25 CENTS

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April 7. 2022

# $Hometown\ Hero\ ^{\rm Historic\ marker\ dedicated\ at}_{\rm Earl\ Lloyd\ boyhood\ home.}$

By Jeanne Theismann Gazette Packet

arl Lloyd, the first African American to play in the NBA, was honored April 2 with a state historical marker dedicated at the site of his boyhood home in Alexandria.

The historical marker was unveiled at 1020 Montgomery Street, just blocks from the site of the former Parker-Gray High School where Lloyd honed his craft.

"Today is a recognition of what Earl contributed to our society and to our world," said Dr. Frank Enty, a teammate of Lloyd's at West Virginia State University. "He made such significant contributions and few of us are able to do that. He made a mark."

In addition to Enty, speakers at the dedication included Mayor Justin Wilson, Alexandria Black History Museum Director Audrey Davis, Alexandria African American Hall of Fame Chairman Julian Haley and Lloyd's nephews Kevin Lloyd and Reginald Lloyd.

"Today is a big stepping stone for the younger generation," said Reginald Lloyd. "Young people today do not have the community leaders that we had growing up. The example my uncle set gives them something to look forward to and shows them that the future looks brighter."

Lloyd was born in Alexandria in 1928 and attended the segregated Parker-Gray High School, now the site of the Charles Houston Recreation Center and home to the Alexandria African American Hall of Fame. At Parker-Gray, Lloyd played basketball and earned All-South Atlantic Conference honors three times and All-State Virginia Interscholastic Conference honors two times.

After graduating from Parker-Gray in 1946, he earned a scholarship to West Virginia State, where he led the team to the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association championships and made the Pittsburgh Courier's All-American team in 1949 and 1950.

After his graduation in 1950, Earl was drafted by the Washington Capitols, becoming one of four black players drafted to the NBA that year. He became the first African American player in an NBA game on Oct. 31, 1950. That milestone came days before other African American players made their debuts — "Chuck" Cooper on the Boston Celtics and Nat Clifton on



Dr. Frank Enty, a college teammate of NBA great Earl Lloyd, speaks to the audience at the April 2 dedication of the historical marker at Lloyd's Montgomery Street boyhood home.

the New York Knicks.

Lloyd's NBA career was interrupted by a two-year stint in the Army during the Korean War. He returned SEE HISTORIC MARKER, PAGE 5

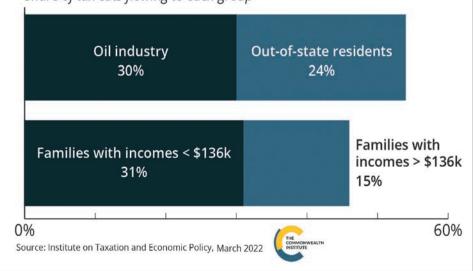


Earl Lloyd nephews Reginald Lloyd, left, and Cornelius Lloyd, right, are joined by Derek Lymus in unveiling the historic marker at Lloyd's childhood home April 2 on Montgomery Street. Lloyd was the first African American to break the color barrier in the NBA in 1950.

# Off Target: Majority of "Savings" Flow to Oil Industry and People Outside of Virginia

54% of benefits under proposed three-month gas tax suspension will not reach Virginia families

Share of tax cuts flowing to each group



## Fossil Fuel Fiesta

### Governor proposes gas-tax holiday, but will Virginians benefit?

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE GAZETTE PACKET

majority of savings from Gov. Glenn Youngkin's proposed three-month gas tax holiday would not go to Virginians according to data compiled by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy and the Commonwealth Institute. By looking at the experience of Illinois and Indiana, the groups determined that the oil industry and out-of-state drivers would drive into the sunset with a majority of the benefit. That would leave Virginians with an estimated 46 percent of the profits.

"If we get rid of the state retail gas tax, which is around 26 cents per gallon, the price

of gas would not automatically go down by 26 cents per gallon," said Chris Wodicka, a senior policy analyst at the Commonwealth Institute. "So that difference would effectively go to oil companies for them to add to their bottom line."

Rather than pass savings along to motorists, oil producers would end up raking in about a third of the profits. But that doesn't mean Virginia drivers will get to reap the rest of the benefits. Because Virginia is a tourist destination with three interstate highways, about a quarter of the remaining savings would be taken by people who don't live in Virginia.

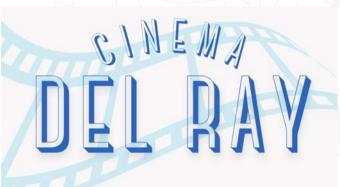
"A significant slice of Virginia's gas tax isn't paid by Virginians in the first place. It's paid by tourists headed down to Williamsburg or Virginia Beach. It's paid by truckers headed up and down I-81, passing along their higher transportation costs to, in many cases, out-of-state residents."

A HISTORIC \$2.6 billion surplus created

See Fossil Fuel, Page 4



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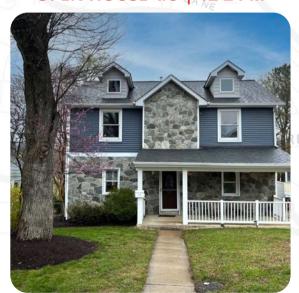
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# Women's Work

### Fort Ward highlights women's role in the Civil War.

By Jeanne Theismann Gazette Packet

hey were not able to go into battle themselves, but women were an integral part of the Civil War as showcased during Civil War Women's Day March 26 at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site.

"We are a group of volunteers helping Fort Ward Museum interpret Women's History Month by showcasing the Civil War from a woman's perspective," said historical interpreter Elaine Kessinger. "Today we are representing how women supported the war effort with care boxes, writing letters and making sure soldiers got news from home.'

The event highlighted the dress, skills and contributions of women on the home front, in camp, and on the battlefield during the Civil War.

"African American women were basically intelligence agents," said interpreter Elisa Jagne. "I am portraying an African American female who is able to go back and forth behind enemy lines and bring back information in support of the Union. And as Harriet Tubman and others did, these women were able to help free their own people through the Underground Railroad."

Jagne noted that the clothing worn by the undercover spies was key to their success.

"These women would not be wearing the sack coat I am wearing right now," Jagne said. "In order for us to disguise ourselves we dressed as the common slave at that time. That allowed us to infiltrate the South and bring back information."

Tracey McIntire showcased a display of books that feature some of the women who disguised themselves as men and fought during the Civil War.

"These are books I suggest folks read if they are interested in the topic," McIntire said. "Rosetta Wakeman, Sarah Emma Edmonds -- both were successful in disguising themselves and fighting."

Among the featured topics of the program were the soldiers' aid societies and relief efforts that were typically launched by women to support both armies during the www.ConnectionNewspapers.com



Tracey McIntire (dressed as a male soldier), Heather Hook, S. Erickson and Elisa Jagne greet visitors to Civil War Women's Day March 26 at Fort Ward Museum.

Elisa Jagne, portraying a Civil War-era African American woman, talks to an attendee at Civil War Women's Day March 26 at Fort Ward Museum. Jagne explained how enslaved people served as spies for the Union Army.

Рнотоѕ ву Janet Barnett GAZETTE PACKET





Elaine Kessinger, VJ Kopacki and Darline Demott portray Civil Warera women March 26 at Fort Ward Museum.

"These soldiers were brothers, sons, fathers," Kessinger said. "Union or Confederacy, depending on your sympathies, women were instrumental during the Civil War."

Fort Ward is the best preserved of the Union forts that comprised the Civil War Defenses of Washington and features special programs throughout the year. www.alexandriava.gov/FortWard



Volunteers from Agudas Achim Congregation and Alfred Street Baptist Church help prepare meal packages to combat food insecurity as part of Good Deed Day April 3.



More than 20,000 meals to combat hunger are assembled by volunteers from Agudas Achim Congregation and Alfred **Street Baptist** Church as part of Good **Deeds Day** April 3.

# Good Deeds Day

### Agudas Achim, Alfred Street Baptist join forces to combat hunger.

By Jeanne Theismann GAZETTE PACKET

olunteers from Agudas Achim Congregation and Alfred Street Baptist Church joined forces April 3 to pack 20,000 meals to combat food insecurities in the region as part of Good Deeds Day.

"We are packaging rice, beans, flavoring - it's like an assembly line," said Agudas Achim volunteer Samara Weinstein. "We weigh, measure and pack everything up then bring boxes of meals to a shelter."

According to a Virginia SNAP-Ed Food Security Survey, children in 29 percent of households are impacted by food insecurity.

"Right now the needs are even greater," Weinstein said. "We just heard from Food for Others that they are short about 200,000 meals for children in the next few weeks so the needs are severe. Our community is helping address that need, which is dire."

Good Deeds Day was started in Israel in 2007. It has grown to include 108 nations around the world. The event at Agudas Achim Congregation was sponsored by the Henry H. Krevor Endowment Fund for Social Action and supported by an anonymous donor.

"This is a beautiful partnership between Agudas Achim Congregation and Alfred Street Baptist Church," Weinstein added. "It is a continuation of our interfaith partnership and relationship."

Added Alfred Street Baptist Church volunteer Freddie Walker, "We're assisting in the effort to reduce hunger in this world. This is my first time partnering with Agudas Achim and it is a fulfilling experience doing something bigger than myself."

Mayor Justin Wilson, right, reads a proclamation to commemorate Child Abuse Prevention Month at the Pinwheel Garden at Charles Hill Park April 1 in Del Ray.



Kate Garvey, Director of Human Services, and staff at the planting of the Pinwheel Garden April 1 at Charles Hill Park in Del Ray. Pinwheels are the national symbol for child abuse prevention.

### Garden display raises Pinwheels for Prevention Garden display raises child abuse awareness.

By Jeanne Theismann Gazette Packet

ayor Justin Wilson led the Alexandria community in commemorating National Child Abuse Prevention Month as a Pinwheel Garden was planted April 1 at Charles Hill Park in Del Ray.

"Pinwheels are the national symbol for child abuse prevention," said Pat Miller of Alexandria Celebrates Women, the organizer of the event. "All across the United States people are creating blue and white pinwheel gardens and that is what we have created here today."

Alexandria Celebrates Women worked with local Artist C. Alexandria-Bernard Thomas to create the garden of paper pinwheels, which will be on display throughout the month.

"We hope people will make their own pinwheels and bring them and plant them also," added Miller.

Prevent Child Abuse America started the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign in 2008 to create a national effort to change the public's beliefs and behaviors regarding child abuse and neglect prevention. Thomas spearheaded the idea to bring awareness to



Alexandria Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter, standing, is joined by Mayor Justin Wilson and C. Alexandria-Bernard Thomas in planting pinwheels to mark Child Abuse Prevention Month April 1 at Charles Hill Park in Del Ray.

Alexandria by fusing poetry and advocacy to support children and families affected by



Artist C. Alexandria-Bernard Thomas, a child abuse survivor, at the planting of the child abuse prevention Pinwheel Garden April 1 at Charles Hill Park in Del

"My role as facilitator and organizer was to bring awareness to the city of Alexandria and Del Ray to show that we are not afraid to stand up for children and families who are affected by abuse," said Thomas. "It takes numbers. Not one person can do this and we are here today to show that we are here for them."

Wilson read a proclamation naming the month of April Child Abuse Awareness Month for Alexandria. He was joined in planting pinwheels by other local officials and Thomas, who is a survivor of child

"I am a survivor of child abuse and when I was growing up I did not have this sort of solidarity," Thomas said. "I was left to fend for myself so I want to provide a resource to people who need this type of love and solidarity.

It's lonely when you don't have someone who can understand you so I want others to know they are not alone."

April has been designated Child Abuse Prevention Month since 1983. In 2016 President Barack Obama issued a proclamation stating: "During National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we recommit to giving every child a chance to succeed and to ensuring that every child grows up in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment that is free from abuse and neglect."

www.preventchildabuse.org

# Fossil Fuel Fiesta

From Page 1

a massive windfall for lawmakers, who are usually fighting over dwindling resources. This year, though, they got to fight over how to spend a giant pot of money. Republicans argued for tax cuts; Democrats pressed for services. Lawmakers left town last month without coming to an agreement, and then the governor suggested a three-month gas tax holiday.

"Virginians need tax relief and it's time for the General Assembly to act on the multiple tax relief proposals," said the governor in a written statement. "With gas prices and inflation squeezing families' pocket books across Virginia and

the nation and with over \$1 billion in unanticipated revenue in our transportation fund, the General Assembly must act now.'

Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36) briefly tried a parliamentary move he hoped would have prevented lawmakers from considering any bill introduced by the governor during the special session. But after a consultation with Republican Lt. Gov. Winsome Sears, who has the power to rule the amendment out of order, Surovell abandoned his amendment to the procedural resolution. After lawmakers left town, Sen. Steve Newman (R-23) and Del. Tara Durant (R-28) introduced legislation on behalf of the

"Higher gas prices really hurt people, and people really notice it. It is so much more visible a tax than what's withheld from your paycheck. As a result, politicians have to be acutely sensitive to gas prices."

— Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington

governor to implement a three- Leadership and Media Studies at month gas tax holiday.

"Higher gas prices really hurt people, and people really notice it. It is so much more visible a tax than what's withheld from your paycheck," said Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for

the University of Mary Washington. "As a result, politicians have to be acutely sensitive to gas prices."

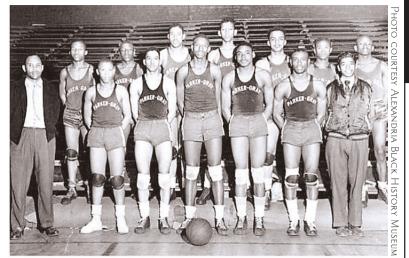
THE ESTIMATED COST of the three-month gas tax holiday is \$437 million. The governor plans to pay

for the holiday using money from the Commonwealth Transportation Fund, which is expected to take in \$1 billion in unanticipated revenue. The bill seems poised to pass a Republican-controlled House, although Senate Democrats may end up rejecting the bill. Democrats say the Republican governor should not have called lawmakers back to Richmond when budget conferees had not yet reached a compromise.

"The governor thinks he's still the co-CEO of a company — he's not, he is the governor of the commonwealth of Virginia, and his glaring incompetence is beginning to harm Virginians," said DPVA Spokesperson Gianni Snidle. "The governor is wasting taxpayer dollars to play political theater and it needs to stop."

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4 ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET APRIL 7-13, 2022



Earl Lloyd, front row center, graduated from the segregated Parker-Gray High School in 1946. With him in front: Coach Louis Johnson, William "Red" Jackson, Rozier Ware, Horace Burton, Oliver Ellis and Henry Brooks. Back: Lee McCoy, Albert Burts, Robert "Tex" Matthews, Francis McGee, Louis Napper and Willie Rice.

## Historic Marker Dedicated at Earl Lloyd Boyhood Home

"My uncle

was more

than a great

athlete, he

was a great

— Earl Lloyd nephew

Reginald Lloyd

man."

to the NBA in 1952 with the Syracuse Nationals, winning the NBA from a segregated school in Alex-

title game in 1955. With that victory, Lloyd and Jim Tucker were the first African Americans to win an NBA championship.

Lloyd retired as a player in 1960 and went on to become the first Black coach in the NBA. He was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 2003. He died in 2015.

A statue of Lloyd is on display at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. Enty was a featured speaker when the statue was unveiled in April of 2021, saying

"This statue shows that someone coming from humble beginnings,

> andria, could rise and become a notable figure in the history of athletics. It means that any youngster who has the ambition, the determination, the stick-toitiveness can also rise to great heights. That is what the statue really represents."

> Added Reginald Lloyd, who participated in the unveiling of the historical marker, "My uncle

was the humblest human being I have ever met.

He was more than a great ath-

Attendees listen to remarks from Audrey Davis, Director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, at the April 2 dedication of the historical marker at the Montgomery Street boyhood home of NBA great Earl Lloyd.

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# OPINION

# The Devilish Details of Tax Cutting

Del. Kenneth R. "Ken" Plum

utting taxes is either the theme or a promise of most every political campaign. States that are doing well should give some of the taxpayers' money back to them. States that are struggling should cut taxes to stimulate the economy. Whatever the promise it is important to look behind the numbers to fully understand the impact of cutting taxes.



2021 election the Commonwealth had been named the best state for business two years in a row with tax policy being a major consideration to receive such a recognition. A "rainy day" fund was in place and additional reserves were being maintained to stave off any dips in revenues. Regardless of these facts, the winhis campaign several tax cuts if elected. Among those were doubling the standard deduction on

ning candidate had promised in

the income tax, eliminating the remaining gro-Virginia is no exception. Leading up to the

cery tax, suspending the gas tax, and providing a tax holiday for small businesses.

During the campaign, then-candidate Glenn Youngkin floated the idea of eliminating the income tax. To his credit when he learned that it would wipe out around 70% of the state's general fund and bankrupt state government he quietly dropped that proposal. It's one of those details that must be considered when discussing tax policy and which voters need to carefully examine when they hear a "too good to be true" promise.

The General Assembly has not been able to

SEE THE DEVILISH DETAILS, PAGE 14

#### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### **Lively School Libraries**

f you entered a school library today, you might be surprised that it is not the quiet tomb of books you remember from your childhood. An average day includes class visits for primary school read-alouds while caring for live chickens, groups of middle school students playing quiet games of chess and rowdy games of UNO during lunch breaks, and high school students engaging in rigorous inquiry with a wealth of resources to create high-tech products. School libraries offer a safe space for students to visit during their day. For some the library is a respite from the chaos of the cafeteria, for others it is a second home where they come for a moment to catch their breath or catch up with friends and yes, some still come for the books.

Libraries are the point of inquiry for asking and answering questions, an inclusive place for collab-

orative learning, exploration, and engagement. Professional librarians teach students how to be digital citizens and navigate the fast changing information resources, as well as curate a collection of books that reflect the diverse identities of their students. School libraries are active engaging places that deserve to be celebrated and recognized for the gems that they are in our communities. This is a far cry from peddling dangerous materials as the book banning supporters

would like you to think occurs in libraries. Librarians pride themselves on the relationships built over years of contact with students and the goal of fostering lifelong learning that prepares students for college, career and community.

This April, please join in celebrating National School Library Month and thank a school librarian for offering our students more than just books in the library.

Caroline Jolly



U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) said he intends to support Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination to the Supreme Court.

## Virginia's U.S. Senators Meet with Judge Jackson

n Monday, Virginia's U.S. Senators meet separately with President Joe Biden's Supreme Court nominee, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson.

"I'm really excited to meet the Judge. I have voted for her twice, but a Supreme Court matter is different than any other, and it's the most serious of any of the nominations that we vote for," said Kaine. "What a wonderful opportunity to have a great discussion, and I'm really looking forward to it."

U.S. Sen. Mark R. Warner (D-VA) said he intends to support finally including a Black woman." 6 ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET APRIL 7-13, 2022

Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson's nomination to the Supreme Court.

"Judge Jackson is a trailblazer and a highly-qualified jurist. Her wide-ranging endorsements – from conservative jurists, civil rights organizations, law enforcement groups, and through her previous bipartisan Senate confirmations speak to her sterling credentials," Warner said. "Her confirmation would also take a long overdue step toward making the composition of the Supreme Court better reflect the people it represents by



On Monday, April 4, Sen. Tim Kaine met with President Joe Biden's Supreme Court nominee Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, who would be the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court if confirmed.

#### Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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### Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month

# Embrace Your Voice 2022: Poetry Share.

egister to join Embrace Your Voice 2022, the eighth annual poetry share hosted in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month (SAAPM) by Doorways, Friends of Guest House, and the Alexandria Sexual Assault Center. This year's poetry share will be a hybrid in-person and virtual event, with attendees and poets participating from the Lee Center in Alexandria or online via Zoom.

- ❖ To share your work, please register as a poet (in-person or virtual) by Monday, April 18. You will receive a participant consent form and a request for a copy of your poem(s) in advance.
- ❖ To attend the event, please register as an attendee (in-person or virtual).

#### **For Poets**

Poems must be original, of the poet's own construction. Poems may not include homophobic or sexist comments, or comments offensive to a class or group of people. Poets are required to complete a participant consent form to share their work.

#### **Need Support?**

While sexual assault is an important topic, and something we should be aware of and talk about, it is a subject that can raise feelings like sadness and fear, and bring up painful memories. If you experience anxiety or uncomfortable emotions during the event, we invite you to seek out one of our trained advocates who can listen, and lend support onsite at the Lee Center on online via the Zoom chat.

You can also contact these hotlines for support any time:

- ❖ Doorways (Arlington) Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline: 703-237-0881
- ❖ Alexandria: 703-683-7273 (Sexual Assault Hotline) or 703-746-4911 (Domestic Violence Hotline)
- ❖ National Sexual Assault Hotline: 800-656-4673 / Online Chat: hotline.rainn.org y hotline.rainn.org/es
- To register: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/embrace-your-voice-2022-poetry-share-tick-ets-277773838027

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Biologists pull up the suspended mussel cages from the river.



Project participants search a cage's base for young mussels.



Biologist Matt Ashton lowers a cage, explaining the process to the public.



Project participants put fish carrying microscopic mussel larvae into cages.



Matt Ashton secures a new cage before lowering it into the water.



An educational panel on the pier explains a mussel's life cycle.

# Bringing Mussels Back to the Potomac

By Glenda C. Booth Gazette Packett

any people may think that freshwater mussels are insignificant, nondescript critters, but for rivers and streams, they are important critters.

Virginia's riverbeds, including the Potomac's, were once lined with native mussels. When the first English settlers arrived, "They were astonished to discover rivers practically paved in freshwater mussels," according to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' (DWR) website. Over the next 400 years, pollution, dams and invasive species helped put 70 percent of mussels in the United States at risk. Over seven percent have gone extinct and another 50 percent are listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. In Virginia, of 82 species, only 30 percent are considered to be stable, with the remaining in decline, reports Department of Wildlife Resources.

Declining mussel populations can signal that freshwater ecosystems are in trouble. "The disappearance of freshwater mussels usually indicates chronic water pollution problems," says a U.S. Department of Agriculture website.

To improve water quality, the Potomac Riverkeeper Network (PRKN) has launched the 50 Million Mussel Project to restore freshwater mussel populations in the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers.



Left to right: eastern pond mussel; eastern lamp mussel; tidewater mucket mussel.

#### What Is a Mussel?

Mussels are aquatic mollusks, invertebrate animals with soft bodies usually enclosed in a hinged shell. Freshwater mussels can range from thumbnail to pie plate size and live from 20 to 100 years.

Mussels draw in water with their incurrent siphon and discharge it through their excurrent siphon. Their shells are usually, but not always, dark in color on the outside and pearly on the inside. Mussels grow in both freshwater and saltwater. They spend much of their lives partially buried in sediment.

#### Why Mussels?

"Like oysters, freshwater mussels are nature's water-based clean-up crew," explains Emily Franc, Vice President for Development/Philanthropy at Potomac Riverkeep-



An eastern lamp mussel.

er Network. They are filter feeders which means they obtain food by filtering water for nutritious particles.

One adult mussel can clean up to 10 liters of water per day. They can filter out excess nutrients, sediments and other pollution. These pollutants come from stormwater running off roofs, parking lots, roads and other hard surfaces and from lawn and agricultural fertilizers. Nutrients often flow off agricultural fields and poultry farms.

Sediments can smother mussel beds and cloud water. Turbidity blocks sunlight needed for submerged aquatic vegetation, underwater plants that invertebrates, fish, ducks and other aquatic organisms need for food and protection.

While the river is making progress, in their 2020 report, the Potomac Conservancy, concluded, "... excess nutrients and sediment from polluted urban runoff is increasing over time and threatens to undo

"Recovering our nearly extinct freshwater mussel populations will help heal the entire Chesapeake Bay. They need our help to make a comeback."

— Emily Franc, Potomac Riverkeeper Network

decades of progress ... Sediment in urban and suburban stormwater runoff continues to increase."

#### **Growing Mussels**

The riverkeepers hope to reintroduce 50 million mussels to the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers by 2030, starting by propagating native mussels on the Potomac in Smoot's Cove at National Harbor. They have propagated or cultured four species: eastern floater, eastern lamp mussel, eastern pond mussel and tidewater mucket. They plan to eventually have similar projects at other Potomac River sites.

SEE BRINGING MUSSELS BACK, PAGE 9



### Women's Leadership Forum

Marcia Call, center, chair of the 2022 Chamber of Commerce Women's Leadership Forum, is joined by forum moderator Deborah Tompkins Johnson and Pamela Gilchrist at the Westin Hotel Alexandria on March 24. Sponsored by The Goodhart Group, the leadership panel included Lillian Chao-Quinlan, president and principal owner of Sportrock Climbing Centers; Kate Ellis, general manager of Hotel Indigo Old Town and president of Alexandria Hotel Association; Letitia Long, Rector of Virginia Tech Board of Visitors and chairman of the Intelligence and National Security Alliance; and Jatrice Martel Gaiter, executive vice president of External Affairs of Volunteers of America.

## Bringing Mussels Back

From Page 8

Propagating mussels requires understanding one of the most complex reproductive systems in nature. Males release sperm which the current carries to a downstream female who draws it in through her siphon. A fertilized egg develops within her gills into the microscopic larval stage called a glochidium. Once mature, the glochidia enter the water column and attach to the gills, fins or scales of freshwater fish, so the fish serves as a host or "taxi" for the mussel's eggs. The glochidia then encyst into the fish's tissue. Still microscopic, the juvenile mussel drops off the fish and begins its life on the stream bottom.

At the Smoot's Cove nursery, Potomac Riverkeeper Network project managers put striped bass and yellow perch carrying microscopic mussels in six cages in hopes that the baby mussels will drop into the cages and grow. They submerge the cages underwater to within one foot of the riverbed.

The floating cages are designed to catch baby mussels as they fall out of the fish's gills and avoid being suffocated by sediment buildup. So far, managers have not found young mussels in the cages, but they suspect that waves and current moved them out and that the mussels are on the river bottom. They hope to send scuba divers down in the fall to search the riverbed for mussels that likely escaped the cages in

recent months. They have found damage to some of the cages and suspect that otters or large birds may have torn into them. The demonstration project will also help develop the most effective type of cage and locate other suitable sites for mussel nurseries.

Managers hope that the Smoot's Cove 10-year project can be a national demonstration center and that the mussel population will eventually become self-sustaining.

In addition to the Peterson Companies/National Harbor, other partners are the Joseph Manning Hatchery in Charles County, Maryland, Oasis Marinas, Underwater Adventure Seekers and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Potomac Riverkeeper Network will expand partnerships to other organizations, including nonprofits.

Mussel restoration projects are also underway on the Anacostia and James rivers and in southwest Virginia.

Franc loves the challenge: "Centuries of human impacts overwhelmed and decimated these once vibrant freshwater mussel populations," she says. "We have the opportunity to reverse the damage and get mussels back in the water to do what they do best, clean the water. Recovering our nearly extinct freshwater mussel populations will help heal the entire Chesapeake Bay. They need our help to make a comeback."





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### Entertainment



Augie's Mussel House.

## here to Eat Outside?

s spring's milder weather invites diners outside, Alexandria, offers plentiful al fresco options in Old Town, Del Ray and beyond.

Here are some of Alexandria's best outdoor dining spots:

\* Waterfront Wow Factor: Let the Potomac River breeze ease you into the

#### VISIT ALEXANDRIA

weekend at BARCA Pier & Wine Bar

and Ada's on the River, or raise a glass in the midst of the buzzing waterfront at Vola's Dockside Grill (check out Vola's Spring Oyster Festival this Saturday, April 2).

- \* Riverside Lounges: Gather your crew on the cozy couches outside Blackwall Hitch, or indulge in a seafood-infused brunch at Hummingbird.
- ❖ Beloved Backyards and Patios: Check out community favorites with creative al fresco spaces, including The Front Porch and The Back Yard at regionally acclaimed Evening Star Café. Explore the beer garden or Lena's Oasis outside Lena's Wood-Fired Pizza & Tap or Virtue Feed & Grain's laidback patio.
- Street-side People Watching: Be transported to a French bistro outside Fontaine or watch the world go by on King Street at The Warehouse, Landini Brothers and Vaso's Mediterranean Grill.
- High-Level Hideaways: Order a cocktail (or mocktail) from Café 44's terrace bar with the Potomac River as your backdrop, or feel on top of the world at Daniel O'Connell's second floor patio above bustling lower King Street.
- Buzzing Courtyards: King & Rye's Cocktail Garden returns April 21 with stellar cocktails and a sum-



Ada's on the River.



**Evening Star Cafe.** 

mer music series, while Sonoma Cellar and Taverna Cretekou offer cozy courtyards strung with twinkle lights to sip and savor.

Casual Beer Gardens: Gather for happy hour at Augie's expansive beer garden, take the whole family to The Garden Del Ray or bring your four-legged friends to Hops N Shine's backyard in Arlan-

❖ Peaceful Parklets: Grab a seat at Cheesetique's spacious "meadow" for a decadent grilled cheese or charcuterie board, or head to parklets in Carlyle to enjoy Tequila & Taco or Sweet Fire Donna's.

More information on the top spots to dine outside in Alexandria: The Best of Outdoor Dining in Alexandria, VA https://blog.visitalexandriava.com/outdoor-dining/

#### Calendar

#### **NEW EXHIBIT AT** MOUNT VERNON

George Washington's Mount Vernon unveiled an expansive and inclusive new permanent exhibition, Mount Vernon: The Story of an American Icon. The exhibition traces the rich and complex history of Mount Vernon-not only the celebrated era of George and Martha Washington, but the lesser-known stories of the enslaved community, earlier and later generations of Washingtons, and the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association (MVLA), which has preserved the property since 1860. The exhibition represents the largest reunion of original Mount Vernon objects since the dispersal of George and Martha Washington's estates in 1802.

#### NOW THRU MAY 5

Solo Art Exhibition. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Art & Framing, 694 N. St. Asaph St., Alexandria. Art & Framing will be home to the exhibition "Works from Nature's Jewel Tones: Paintings by Kathleen Callery. The show features 20 of Callery's works. The jewel tones found in nature have been the main inspiration for these paintings--Kathleen Callery.

#### **NOW THRU APRIL 17**

Forces Fleeting. At The Athenaeum Gallery, Alexandria. Opening Reception, Sunday, March 13, 4 — 6 p.m. Artist Talk, Saturday, April 9 at 2 p.m. Forces Fleeting is a mixed-media exhibition of new works by artists Nikki Brugnoli and Anne C. Smith, in the first joint installation by the two longtime friends and collaborators. In very different ways, both women explore the transformative power of landscape, with Brugnoli's gestural screenprint drawings on mylar and wood panels and Smith's dark pencil drawings on stained linen.

#### NOW THRU APRIL 30

Second Life Exhibit. 6 p.m. Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday; 9 p.m. Friday. At Del Ray Artisans gallery in the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. The "Second Life" exhibit features art made with recycled materials. Workshops and events are also scheduled throughout the month. Details: delrayartisans.org/calendar/#event=second-life

#### NOW THRU JUNE 5

'SeeWorthy" Exhibit. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Studio #9, Alexandria. View ship construction through the eyes of maritime archaeologists in SeeWorthy, a new exhibit from Alexandria Archaeology highlighting the technology used to digitally reconstruct historic vessels. Recent development along the waterfront has led to significant discoveries by archaeologists, including the remains of four historic ships. These remnants have been laser scanned to create models showing what they would have looked like in the late 18th and early 19th

centuries.

#### NOW THRU MAY 1

Cherry Blossom Exhibition. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Art lovers are encouraged to stop by the Torpedo Factory Art Center throughout April to view floral art displayed on all three floors. Participating artists will display their most colorful spring and cherry-blossom-inspired works in their studios from Saturday, April 2 until Sunday, May 1. Torpedo Factory Art Center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Masks are required for all visitors regardless of vaccination status. Visit torpedofactory.org.

#### **NOW THRU JUNE 12**

MVUC Greenhouse Plant Sale. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Weekends only. At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. The Annual Spring Plant Sale at the MVUC Greenhouse opens April 2 and 3, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., weekends only. They have a variety of vegetables and flowers for sale again this year. Lots of regular and heirloom tomatoes and not-too-hot peppers (more than 20 different varieties) as well as some of your favorite perennials, annuals, and herbs. Visit the lovely, old greenhouse and buy some new plants for your spring garden.

#### THURSDAY/APRIL 7

Joseph Ellis: The Cause: The American Revolution and its Discontents 1773-1783. 7 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon. One of the most celebrated historians of the Revolutionary era brings personal stories to life in this landmark work. Cost: \$60 individual lecture/\$175 series. Discount for members. For more information and to register visit mountvernon.org.

#### THURSDAY/APRIL 7

Outdoor Cello Concert. 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. At the Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. After a breathtaking debut performance in the Secret Garden in April 2021, internationally renowned cellist Amit Peled and his 1695 instrument by the Italian master Giovanni Grancino make a return appearance for a program built around the passion, seduction, longing and despair of Beethoven and Brahms's hidden love affairs. Part of the Sounds of Hope & Harmony series. More details and tickets on the website: https://www. classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/

#### **APRIL 8-9**

"Anastasia!" 7 p.m. At Bishop Ireton School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria, The cast and crew of "Anastasia!" is thrilled to present this lush, imaginative musical about love, family and home to the Bishop Ireton community. It is the first musical from BI since the spring of 2019 (2020's production of

See Calendar, Page 11

### Calendar

"Freaky Friday" was unfortunately cancelled just one week before opening due to Covid-19 and there was no musical staged in 2021, also due to the pandemic).

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 9

Storytime with the Black History Museum. 10:05 a.m. At the Reading Garden at Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Explore the history of Alexandria's local African American community through books, stories, and songs. Geared for children ages 3-8, but all are welcome at this outdoor event.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 9

The "Grandest Congress": The French and Indian War in Alexandria. 12-4 p.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, Alexandria. Spring, 1755: Major General Edward Braddock, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, landed in Alexandria on March 26th to assume command of all North American military forces. He lodged at the grandest dwelling in town, Carlyle House. While staying at Carlyle House, Braddock convened a meeting of five colonial governors. Among Braddock's objectives was to secure funding for his upcoming campaign against the French. Carlyle called this gathering "the Grandest Congress ... ever known on the Continent." Visitors to the Carlyle House will experience Braddock's visit and the French and Indian War firsthand through costumed interpreters. Admission is free, but donations



The Carlyle Spring Camp will take place April 11-15 at Carlyle House Historic Park in Alexandria.

are welcome.

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 9

Potomac River Cleanup. 9-11 a.m. Join the Friends of Dyke Marsh and the National Park Service for the 34th annual Potomac River cleanup in support of the Alice Ferguson Foundation. They will conduct a trash cleanup along the Potomac River shoreline in Belle Haven Park and the Haul Road Trail. Check in at a registration table in Belle Haven Park near the south parking lot or at the entrance to the Haul Road Trail. They will provide gloves, tools and trash bags. Wear sturdy, closed-toe shoes, long pants and sleeves, gloves and sun protection. More event details and registration are available via this link: https:// forms.office.com/g/BuDrx9y9EL

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 9

Easter Egg Hunt. 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

At various locations throughout Old Town Alexandria. Bring your own basket and bunny hop up and down King Street and select side streets. Explore the map to find participating retailers, where you'll get an Easter treat and discover interactive activities at select locations. More details to come at oldtownbusiness.org.

#### **APRIL 11-15**

Carlyle Spring Camp. 9:30-11:30 a.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Discover your inner archaeologist and architect. Learn about archaeology and architecture. Cost: \$12 per child per day. Visit the

website: https://www.novaparks.com/parks/ carlyle-house-historic-park/events/ spring-break-camp-at-carlyle-archeology-architecture

### The same THE AMERICAN HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY'S SPRING GARDEN **MARKET** ANNUAL PLANT SALE & GARDEN PRODUCTS MARKETPLACE APRIL 8 & 9 at RIVER FARM 7931 East Boulevard Drive Alexandria, Virginia • FRI., APRIL 8 & SAT., APRIL 9 10 a.m.-4 p.m. • Parking \$20 per car; free for AHS members www.ahsgardening.org/sgm Proceeds from the Spring Garden Market support the preservation of historic River Farm as the headquarters of the American Horticultural Society and its maintenance as a green space for all to enjoy. YEARS Thanks to Spring Garden Market Sponsor Mount Vernon Gazette

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### 'March for Meals' Highlights Importance of Senior Nutrition



Members of the Alexandria City Highschool Honor Society volunteer with Meals on Wheels to celebrate SSA's "March for Meals."

By Margaret Shetler
Nutrition Program Coordinator

uring March, Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) joined forces with Meals on Wheels programs across the country to raise awareness around the importance of senior nutrition programs in the fight against food insecurity and malnutrition. The month-long campaign, March for Meals, commemorated the 50th anniversary of President Richard Nixon's signing of the Older American Act's Nutrition Program, the federal legislation that made Meals on Wheels possible.

March was packed with events celebrating Meals on Wheels in our community. In a joint resolution, sponsored by Sen. Adam Ebbin and Delegates Bennett-Parker, Herring and Plum, the Senate of Virginia issued a commendation of SSA's Meals on Wheels for the way it has "enriched communities by addressing food insecurity and isolation among seniors."

The Alexandria City Council proclaimed March "March for Meals" month, and March 21-25 was Champions week, where community champions were invited to deliver Meals on Wheels for one day to show support for

senior nutrition programs. Community champions throughout the month included Congressman Don Beyer, State Senator Adam Ebbin, Virginia Delegates Charniele Herring and Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Mayor Justin Wilson, City Council Members Canek Aguirre, Sara Bagley, John Chapman, Alyia Gaskins, Amy Jackson, and Kirk McPike, Sheriff Sean Casey, MOWA President Ellie Hollander, Acting Police Chief Don Hayes, Clerk of Circuit Court Gregg Parks, City Manager Jim Parajon, Fire Chief Corey Smedley, members of the Commission on Aging, and SSA board

In interviews shared on SSA's Facebook page, Community champions reflected on the impact of Meals on Wheels in Alexandria.

"We all know that nutritious food is critical to our physical health, mental health, social health, and overall wellbeing," said Alyia Gaskins, Alexandria City Councilmember. "I love Meals on Wheels because they provide a critical lifeline to our community."

March for Meals was a celebration of the vitality of senior nutrition programs, but also a celebration of the people that make Meals on Wheels possible. Meals on Wheels couldn't happen without the help of SSA's dedicated



Mayor Justin Wilson and Anne Coyne, St. Martin de Porres Senior Director, join Mary Lee Anderson, SSA Executive Director to deliver Meals on Wheels.



Congressman Beyer, City Councilwoman Alyia Gaskins, and Sheriff Sean Casey participate in "Champions" week to show support for Meals on Wheels.



Senator Adam Ebbin presents the Senate of Virginia Commendation of SSA to Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director, Marshall Hespe, Meals on Wheels Program Director, and Maribeth Bersani, member of SSA's Board.

volunteers. Chris Moore, Director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, shared that "it is wonderful to be able to take part in [Meals on Wheels] for one day, knowing that this happens 365 days a year."

In partnership with the City's Division of Aging and Adult Services, SSA has worked tirelessly to ensure that homebound older adults receive Meals on Wheels seven



Members of Westminster Presbyterian Church are recognized as champions during March for Meals.

days a week, 365 days a year. Each week, SSA volunteers deliver over 2,300 meals to older Alexandrians.

Meals on Wheels programs require sustained and expanded funding and more volunteers to address senior hunger and isolation in our communities, and need has continued to grow throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Ellie Hollander, President of Meals on Wheels America, says that "if we couldn't rely on volunteers and individual donors, we would not be able to deliver to the millions of seniors that depend on this service as a vital lifeline, day in and day out."

If you know someone who would be interested in volunteering or receiving Meals on Wheels, go to SSA's website at www.seniorservicesalex.org/programs/mealson-wheels/ or call 703-836-4414 ext. 112.

To see our Champions week interviews and stay up to date with Senior Services of Alexandria, visit our Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/SeniorServicesofAlexandria/. To learn more about the Older Americans Act, senior nutrition, and Meals on Wheels America go to www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org

## Earth Day All Month

arth Day was founded on April 22, 1970, when people came together to demand cleaner air and water. The City of Alexandria and Alex-Renew will celebrate Earth Day throughout April with virtual and in-person events, providing information to empower residents to make an impact on the environment and drive change.

The international theme of Earth Day 2022 is "Invest in Our

arth Day was founded Planet," which focuses on the importance of taking action, and what people came together to individuals and organizations can do to make a difference.

During this year's Earth Day-related events, participants can:

Clean up litter at All Veterans Park and Windmill Hill Park in conjunction with the Alice Ferguson Foundation's watershed cleanup on Saturday, April 9.

Enjoy a bike ride celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Mount Ver-

non Trail with the Washington Area Bicyclists Association, Walk/Bike Arlington and East Coast Greenway. Participate in giveaways and a scavenger hunt for kids at this April 16 event.

Learn how to live more sustainably by reducing plastic and packaging in a Reduce and Reuse Workshop with the City's Resource Recovery team on April 21.

Visit Ben Brenman Park (4800 Brenman Park Drive) to receive a tree to take home, participate in a kids bike rodeo and check out electric vehicles on April 24.

Build your own rain gauge, participate in a kids' game, learn about stormwater management practices you can implement on your property, snap pictures at an interactive selfie station and enter to win a rain barrel during Stormwater Day at Ben Brenman Park on April 30.

Year-round opportunities for action include working at stream cleanups, participating in the Eco-

City Academy and becoming an Eco-City Ambassador, becoming an Energy Master and joining environmental education classes and activities at the Jerome "Buddie" Ford Nature Center (5750 Sanger Ave.). Residents can also attend meetings and review past presentations to the Environmental Policy Commission to learn about the City's ongoing efforts. https://www.alexandriava.gov/EPC

### ENTERTAINMENT

### National Concert Band of America 47th Season

May 1st, 2022 -An American Journey

he National Concert Band of America will continue its season with a free concert entitled "An American Journey" on Sunday May 1st, at 3 pm, Carl Sandburg Middle School, 8428 Fort Hunt Rd., Alexandria, Va. To be directed by Principal Conductor Adrian Holton, the concert will capture the sounds of what it is like to be an American, from our triumphs to our tragedies.

The concert opens with two pieces by Julie Giroux and Roger Zare about Americans leading the charge in the space race. The band will feature two staples of the wind band repertoire by Samuel Barber and Peter Mennin that are emblematic of the progressive nature of the U.S. Armed Forces during the Second World War and America's post-war, mid-century prosperity.

The program will also feature Frank Ticheli's An American Elegy, written in memory of victims and survivors of the school shooting at Columbine High School in 1999.

This free must-see concert offers snapshots of our American History, particularly in the 20th century. See you on May 1st at 3 p.m.

For more information, please visit the website at www.national-concertband.org.

### Spring Book Sale

he Friends of the Beatley Central Library will hold their Spring Book Sale from Tuesday, May 10, through Sunday, May 15. Members' Preview on Tuesday, May 10, 3-7:30 p.m. (\$15 memberships available at the door); Wednesday, May 11, 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Thursday, May 12, 10 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Friday, May 13, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Saturday, May 14, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday, May 15, 1-4:30 p.m. \$4 or less, unless specifically marked: hardbacks, paperbacks, children's books, and media items. All genres. Half-price on Sunday, May 15. Charles E. Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA; info: 703-746-1702; www.beatleyfriends.org.



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#### Obituary

#### **Obituary**

Paige Coffey Cirrone took her final bow on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, following a valiant battle against breast cancer. She was 55 years old. Paige grew up in the Richmond, VA area and graduated from Marymount School. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in Musical Theatre from the Shenandoah University and Conservatory. Following graduation, she performed in local productions and traveled with the post Broadway casts of Nunsense and Gypsy before settling in the Alexandria, VA area.

From an early age Paige was always entertaining family and friends with her dancing, acting, or singing. One outlet was synchronized swimming that allowed her to utilize her many talents. She swam for the Richmond Dolpholinas and was a founding member of the Octopi Synchronized Team

Her life took her on a journey from Richmond, VA to Fort Lauderdale, FL, to Alexandria, VA, to Roanoke, VA and finally back to Florida and Cape Canaveral. Along the route she found countless friends that shared her love of the arts and all the ways that people expressed themselves. She found ways to use the arts to help people overcome their own challenges, either mental or physical. By using her love of dance she brought joy to herself and those around her.

Paige discovered surfing later in life. It was something that she and her husband and daughter enjoyed and shared as a family. She and Chris become regulars with the Cocoa Beach and Cape Canaveral surfing communities. It was not uncommon to see her dancing on her board. Both she and Chris supported many of the Florida Surfing Museum activities.

Paige's greatest love was family and especially her daughter Chloe, who will graduate this spring from North Florida University with a BA in Graphic Arts. Chloe has inherited her mother's love of both dance and the fine arts. They could frequently be seen in Facebook and TikTok videos either trying the newest dance craze or some oldies but goodies. Paige is survived by her husband Chris, her daughter Chloe, her son Nacho (the dog) her mother, Dorothy C. Coffey and sister Mary Scott Tuck and is preceded in death by her father John H. Coffey.

#### Legals

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#### Whew!



#### By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Did you hear that exhale about 10:15 this morning, Friday, April 1? That was me/my reaction after I received a second call from my accountant. Which was in response to hearing what my 2021 tax bill was calculated to be. It was marginal to say the least and incredibly amazing/lucky to say the most. The last thing I need during all this cancer stuff/expense, is substantial taxes, penalty, and interest due the IRS. If there's any subject, short of being a "terminal" cancer patient, which strikes fear and anxiety into the hearts and minds of us living and breathing tax-paying citizens, it is receiving an unexpected and beyondone's-ability-to-pay, previous year's tax bill.

If there's any arm longer than the IRS', I don't want to have anything to do with it. The IRS is bigger and stronger and way more connected – and funded, than any of my presumptive representatives/defenders would be. If there's any fatherly advice that still resonates nearly 17 years after my father's passing, it is his advice pertaining to tax collection by the government. He would say, if you owe them, pay them, something, anything, and don't ignore them. Moreover, he would summarize tax arrearage with the following advisory: "It's their money and they want it."

A child during the Depression and a self-employed businessman for most of his adult life, he was keenly aware of the IRS. Mostly he lived by his wits and tried to color between the lines. He respected the government, especially the tax-collecting authorities, and so far, as I recall, was never in default or the subject of a judgment/ any legal proceedings. He managed to work all those years without incurring the wrath of the dedicated public servants who strive to collect every dollar due – for the public good of course.

So, when I received that second call from my accountant ("the left-handed gun" is his nickname; he's left-handed) to tell me the net damage after completing my federal and state tax 2021 returns, would be hundreds, not thousands, neither of which I have readily available, I was, to invoke Hubert Horatio Humphrey, the democratic candidate for President in 1968, "Pleased as punch." And to invoke anyone whoever survived a duel at 10 paces with pistols: I feel as if I dodged a bullet. (Not literally. The IRS has many weapons at their disposal, few however, if any, include guns/gun powder.) That dodge being legit thanks to my capable accountant (not me). As such, I look forward to paying my fair share this year to the IRS/state of Maryland and will try to quarterly-plan a bit more for the next tax year ending 12/31/22 so that the pressure I began to feel on Jan 1. 2022 could be mitigated by the responsible actions I take between now and this next year's filing deadline.

Granted, I've survived cancer going on 14 years, and have been extremely fortunate to have done so. However, an IRS audit would be another matter entirely, and one I'm not sure I'd survive, at least not with the same vim and vigor with which I've endured my cancer diagnosis.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers

### News

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### Kids' First Years in Alexandria

n Alexandria, all children deserve the same chance for a happy, healthy start in life. That's the overarching conviction guiding Kids' First Years, a collective impact initiative dedicated to being the unified voice for organizations in Alexandria that collaborate to provide support, care and education for the city's young children and their families.

Formerly operating as Smart Beginnings Alexandria, Kids' First Years is excited to kickoff 2022 with a new name and a renewed commitment to build an equitable and accessible early care and education system in Alexandria.

"We work in close partnership with about 20 local organizations and agencies to ensure that children and families have access to the things they need and that our community is positioned to sustain and enhance those supports," said Michelle Smith Howard, Executive Director of Kids' First Years. "Also, we have strong relationships with Alexandria preschools and child care centers, elementary schools, libraries, faith-based entities and many more, so we have created an extensive network of early childhood stakeholders in the city."

Smith Howard also noted that Kids' First Years has embraced The Basics, which are five simple yet powerful things that parents, caregivers and child care providers can do to help children thrive in the early years:

- Maximize Love, Manage Stress
- \* Talk, Sing, and Point
- Count, Group, and Compare
- Explore through Movement and Play
- Read and Discuss Stories

"These evidence-based parenting and care-giving principles can benefit children from all backgrounds and across the spectrum of socio-economic factors," she said. "There's even a free text messaging component where parents can get two texts per week on their phone with an easy and fun suggested activity tied to one of The Basics principles."

Kids' First Years can provide Spanish, Arabic and Amharic translations for many of the organization's materials and a translation line can be offered for phone calls when needed. In addition, parents and early childhood stakeholders can sign up to receive a regular newsletter with helpful tips and updates about issues to support the area's littlest learners.

Kids' First Years aims to be a trusted resource for information about child care and early childhood education in the City of Alexandria. "Whenever parents or anyone in our community has a need or question related to early childhood care or education, Kids' First Years can help them navigate to the right preschool partner or connect them quickly to the appropriate services and supports," Smith Howard said.

The partner organizations working with Kids' First Years are: ACT for Alexandria, Alexandria City Public Schools, Alexandria Health Department, ALIVE!, Bruhn-Morris Family Foundation, The Campagna Center, Center for Alexandria's Children, Child and Family Network Centers, Alexandria Department of Community & Human Services, City of Alexandria, Creative Play School, Hopkins House, Neighborhood Health and Northern Virginia Family Services.

For more information about Kids' First Years as well as to sign up for the Kids' First Years newsletter and the free text messaging component of The Basics, visit kidsfirstyears. org or follow Kids' First Years on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/KidsFirstYears

# The Devilish Details Of Tax Cutting

From Page 6

agree to a final budget for the next biennium with the issue of taxes being the main hang-up and the Governor not being able to justify his proposals against the details of taxes and where the money goes. Everyone I know opposes a tax on groceries, and that is why the General Assembly cut the grocery tax with the exception of one and a half cents for education and transportation. For many rural areas with a limited tax base, groceries and gasoline were about the only items that could be taxed to provide some funding for their schools and roads. If the decision is made to cut the gas tax the responsible thing to do is to make up the losses to the small localities with state general funds that are currently going to other programs.

Another detail about the proposed gasoline tax that must be considered is the analysis of the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (https://itep.org/) that shows that 30% of the projected savings would likely flow to oil producers rather than motorists.

Less than 30% the analysis found would go to Virginia residents, with the remainder going to trucking companies that buy a lot of gas in the state and out-of-state tourists who visit the Commonwealth.

The same organization looked at the proposal to double the standard deduction on the income tax and found that it would not help many Virginia families whose income is already too low to be taxed. Only high-income earners who have the least need for a tax break would benefit from this proposal.

The devil is in the details as is the case in many proposals, and the Governor needs to consider those details and give the General Assembly the opportunity to pass a responsible budget.



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#### **Old Town** \$1,295,000

Stunning 3-bedroom, 2.5-bath, 1875 historic rowhouse. Features antique heart pine floors, 10' ceilings, a private terrace & garden, a newly renovated kitchen with quartz counters & slate floors, and a spacious owners' suite with beautifully renovated bath, 302 S Lee Street

Wendy Santantonio 703.625.8802 www.WendySantantonio.com



#### **Huntington** at Mount Vernon \$549,900

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