

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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FEBRUARY 23, 2023



Members of the Andrew Jackson Lodge No. 120 of Alexandria.



Members of the American Legion Riders travel along King Street during the George Washington Birthday Celebration Parade Feb. 20 in Old Town. The parade celebrated the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, seen dominating the skyline of Alexandria.

By George!

Worldwide participation highlights GW parade.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

More than 4,000 participants, many from around the world, took part in the George Washington Birthday parade Feb. 20 as the event celebrated the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

George Seghers, Executive Director of the Memorial, served as Grand Marshal of the parade that welcomed Freemasons from continents across the globe and every state in the nation to mark the anniversary and recreate the parade along King Street in Alexandria from 100 years ago.

"It was so delightful to see all of

the different community groups and Masonic Lodges come together," said parade co-chair Sue Johnson. "We were fortunate to have good weather and everyone was having such a good time."

The parade, which is funded through private donations, was sponsored by the George Washington National Masonic Memorial Association as Jubilee Sponsor and the recently formed George Washington Legacy Foundation as Platinum Sponsor.

"We formed the foundation to enlighten public awareness of George Washington and his legacy," said foundation president and Gold Sponsor Marion Moon. "We also provide grants to qualifying tax-exempt nonprofit organizations and governmental entities for the support of activities such as the parade."

Other sponsors include: Gold -- Duvall House; Silver -- Brothers Paving & Concrete; Simpson Development Corporation; Bronze -- Alexandria Washington Lodge No. 22; Friendship Veterans Fire

SEE WORLDWIDE, PAGE 8



The United States Army Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps performs during the parade.

Brian Hilton as General George Washington waves to the crowds during the Feb. 20 parade in Old Town.

PHOTOS BY
JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

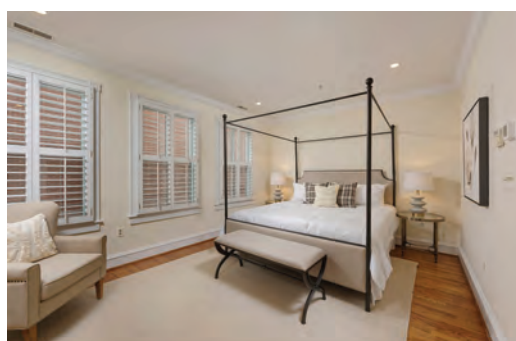


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NEWS



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Former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore addresses the crowd as the keynote speaker at the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Feb. 20.

A Lasting Legacy

Freemasons rededicate Memorial cornerstone.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Thousands of Freemasons from around the world gathered at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Feb. 20 for a rededication ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone 100 years ago and to celebrate the Memorial's next century of service.

Former Governor Jim Gilmore was the featured speaker at the rededication, which was attended by dignitaries, politicians and local Masons.

"It was a great day for the city and a great day for America," said Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Virginia Grand Historian McArthur Myers. "Masons from everywhere gathered together representing all of humanity."

The Memorial is a National Historic Landmark representing Freemasonry's tribute to George Washington.

The original celebration of the cornerstone was a national Masonic event. Over 10,000 Freemasons attended the Memorial's cornerstone laying in 1923. In 2023, Masons gathered to witness the rededication of the cornerstone following participation in the city's George Washington Birthday Parade, the oldest and largest in the nation.

The rededication ceremony was sponsored by the Grand Lodge, A.F. & A.M., of the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Conference of Grand Masters of North America, and the George Washington National Masonic Memorial.

"I am privileged and honored to have been able to be a part of this ceremony," said Myers, a lifelong resident of Alexandria who led the Pledge of Allegiance at the rededication. "It is inspiring to witness Masons coming together in tribute to George Washington, our nation's foremost Freemason."

www.gwmemorial.org



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

George Seghers, left, Executive Director of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, and Edgar Pepler, past president of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Association, stand next to the 100th anniversary cornerstone prior to the start of the Feb. 20 ceremony.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Grandmasters from around the world await the start of the Feb. 20 ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial. In front are Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Virginia officer William Barbette, center left, and Worshipful Grand Historian McArthur Myers.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Worshipful Grand Historian and Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Virginia representative McArthur Myers, left, leads the Pledge of Allegiance at the Rededication Ceremony of the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Feb. 20.

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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Dignitaries including Mayor Justin Wilson and former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore observe the ceremony marking the 100th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial Feb. 20.

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 1, 2023 ♦ 3



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

'Tis the season

Lexi Robinson and River Lauder of Girl Scout Troop 6620 sell Girl Scout cookies Feb. 11 at Bradlee Shopping Center. New for 2023 is Raspberry Rally, described as the sister cookie to Thin Mints. It is available exclusively online to help Girl Scouts learn e-commerce skills. Online sales for the new flavor begin Feb. 27. Visit www.GirlScouts.org to locate local sales or to order online.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Head of the class

Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association president James McClellan, right, presents the Rev. Ben Lynt Distinguished Community Service Award to John Porter at the organization's breakfast Feb. 20 at the Westin Alexandria Old Town Hotel. Porter, a retired long-time ACPS educator, was recognized for his significant volunteer efforts with nonprofit and social services organizations in Alexandria.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNews-papers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

ALDI STORE OPENS IN ALEXANDRIA

ALDI is welcoming customers to celebrate the opening of its newest location at 6218 N. Kings Hwy. in Alexandria on Thursday, March 2 at 9 a.m., continuing to deliver on its promise to provide unbeatable savings and award-winning products.

The store will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The newest ALDI store will offer fresh, organic produce delivered daily, an unmatched selection of cheese and wine, and food for every taste and lifestyle (gluten-free, plant-based, whatever you need) in addition to convenient access to curbside pickup and grocery delivery options.

The first 100 customers will receive a gift bag filled with a sampling of ALDI Fan Favorites products and a gift card as part of the ALDI Golden Ticket gift card giveaway program. Shoppers can also enter a

sweepstakes for a chance to win a \$500 ALDI gift card from March 2 through March 5.

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

Interested in becoming a foster parent? There is always a need for caring foster parents looking to open their homes to foster youth. Get in touch to learn more. Visit fcsvanow@gmail.com or www.FCSVA.org. Or call 703-817-9890.

LOOKING FOR SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play most Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna from May-July and September-October. For more information, visit the web site www.goldengirls.org.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the

ideal candidate. www.volunteeral-alexandria.org

ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership Program will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteeralexandria.org/ALIVE>

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the adminis-

tration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donaldrea@aol.com.

Arts and Crafts Festival. Volunteers are needed on June 10 to help with the event including: greet and check-in vendors, children's area, clean up and tear down and beer tent. Shifts are available between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Visit www.volunteeral-alexandria.org/ for more.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

NEWS BRIEFS

Workshop and Hiring Opportunities

The City's Department of Human Resources will host a Career Development Workshop and Hiring Fair to provide opportunities for job seekers, particularly those who were recently affected by the mass tech industry layoffs around the region and nationally. City Employees exploring other opportunities within the City are also encouraged to attend.

CAREER WORKSHOP

Monday, Feb. 27, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St.

This program will provide job seekers with coaching on interviewing skills, resume reviewing and critiquing and strategies for creating your next opportunity after a layoff.

JOB HIRING FAIR

Tuesday, Feb. 28, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St.

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NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 4

After job seekers are prepared, the City will host a hiring fair featuring representatives from various City departments and an opportunity to apply for vacancies in City government.

Sudden Death Ruled a Homicide

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a sudden death that occurred on Friday, Feb. 17, 2023, in the unit block of East Reed Avenue.

At approximately 2:50 PM, APD responded to the area for a sudden death.

The Medical Examiner has ruled this sudden death incident as a gun-related homicide.

On February 17, 2023, the Alexandria Police Department arrested Junior Espinal Calix, 19 years of age, a City of Alexandria resident, in connection with this incident. Espinal Calix was arrested and charged with involuntary manslaughter.

The victim was 21-year-old Nabel Chávez.

The investigation is ongoing, the Alexandria Police Department is asking that any witnesses with information regarding this incident to please contact Detective Christine Escobar by phone at 703-746-6819, email: Christine.Escobar@Alexandriava.gov or call our non-emergency number at 703.746.4444.

Join the 2023 Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade

Saturday, March 4, 2023 at 12:30 pm, 300 King St, Alexandria, VA

Held annually on the first Saturday in March, the Parade has grown to be the largest one-day event in Old Town Alexandria. Featuring pipe bands, Irish dance schools, community groups, and a host of other musicians and performers. For over 40 years, the Ballyshaners have been pleased to provide Alexandrians with the finest Irish celebrations. Join in March 4th, 2023, as the parade steps out once again.

Applications for the 2023 Parade are NOW OPEN! The Ballyshaners are pleased to offer this tribute to Irish culture and heritage for over 40 years in Old Town. Please click the link below to register your organization's unit for the Parade.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-ballyshaners-st-patricks-day-parade-in-old-town-alexandria-registration-476787092027?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>

These parades typically cost tens of thousands of dollars and require months of careful planning, and the past two years have been difficult.

Want to donate to preserve Old Town's St. Patrick's Day Parade? Cash donations can be made at our donate page or contact us at ballyshaners@yahoo.com

Slow Zone for Dockless Scooters and E-bikes

City of Alexandria is launching a slow zone for dockless scooters and e-bikes and would like the public's feedback on this pilot program. <https://www.research.net/r/AlexandriaVA-SlowZone>

Beginning Feb. 21 and running through May 21, the City will institute a slow zone that limits the speed of dockless scooters and e-bikes used in the Robinson Landing neighborhood of Old Town. Slow zones are designated areas with top speeds that are below the established City limit of 15 mph; they are often used to improve street and sidewalk safety along heavily trafficked corridors.

Evaluating the use of dockless slow zones to address conflicts between riders and pedestrians in high-activity areas was one of the recommendations in the 2019 evaluation report for Alexandria's Dockless Mobility program.

The pilot slow zone will have an 8 mile-per-hour speed limit on neighborhood streets, Point Lumley Park, and the nearby pedestrian walkway and promenade. GPS technology will be used to enforce the speed limits.

Alexandria residents, businesses, and visitors are encouraged to provide feedback through Sunday, May 21, the final day of the pilot. City staff will review the responses and consider them in determining the next steps for the Robinson Landing slow zones and the suitability of slow zones in other locations in Alexandria.

To learn more about slow zones and the City's Dockless Mobility program, visit alexandriava.gov/DocklessMobility.

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Dr. Whyte's New Book

Released February 14, 2023

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK

JOHN WHYTE, MD

Chief Medical Officer of WebMD

Heart disease is the leading cause of death among Americans. You have the power to reduce your risk, and WebMD's Dr. John Whyte, MD will show you just how easy it is to do it.

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Still On the To Do List: Budget, Judges, Finish 1,800 Bills

BY SEN. ADAM P. EBBIN

The clock is ticking as the General Assembly moves rapidly towards adjournment. Legislators and staff are putting in long hours in committee and on the floor to complete business by “Sine Die,” the final adjournment of the 2023 legislative session. With only 46 days to complete our business, there is little time remaining to find agreement on a budget, nominate and approve judges, and review the remainder of the over 1,800 pieces of legislation introduced this year. With both bodies having reported an amended budget, a small group of senior legislators, known as budget conferees, from the Senate and House money committees are hard at work on producing a compromise budget that both bodies are comfortable signing off on and sending to the Governor. It may seem improbable to produce such a document when the two proposals have a \$1 billion gap in proposed spending. At a micro level, the proposals are also in disagreement on close to 100 substantive policy decisions and smaller alterations to state agency and program funding. Despite these wide differences, compromise, like the late night coffee the conferees are consuming, is

already brewing.

Before we adjourn on Saturday February 25th, the General Assembly must also take up the nomination and appointment of a number of judges from across the Commonwealth. The process by which Virginia selects its judges – from general district to the Supreme Court is fairly unique. Virginia is one of only two states where the legislature elects judges. The Governor can only weigh in on the process during the interim between sessions, when he can make short term appointments to unfilled seats, pending the approval of the legislature. This year we are tasked to fill seats in all five levels of Virginia’s courts, and, fairly unusually, to appoint two judges to the State Corporation Commission (SCC). The SCC is the independent regulatory authority that oversees utilities, insurance, and businesses in Virginia. There are currently two vacancies on the three member panel, one of which has been empty for a full year after House Republicans removed an exceptionally qualified judge from the commission for purely partisan reasons. Leaving the Commission shorthanded for this long reduces



Ebbin

consumers’ safeguards against unfair business practices. To help alleviate these concerns, Del. Kathy Byron (R-Bedford) and Sen. Scott Surovell (D-Fairfax) have introduced legislation to streamline the process of appointing these important judges.

The extended debate this session about the role of the SCC in reviewing energy rates and the enactment of clean energy underscores how necessary it is that we take action and fill these positions as soon as possible.

The last major agenda item is to finish business on all remaining bills. A portion of the still outstanding legislation must have passed both chambers, but with different amendments offered by each body which can sometimes substantially change the underlying policy. To rectify these differences, these bills will be placed in committees of conferences – small groups of legislators who are tasked with ironing out the differences outside of the normal chamber and committee process.

So far, it appears nine of my bills are poised to pass the House. My SB 1091, which would allow condominium owners to apply for joint

grants to complete flood mitigation projects, has now passed both chambers and is heading to the Governor’s desk for his signature. SB1087 which establishes the nation’s strongest privacy protections for your genetic data collected by ancestry.com and 23andme has reported favorably out of its House Committee, and will soon be voted on by the whole body. I was also glad to pass legislation providing living organ donors 60 days of unpaid leave to recover from this life saving procedure, and institute studies to address the rampant and frustrating vehicle noise we have seen across our region, as well as review how to license and regulate vaporized nicotine stores.

However, I was disappointed that my two bills designed to help promote safety and reduce gun violence were defeated in the House of Delegates and that my SJ 242, which was constitutional to repeal Virginia’s prohibition on same-sex marriage, was defeated in subcommittee in the House of Delegates.

While I am disheartened that those important pieces of legislation did not pass, I will continue to fight in the future to ensure Virginia has a constitution that reflects its values.

It remains to be a great honor to serve the 30th district.

General Assembly Is Finalizing Bills

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL (D-36)

Now that the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates have completed work on all bills from each chamber, each chamber has begun work on bills from the other chamber. Some of the more difficult bills met their fate last week.

It appears that both houses will approve around 20 of my bills which I will discuss in a future column. This column focuses on several of my bills that the House of Delegates rejected.

Protecting Choice

In the aftermath of last year’s Dobbs decision, we must do everything we can to protect Virginia women and healthcare providers from prosecution for exercising their reproductive healthcare rights. Virginia is likely to become a sanctuary for women seeking reproductive healthcare

due to our geographic position and existing laws. My legislation would prohibit the extradition of Virginia medical professionals who provide reproductive healthcare to other states. It failed on a party-line vote.

I also sought to allow Virginia women to sue any company that sells or provides access to their personal reproductive healthcare information such as their menstrual data or location history derived from phone use that can be used to determine if they have visited a reproductive healthcare clinic. None is covered by state or federal healthcare privacy laws. My bill would have effectively ended the dissemination of this information for monetization or use in prosecution. The Senate approved my bill on a bipartisan vote, but a House committee killed it on a party-



Sen. Scott Surovell

ty-line vote.

The same House committee also rejected my legislation to clarify Virginia’s emergency protection order or “red flag law.” Red flag laws permit a court to order the temporary removal of firearms from people that may be a danger to

others or themselves. These laws have reduced suicide by 9-14% in adopting states, but these laws do nothing if they are not used. About 60 of Virginia’s 140 jurisdictions saw little to no use of the law. After the Senate approved my legislation on a bipartisan vote, a House committee defeated it.

In 2020, former Governor Ralph Northam’s comptroller advised state agencies to redact the names of all state employees using their official employment credit cards for paying for things like hotels and restaurants. I crafted a bill with the

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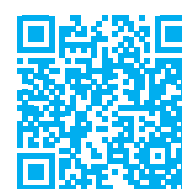
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GEORGE WASHINGTON BIRTHDAY

Worldwide Participation Highlights GW Parade

FROM PAGE 1

Engine Association; Hotel Indigo Old Town; Jennifer Warren and Michelle Newman; MediaTek USA; Old Dominion Boat Club; Supporting -- Bishop Ireton High School; Burke & Herbert Bank; Jeanne Jacob and Gerry Frank; McLaughlin Ryder Investments; and Joan and John Renner.

"What an incredible day," said Michael Quigley of Alexandria-Washington Lodge 22. "It is a very special celebration for the city and especially for the Memorial."

"It was so delightful to see all of the different community groups and Masonic Lodges come together."

— Parade co-chair Sue Johnson



Ivan Mendoza of the Kena Shriners of Manassas.



William Ramsay Elementary School cheerleaders perform in front of the parade reviewing stand.



The First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line performs a firing demonstration during the Feb. 20 parade.



Veterans representing American Legion Post 24 in Alexandria march with military flags including the flag of the American Revolution and the headquarters flag of General George Washington.



Sons of the American Revolution.



Alexandria City Pipes and Drums Drum Major Joshua Cease and Pipe Major John Sprague await a signal to proceed in the parade.



Christian Martinez of the M.W. York Grand Lodge of Mexico.



VFW Post 609 Commander Jerry Krueger, left, and his wife Jessica near the end of the parade route at the Alexandria War Dead Memorial. The VFW is spearheading efforts to add plaques honoring those who died in World War II, Korea and Vietnam to the Memorial, which honors WWI soldiers.



Bayard Johnson and Laurel Wessman of the Kate Waller Barrett chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.



Grand Lodge of Connecticut members pose for a photo during a pause in the parade.



Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia.



Cadets from Fishburne Military School.



American Heritage Girls of Immanuel Bible Church.



Girl Scouts from across the region participated in the parade.



Trail Life USA Troop VA 1115.

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Members of the Alexandria chapter of the Knights of Columbus.



Members of Falun Dafa of DC perform during the Feb. 20 parade.

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 1, 2023 ♦ 9

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISSMAN/GAZETTE PACKET

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OPINION

Problem Gambling Awareness

Calls increased 56.7% in the past year in Virginia to 24/7 hotline for problem gambling, 1-888-532-3500.

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

The final week of the legislative session in Richmond is here, and the House and Senate are working hard to finish voting on legislation and the state budget to send to the Governor by Saturday. As I write this, six pieces of legislation that I filed this year have already passed both the House and Senate and are waiting for the Governor's consideration.

During this session, I spent much of my time working on various efforts related to problem gambling prevention and treatment. As the former Chair of the ABC & Gaming subcommittee as well as the Appropriations subcommittee on Transportation and Public Safety, I am highly attuned to the gaps that exist in public safety related to supporting Virginians with gambling addictions. To help raise awareness about this issue, I gave a point of personal privilege speech on the House Floor last week on problem gambling:

"As all of you know, just three years ago this body granted five cities across the Commonwealth the opportunity to petition voters to build casinos and so far, four cities have held successful referendums to do so.

Sports betting, online Lottery, historic horse racing machines, live horse races and charitable gaming have all expanded, and unregulated skill games, or "gray machines" have spread to convenience stores, truck stops, and restaurants all over the Commonwealth. They are in all of your districts.

Gaming expansion is a double-edged sword. It has brought jobs, tourism, and tax revenue to the Commonwealth, as well as raised funds for charities that help millions of Virginians. But, it would be remiss of this body to forget that with gaming expansion, we have also opened the door to an increase in gambling addiction.

Problem gambling affects approximately 2-3% of US adults, or 4-6 million people. It impacts Americans of all ages, ethnicities, races, and genders. Differing

from a substance abuse disorder, gambling addiction is an impulse-control disorder in which sufferers cannot control the impulse to gamble despite the fact that it is causing problems in their lives and the lives of their loved ones.

If left untreated, gambling addiction can become very serious and can impact every aspect of an individual's life, including family, work, and finances. Sadly, those who have a gambling addiction are twice as likely to die by suicide compared to other common addictions.

Fortunately, problem gambling is treatable, and treatment is effective in minimizing harm to both individuals and society. The Virginia Council on Problem Gambling is doing excellent work on responsible gambling education, as well as providing access to support and treatment of gambling addiction to help Virginians get back on their

feet. This includes a 24/7 hotline that has seen an increase in calls of 56.7% in the past year. The helpline number is 1-888-532-3500.

As we transition into a gaming-friendly Commonwealth, this body has a duty to prepare for and address the negative public health aspects of this too.

This upcoming March marks the 20th year of National Problem Gambling Awareness Month. In fact, this body still has the opportunity to vote on a measure coming over from the Senate, SJ 232, that would codify this designation in Virginia as a permanent education and destigmatization tool for public health.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker."

I am happy to report that SJ 232, which is identical to my HJ 518, has since passed the House unanimously. Problem Gambling Awareness Month will now be recognized in the Commonwealth every March. In addition, my bill HB 1465, which creates the Problem Gambling Treatment and Support Advisory Committee, has passed the Senate unanimously and is headed to the Governor's desk. This bipartisan effort will enable collaboration and long-term relationship building among prevention and treatment providers and operators of legal gaming in the Commonwealth in efforts to combat problem gambling.

If you or somebody you know is struggling with gambling addiction, please visit www.vcpvg.net to chat online, or call or text this confidential and toll-free 24/7 helpline: 1-888-532-3500.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

gmail.com
ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities

in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair

men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassionate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

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MARCH 10, 2023 - 7:30 P.M.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church

MARCH 12, 2023 - 3:00 P.M.
Westminster Presbyterian Church

J.S. Bach: Brandenburg Concerto No. 1, BWV 1046, F major

Jonathan Kolm: TBA (World premiere commission)
— sponsored by Virginia American Water

G.F. Handel: Excerpts from *Water Music Suite No. 1*

Adult: \$45 Student: \$15 Youth: \$5
(703) 548-0885 alexsym.org

NEWS

Alexandria Symphony Presents Brandenburg and Blue

Water Inspired Music by Bach, Handel and a world premiere.

The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra (ASO) will present a program entitled Brandenburg and Blue on Friday, March 10, 2023, 7:30 p.m., at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Sunday, March 12, 2023, 3 p.m., at Westminster Presbyterian Church. Under the direction of Music Director James Ross, members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra will present music by Bach, Handel and a world premiere by Jonathan Kolm.

Since 2019, ASO has presented one or two of Bach's Brandenburg suites in its annual chamber concert. This year's edition, Brandenburg and Blue, weaves the element of water intertwined with the first concerto. The program includes Brandenburg Concerto No. 1 with principals from the orchestra as soloists. The concerto features hunting horns and several period instruments, including a harpsichord. Bach composed the six concertos as a pseudo-job application as a demonstration of his finest work, and they are still regarded as some of the foremost orchestral compositions from the Baroque era.

The program features an excerpt from Handel's Water Music Suite No. 1. Inspired by water, King George requested a series of pieces that could be performed on the river. The orchestra and attendees boarded barges, listening to the concert while floating downstream.

"Water has been the literal lifeblood of Alexandria and its commerce since at least the 1700s, so a piece that was played on a barge in the Thames on a warm summer night in 1717 mixes compellingly

with a new music that traces the path of today's water through our city from rain, through clogs and solvency, purification, and finally renewal," says Ross. "With the inclusion of horns and oboes in all pieces, this is a program that celebrates the wide openness of water and sound in ringing conversation."

The program also introduces the world premiere of The Ways of Water, commissioned by the ASO, sponsored by Virginia American Water, and composed by Alexandria-based composer Jonathan Kolm. The music of Jonathan Kolm has been performed across the United States and abroad, winning prizes and awards including the American Prize and the Swan Prize in Music Composition. In addition to his work as a composer and pianist, he teaches composition, piano and music theory at Northern Virginia Community College where he serves as Associate Professor and advocates for various environmental and social causes in the nation's capital.

"The Ways of Water is a musical reflection and meditation on how water affects us individually and collectively," says Mr. Kolm. "Each of the five movements uses the water theme in different ways to give the listener a chance to reflect on what how we are all made of water, how we use it in our daily lives, and how it sustains the environments and communities we live in and depend on."

All seats are general admission. Adult tickets \$45, student \$15, youth \$5 (18 and under). To order tickets and for more information, visit www.alexsym.org or call (703) 548-0885

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Nothing Like President's Day at Mount Vernon

Crowds came out to celebrate the occasion.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

The tri-corner hats and fancy outfits were out for this year's President's Day event at the Mount Vernon plantation on the Potomac River. The day started with a birthday card drawing event and a wreath laying at George Washington's tomb. This was followed by a Tactical demonstration by the Commander-in-Chief's Guard, and a musical demonstration by The Old Guard Fife & Drum Corps. The rest of the day featured a visit to the George Washington Presidential Library, a meet and greet with their George Washington historical interpreter, food trucks and baked goods at the Half Crown Bakehouse.

PHOTOS BY
MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE



Clear skies and moderate temperatures for the President's Day ceremony at Mount Vernon.



There were those in the authentic colonial uniforms and today's color guard.



The President's Day bouquet at Mount Vernon.

CALENDAR



NOVA Plein Air Art Exhibit. At River Farm, 7931 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. Nova Plein Air Artists (NPPA) will be presenting “Celebrations of the Land, Inspired by River Farm,” an art exhibit of over 50 paintings inspired by nature. Reception will be held from 1 – 3 p.m. on March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Reception free and open to the public.

NOW THRU FEB. 26

Heartfelt Art Exhibition. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists’ Association’s (TFAA) Van Landingham Gallery presents Heartfelt, a juried membership show featuring artworks that embody emotions such as love, empathy, and endearment. The following artists are participating: Diana Papazian, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Veronica Barker-Barzel, Laura Fall, Hernan Murno, Abol Bahadori, Karine Sapondjian, Pauline Siple, and Jon Kandel. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, original paintings, multimedia works, photography, ceramics, and sculpture. Additionally, the gallery offers small gifts, art cards, block-printed totes and tee shirts, and jewelry and unframed works by Jennifer Brewer Stone, Rebecca Mcneely, and Tara Barr.

NOW THRU MARCH 15

“Mount Vernon” At Nepenthe Gallery. Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Nepenthe Gallery, in partnership with Mount Vernon estate and Woodlawn mansion, presents a special “Mount Vernon” exhibit from Feb. 1 through March 15. This exhibit has been organized in conjunction with Mount Vernon’s national birthday celebration of George Washington and Woodlawn’s 60th Annual Needlepoint Show. Woodlawn was once part of George Washington’s original extensive Mount Vernon estate.

This “Mount Vernon” exhibit will showcase an important work by Thomas Sully – his 19th century “Athenaeum Portrait of George Washington.” Other original works by Pamela Patrick White, Bryant White, Gwen Bragg, Debbie Darte and Renée C. Gage will be



Don Francisco’s fine music added to the atmosphere at Nepenthe for the opening of the new exhibit on Mount Vernon. The exhibit will run through March 15 at Nepenthe, Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria.

included and for sale, as well as several original works by Pamela and Bryant White that will be on loan by local collectors for display in the exhibit. There will also be giclée prints available for sale of important works from the Mount Vernon estate collection.

Nepenthe will host six Thursday night “ART + WINE + CHEESE” events related to this exhibit:

February 23rd: Interesting facts about Mt. Vernon and Whiskey Tasting. Steve Bashore, Distiller, Miller and Historian, will lead guests through a Whiskey Tasting and describe the process that still takes place today at Mt. Vernon. Jim Woods, historical interpreter at Mount Vernon, will share stories and information about George Washington’s home and property.

March 2nd: Scenes from Mount Ver-

non. Alexandria based watercolorist and juried artist, Gwendolyn (“Gwen”) Bragg, is an art instructor at both the Art League School in Alexandria and the Workhouse Art Center in Lorton. Gwen will display and discuss many of her watercolor paintings from Mount Vernon.

March 9th: Nelly’s Needlers Needlework Group. Established in 1975 to help preserve Woodlawn, the group was named after Martha Washington’s granddaughter, Eleanor (“Nelly”) Parke Custis, who was raised at Mount Vernon, later lived at Woodlawn, and learned her needlework skills from her cherished grandmother. Nelly’s Needlers will be at Nepenthe Gallery to display works from their 60th Annual Needlepoint Show

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 15

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Obituary

Obituary

Susanne Hylen

January 15, 1973 - February 1, 2023



Susanne Hylen passed away on February 1, 2023 after battling Cancer.

She is survived by her two beloved sons Jonas and Johannes Miranda, her life partner John Miranda, mother Christina Lindow, father Ingemar Hylen, sister Charlotte Hylen, nephews Marcus and Axel Hylen and her great niece Molly Hylen.

Susanne was a long time resident of Alexandria and the owner of Hylen Spa in Old Town.

Obituary

Obituary



James Robert (Bob) St. Clair, 97, of Alexandria, Virginia passed away gently on January 6th 2023, at the Fairfax Senior Living Community, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Bob was born February 25, 1925 in Washington D.C. He was the son of Joseph Frederick St. Clair and Estella Mae Rollins St. Clair. Bob’s father grew up on a farm in Southern Maryland and moved to Washington D.C. for work. As a child growing up during the depression, Bob and his brother William spent summers on the Tippet family farm which was situated on a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay in Southern Maryland. It was during these early years that he developed a love of life around the water, and appreciation of hard work, which later served him well in his business career. As a boy growing up in D.C. and attending public school, Bob developed a passion for music. His neighborhood near the Navy Yard was heavily populated by members of the military bands and he benefitted greatly by learning from some of the musicians of his era. As a high school student, he was playing trumpet at a professional level, and his musical talent created the opportunity for him to play with notables of the Big Band era including Lawrence Welk, Anna Rae Hutton, and Artie Shaw. He was a member of Barney Breiskin’s band at the Shoreham Hotel and a member of the first Redskin Band.

After he graduated from Eastern High School, Bob enlisted in the Navy and was assigned to Franklin & Marshall College in the Naval Air Core program where he studied until his outfit was deployed. While in the service he played with the Navy School of Music and later during World War II served on the US aircraft carrier Tarawa.

Bob met and fell in love with Ruth Riley Rice, of New Market, Virginia, while she was working in Washington. They married on April 10, 1948. Like many young families after the war, they settled in the new, growing suburban area of Northern Virginia. For 61 years they enjoyed life and raised their two children on Morningside Road in the Wellington Heights community.

Bob was honorably discharged from the Navy after the war and he started his business career with Edgar R. Morris Co. and later worked with Westinghouse, rising to regional sales manager. St. Clair Appliance Distributors opened in March of 1966 and Bob and Ruth worked successfully together to grow the business which later welcomed other family members. Ruth St. Clair predeceased her husband in 2009. Bob will be remembered for his life together with his wife Ruth. Inseparable, they built a second home in Leonardtown, Maryland, where they spent most weekends around the water. The family has over the years spent as much time together as possible in St. Mary’s County enjoying the lower Potomac River areas where the entire family grew to love the home of his ancestors.

Bob is survived by his daughter Sharon Leigh St. Clair Lugar, and her husband Larry Lugar of Charlottesville, Virginia; son Robert Franklin St. Clair and his wife Kelly (Myatt) St. Clair of Alexandria, Virginia; his three grandchildren: Kevin Lugar and his wife Susan, Zack St. Clair and his wife Danielle, and Cory St. Clair. He also had four great-grandchildren: Brandon Lugar, Natalie Lugar, Sutton St. Clair, and Baker St. Clair.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, or to a charity of your choice. Services will be private.

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The Virginia Department of Veterans Services (DVS) is seeking applications to establish grant awards to agencies providing comprehensive suicide prevention and opioid addiction programs for Military Service Members, Veterans, and their families throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

To learn more about this grant program, scan the QR code below or go to bit.ly/dvssosrfa2 to access the Request for Application (RFA).

Don't delay. Applications for grants are due February 28, 2023.

Questions? Contact Vivian.Doobay@dvs.virginia.gov or 804.482.8505

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Employment

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CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VA CAREER WORKSHOP & HIRING FAIR

The City of Alexandria, VA will host a **Career Development Workshop and Hiring Fair** to provide opportunities for job seekers, particularly those who were recently affected by the mass tech industry layoffs around the region and nationally. City Employees exploring other opportunities within the City are also encouraged to attend.

CAREER WORKSHOP

Monday, February 27 · 9 a.m.-12 p.m. · Nannie J Lee Center
1108 Jefferson St, Alexandria, VA

This program will provide job seekers with coaching on interviewing skills, resume review and critiquing and strategies for creating your next opportunity after a layoff.

JOB HIRING FAIR

Tuesday, February 28 · 10 a.m.-2 p.m. · Nannie J Lee Center
1108 Jefferson St, Alexandria, VA

After job seekers are prepared, the City will host a hiring fair featuring representatives from various City departments and an opportunity to apply for vacancies in City government.

To register and learn more, visit alexandriava.gov/jobs

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ABC LICENSE

Katie Nguyen Wells trading as AR Workshop Alexandria, LLC, 1212 King Street, Alexandria VA. 22314 + 2927. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) for Marketplace license (Formerly Art Instruction Studio) license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Katie Nguyen Wells, NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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Celebrate students, camps, schools, enrichment programs, colleges and more in our **A-plus: Education, Learning, Fun** pages, the third week of every month.

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Let us know about an upcoming event

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 13

and discuss their organization and needle-pointing as an art form.

NOW THRU MARCH 19

Nicole Santiago Exhibition. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Poetry Workshop on Feb. 25 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Nicole Santiago's work consists of semi-autobiographical narrative paintings and drawings that depict scenes of love, loss, and duty, thinly veiled in the mundane debris of everyday life. While the impetus for Nicole's work is highly personal, she intends to construct something more universal that stretches beyond the limits of her own experiences, expanding into broader familiar theme.

NOW THRU APRIL 3

NOVA Plein Air Art Exhibit. At River Farm, 7931 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. Nova Plein Air Artists (NPPA) will be presenting "Celebrations of the Land, Inspired by River Farm," an art exhibit of over 50 paintings inspired by nature. Reception will be held from 1 – 3 p.m. on March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Reception free and open to the public.

OUR FACES IN FILM SERIES

All month long for Black History Month, Charles Beatley Central Library will show films featuring African American lead characters. Join for great films and snacks. At the Charles E. Beatley, Jr., Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria.

February 24, 2023, from 2 to 4:30 p.m.: "Harriet"
Admission: Free. Call 703-746-1702. Visit alexlibraryva.org

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 22

Ash Wednesday Service. 12-1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. At St. John's Lutheran Church, 5952 Franconia Road, Alexandria. The 40 days of the Lenten season begin with special worship services. The services will include imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Visit the website: www.sjlc.com

THURSDAY/FEB. 23

Black History Cooking Demo. 5:30-7:30 p.m. At Charles E. Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. The creator and chef of Black Folk Food will prepare a handful of dishes, share a brief history and demonstrate what makes the cuisine so amazing.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

Garden Talk - Best Perennial Vines for Your Garden. 1:30-2:30 p.m. (Adults) Elevate the beauty of your garden, even your lamp post, with vines. Vines bring attractive foliage and fragrant flowers to eye level and beyond. Extension Master Gardener docents teach you how to select appropriate vines. \$12 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

General Assembly Is Finalizing Bills

FROM PAGE 6

Virginia's State Corporation Commission set a minimum bill amount to cover a share of costs of using the legacy or traditional system, but failed to fully consider the benefits of solar, such as climate change mitigation, better air quality, fewer service outages and grid upgrades. My second bill would have created a new program in Southwest and Southside Virginia. The House rejected both bills on party-line votes after the Senate passed them with large bipartisan majorities.

Finally, the COVID pandemic taught us how critical and exposed our healthcare and grocery store workers are in their jobs serving us every day. Recent polls show that

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SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Potomac River Cleanup at Jones Point Park. Join them and partner, the National Park Service, for a 9 a.m. cleanup at Jones Point Park in Alexandria. This is a bike- and car-accessible location. Come meet like-minded people and make a real difference for the Potomac River. Sign up at <https://potomac.org/>

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Intro to Tree and Shrub Pruning. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. (Adults) Did your hydrangea fail to bloom? Nervous about shaping your specimen tree? Green Spring Gardens staff will teach you about timing, tools and techniques for pruning common woody plants to keep them healthy and looking their best. \$19 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code 7CT.WGJH.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Narrative Poetry Workshop. 1:30-3:30 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Narrative Poetry Workshop Inspired by the Art of Nicole Santiago. Join City of Alexandria Poet Laureate, Zeina Azzam, as she leads a workshop for emerging and experienced poets inspired by the narrative art of Nicole Santiago. This workshop will draw inspiration from Santiago's paintings, which will be on view at the Athenaeum gallery.

SUNDAY/FEB. 26

Black History Live with Culture Queen. 2 to 3 p.m. At Charles E. Beatley, Jr., Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Experience original and interactive music, movement and storytelling to help your royal children celebrate the kings and queens of African American History. With a renewed sense of confidence, cultural awareness and curiosity for exploring the world around them, kids will leave proudly exclaiming, "I like the me I see!" Note that this program will be held indoors. Please arrive early as space is limited.

TUESDAY/FEB. 28 AND MARCH 1

Open House for Preschool. At 6601 Telegraph Road, Franconia. Kids Play Preschool at Franconia Rec Center is gearing up for the 2023-2024 school year! This licensed program for children ages 2 1/2 and to 4 years old is a fun-filled, safe and inclusive experience. Children learn socialization and school readiness skills through art, science, circle time, outdoor play, centers and music. Join them for an Open House to see a preschool class in action on Tuesday, Feb. 28 and Wednesday, March 1. Drop in any time from 9:30 a.m. to noon and meet preschool staff and other preschool parents. Registration for the 2023-2024 preschool session opens Monday, March 6, at 8 a.m. Registration is in-person only at the Franconia Rec Center. Spaces are filled on a first-come-first-serve basis. For more information, call 703-922-9841 or email Ldpsdirector@yahoo.com. You can also visit the Park Authority's Preschool webpage.

81% of Virginians support sick leave for all workers. Our front-line workers deserve it more than anyone. When frontline workers are regularly exposed to viruses and get sick, they are forced to choose between getting paid and getting better and many have no choice but to work sick. A modest sick leave benefit would help everyone. A House committee killed my bill on a party line vote.

This week, both chambers will act on some of the toughest bills filed in this session and legislators will conduct negotiations on final budget amendments before we adjourn this Saturday.

Please send me your feedback at scott@scotturovell.org

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We Need Your Help Again
 We are sincerely grateful and thankful to you for helping in 2021 to save one of America's oldest newspapers, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, publishing continuously since 1784

Alexandria Gazette Packet
 Publishing Since 1784

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THE CONNECTION Newspapers & Online
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POTOMAC ALMANAC
CENTREVIEW

Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers.

All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now ominous clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

Visit connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>

Connection Newspapers... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac
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Sides Can Sometimes Have Scary Effects



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

My mother-in-law, Peggy Morrison died from cancer in late Oct. 1986. Since Peggy was an extremely private person – and lived two hours away from us by car in Harrisburg, Pa., her daughter/ my wife Dina, and I were kept mostly out of her health loop. We knew a little when there was an awful lot more to know. Part of what I remember hearing/learning then was, as insidious as cancer is, sometimes it's the side effects of the treatment that contributes nearly as much to the patient's death.

At my initial Team Lourie meeting – where we all first met my oncologist in late Feb. 2009, I remember his reading the diagnostic reports from the multiple doctors who participated in my assessment: "Stage IV, lung cancer," "Stage IV lung cancer," "Stage IV lung cancer," and "Stage IV lung cancer" yet again from the pulmonologist, radiologist, thoracic surgeon and finally from the general surgeon who performed the biopsy (along with the pathologist's report), all in agreement. Dumb-founded, blind-sided (I'd been symptom free for nearly two months) and completely blown away by this finding/the consensus that I had non-small cell cancer, stage IV, I summoned up the poise to ask a scenario-type question grasping for the unreachable: definitive answers about my future. Remembering the circumstances surrounding my mother-in-law's death 23 years earlier, I asked if there was any truth to the theory that sometimes it's not the cancer but rather the side effects that hasten the patient's death? My oncologist gave me a qualified answer: "Yes. Sometimes."

With that backdrop – and with minimal cancer knowledge and/or experience from which to draw, I have been emotionally very sensitive (make that scared) when the side effects of my various chemotherapies and immunotherapies were discussed with my oncologist. And even though I've been on a roller coaster of emotions these last 14 years, it's been only recently when there's been significant side-effect anxiety and an inevitability almost.

It manifested in my most recent bloodwork. Two levels were outside the perimeters (provided in parentheses on the report) even for me: my liver and kidney functions. So much so that my oncologist directed me – and submitted the order, to get an MRI of these two vital organs. Two major organs which, if damaged/compromised, would be, as we say in New England "Katie bar the door," which means trouble. As you can probably imagine, this blip on my health radar brought back all the fear I'd been keeping "in the vault."

This is the scan I wrote about a few weeks ago when I had scheduled an MRI on a Fri. (first available) aware that the lateness in the week might mean I wouldn't get a result until Mon., given the ebb and flow on medical stuff. (It's not quite akin to the wheels of justice, but it's never quick enough). Invariably, I suffer accordingly. Amazingly, I was rewarded for my self-control. Later that same day – before the weekend, I received the radiologist's report in my email: "Stable MRI." No indication of anything.

Then this week, part two. My internal medicine doctor emailed me requesting that I get another blood test, specifically to measure my A1C (diabetes). He was concerned that my bilirubin level (liver) was trending higher going back three months and perhaps I had crossed over to the dark side (full on diabetes). I returned to the lab for the second visit this week per doctor's orders, and once again, I was rewarded for my compliance. The light was shining – and it showed these two levels had declined a minimum 20%-plus and my A1C number was still a bit high, as was feared, but not problematic, all things considered.

If you all heard a huge sigh of relief on Tues. afternoon, Feb. 7th, that was me. For the moment it appears as if I can continue my life-sustaining daily medication for the treatment of my stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer, going on two-plus years now. No side-effect complications. No change in my medication/protocol. No urgency. No or else. No nothing. Just plain old "Stable," which as I've said many times before, is an assessment with which I can live.

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

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Tracy Dunn 571.212.3658
www.tracybdunn.com



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Sally Z. Harper 703.517.2849
www.sallyzharper.com



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Crest of Alexandria | \$534,900

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Ann Duff 703.965.8700
www.AnnDuff.com



Old Town | \$199,900

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National Harbor | \$369,000

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