

SSA Celebrates 55 years Lawhorne, Greene honored for service to seniors.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The stars of Alexandria were out in full force March 25 as Senior Services of Alexandria celebrated its 55th anniversary of serving older adults with special recognition for retired Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Donita Greene, owner of Greene Funeral Home.

Held at the Westin Alexandria Hotel in Carlyle, Lawhorne and Greene were honored for their decades of service to seniors across the city. Also honored in memoriam were SSA supporters and community leaders The Reverend Dr. George Pera and The Honorable Kerry Donley.

"We had our largest crowd by far with more than 360 people attending the gala," said SSA executive director Mary Lee Anderson. "We also had more sponsorships and raised over \$170,000. That is more than we have ever raised before."

Donley served as SSA's board chair and was a dedicated Meals on Wheels volunteer. Pera served as president of SSA's board and was the Senior Pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church until his retirement in 1995.

Donley's widow Eva and their daughters were on hand to celebrate his contributions to SSA as well as Pera's son and daughter.

Lawhorne was joined by his wife Linda and two of their three daughters while Greene had several family members, friends and professional colleagues in attendance.



Senior Services of Alexandria honorees Donita Greene and Dana Lawhorne, center, are joined by SSA board chair G. Christopher Wright and SSA board member Josh Bagley of Goodwin Living at the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel.

"It was a great night," Anderson said. "We had great honorees with Donita and Dana and people just turned out. I think everyone was really happy to see one another in person, reconnect and just be together to support SSA."

Siblings Tracey Pera Sanders and David Pera attend the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel. Their father, George Pera, was posthumously honored for his service to seniors in the community.



Eva Donley, center, is joined by daughters Kristin, Kaitlin, Colleen and Kelsey at the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel. Former mayor and SSA board chair Kerry Donley was honored posthumously at the event.



Retired Sheriff Dana Lawhorne, second from right, is joined by Police Chief Don Hayes, retired Deputy Sheriff Tim Gleeson and Sheriff Sean Casey at the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel. Lawhorne was honored by SSA for his longstanding support of the organization.



Donita Greene, center, is congratulated by Jim Zalewski of Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home, and SSA supporter and past board member Lynnwood Campbell at the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel.



Staff members of Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home enjoy the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel.



Retired Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and his wife Linda, center, with daughters Christine and Mallory at the SSA 55th anniversary gala March 25 at the Westin Alexandria Hotel.



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Alexandria Offers Free Tax Clinic

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

It is a rainy Saturday, March 25, and amazingly slow according to Tom Reeder, even though 11 rooms are full of clients seeking free tax preparation assistance. Volunteers pop in and out of his room with questions about the tax returns. “It seems like all of the problems come to me.” He says today they have four students from Georgetown plus a number of volunteers from all over Northern Virginia who have been doing this for a number of years.

All of the volunteers have taken a class in person or online. Some are certified at a basic level and some advanced. “Some are really advanced.”

Reeder is the site coordinator for the Alexandria site. He has been volunteering for the free tax preparation services offered by the City of Alexandria in conjunction with expert volunteers from Community Tax Aid, Inc. for sixteen years. He says over this time he has seen things get a lot more complex. “The tax system is a major way that we deliver benefits to people — the EITC, the child tax credit, the Affordable Care Act, educational tax credit. It is very diverse. We have to evaluate which is best under certain circumstances.”

“The economy is the biggest complexifier,” he says. “There are people whose payers don’t withhold taxes. And there are a lot of people with self employed income which takes more paperwork to do the business deduction.” He explains, “People often don’t know they can deduct mileage and have no idea they needed to keep track of miles. We have to come up with some way.”

About half of the time is spent on people with simple tax returns and the other half is spent on fewer people but with more complex, time-consuming returns. For instance, he explains they had a mother in the lobby doing her return, but her son had educational experience that would help the mother’s return. The son was in the building being prepared by a different person but they needed to have the son and the mother sit down at the same time. “The multi-generational are the most complex we have to deal with — grandmother, mother, kid—who is claiming who and who is getting what benefits.”

Today Reeder is assisting Alexandria resident Sabrina Walker



Tom Reeder has been assisting Alexandria residents with free tax preparation for sixteen years.

who is seeking an injured spouse exemption. Reeder says, “We only have about one of these cases a year so we have to do a refresher.”

“I want to make sure they don’t penalize me for things my spouse is doing,” Walker explains. Walker says last year when she received her tax refund, she got it right away “but it wasn’t what it was supposed to be.” That’s when she learned she was held liable for

debts her husband had incurred and she could get an exception. She says, “This tax clinic has been a godsend.”

The people seeking assistance must bring the relevant documents with them including a social security or taxpayer ID card for each family member, a photo ID for the taxpayer (and spouse if filing jointly); W-2 forms and other income records, receipts or records



Sabrina Walker is seeking assistance with a spousal exemption to avoid being penalized for her husband’s debts.

for expenses such as childcare and education and if possible a copy of last year’s return. Other documentation may be required.

Reeder says about ten percent of the people seeking help don’t have the documentation they need. He says sometimes the volunteers can figure out how to help them and other times they have to turn them away. But he says people seeking assistance can call Community Tax Aid information ahead at 202-830-1480 (English) or 202-869-2999 (Spanish) to check what will be needed or for other questions.

The free tax preparation is offered at the Department of Community and Human Services new Del Pepper Building at 4850 Mark Center Drive. Reeder says this year they aren’t requiring appointments because appointments don’t allow them to do as many returns. “Some people don’t take the allocated ap-

pointment time and some don’t show up for appointments so it’s more efficient to have walk-ins.” On average it takes about 30 minutes to prepare the return and 15 minutes to review.

The tax clinic began in February and will continue “until April 19 or probably a little bit longer for people who forgot. Some people wake up and realize they haven’t filed taxes for 2-3 years.” He says most of them are due a refund, and there is no penalty for filing late since it is based on what you owe. Taxpayers are eligible for the tax assistance if their income is below \$59,000 for individuals and families. The tax assistance is offered on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. - noon. The location is a five minute walk from the Mark Center Transit Station and is served by DASH transit where all rides are free.



Tom Reeder assists Sabrina Walker for the second year with preparation of her tax return. She declares the tax clinic a godsend.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE

OBITUARY

Mollie Abraham

Community trailblazer dies at 96.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Mollie Abraham, a trailblazer for women's rights and founding member of the Alexandria chapter of the National Organization for Women, died March 25 at her Alexandria home. She was 96.

Throughout her more than 70 years as a resident of the city, Abraham fought for equality for women, minorities and under-represented groups, encouraging individuals to effect change by becoming involved in the political process.

Mollie Bass Abraham was born June 2, 1926, in Baltimore, the eldest of four children born to Philip and Mary Bass. She moved to Alexandria in 1949 shortly after her wedding to Meyer H. Abraham, who she had met on a blind date.

Together the couple worked in the White Star Market, his family business on King Street. Soon afterwards, they took over and made a success of Tom's Garden, (aka The Sportsman's Grill), a restaurant on lower King Street. Several family enterprises followed, one of which was the Vienna Inn, which the Abraham's owned and operated from 1960 to 2000.

But it was Abraham's passion for civic involvement that had a substantive impact across the city. Not long after her arrival in Alexandria, Abraham served as a chaperone for B'nai B'rith youth at her synagogue, Agudas Achim Congregation, and started the Valley Drive preschool at Agudas Achim. She served as president of the Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association and served two terms as president of the Agudas Achim Sisterhood.

She also became active with the PTA, especially as an advocate for the integration of the Alexandria City Public Schools – "whatever it took," she said when named as a Living Legend of Alexandria in 2011. "I always spoke out for anything that benefited women and minorities of any sort, whether of race, gender or religion."

Abraham became actively involved in politics and was frequently on the frontlines on issues ranging from racial segregation to the equal rights amendment. She served as the Virginia state coordinator for NOW from 1976-77 and was chair of the Commission for Women for two terms, advocating for equal pay and retirement benefits for part-time city employees.

Abraham represented the Women's Commission on the Human Rights Commission and served on the Alexandria Youth Policy Commission. Under her leadership, the Commission supported the efforts of the Commission on Aging for inclusion in the City's Affirmative Action Plan and Utilization Analyses

As a cancer survivor, Abraham raised awareness of the increased risk of breast cancer for older women and the importance



PHOTO BY NINA TISARA/LIVING LEGENDS

Mollie Abraham, a Living Legend of Alexandria, died March 25 at the age of 96.

to survival of early detection. She served on the City Manager's Breast Cancer Awareness Committee, which initiated the annual Walk to Fight Breast Cancer in 1994 to raise funds for mammograms for uninsured and under-insured women.

In 2001, Abraham received the Margue-

"I always spoke out for anything that benefited women and minorities of any sort, whether of race, gender or religion."

— Civic activist Mollie Abraham



Mollie Abraham as a parade Grand Marshal.

rite Payez Leadership Award, the highest honor of the Commission for Women's Salute to Women Awards, for her life-long dedication to advocating for women. In 2010, Abraham and her granddaughter, Mary Reid, were among those honored by Senior Services of Alexandria in that year's

"Generation to Generation" gala.

Abraham is survived by her children, Lynn Abram (the late Donald J. Abram) and Mark (Laura) Abraham of Alexandria, and Philip Abraham of New Britain, Conn.; grandchildren, Mary Reid (Alexandria), David Abraham (Tobi, Ashburn), Madeline Bates (Kyle, Arlington), Rachel Roudik (Robert, Alexandria), Thomas Abraham (Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.), Jonathan Abraham (Brooklyn, N.Y.), and Nathan Abraham (Japan); and her great-grandchildren, Ryan and Turner Reid (Alexandria), James and Sara Abraham (Ashburn), and Mollie and Brooks Roudik (Alexandria). She was predeceased by her husband, Meyer Abraham, in 1999.

A funeral service was held March 29 at Agudas Achim Congregation followed by interment at Agudas Achim Cemetery. The family will sit Shiva on Thursday, March 30, Sunday April 2, and Monday, April 3 with evening Minyan.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in her memory to Agudas Achim Congregation, Feminist Majority Foundation or a cause of choice.

When gathered with four generations of her family on Mother's Day in 2021, Abraham said, "There's nothing like seeing the youth becoming the people they are today."



Mollie and Meyer Abraham in an undated photo.



Mollie Abraham during a trip to Israel as a volunteer for the Israeli army.



Mollie Abraham in an undated family photo.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Mollie Abraham, seated at right, with four generations of women in her family. Rachel Roudik (in back) and baby Brooks, and Lynn Abram in front holding daughter Mollie on Mother's Day 2021.

Arlington and Alexandria Bring Home the 4-H Ribbons

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
THE GAZETTE

If you grew up in the Midwest like I did, 4-H would be about the best strawberry jam and the handsomest looking hog at the state fair. But Deborah Madden, Associate Extension Agent for Arlington, says, "The program really reflects what area you live in." Locally the kids are surrounded by defense and the government. "We don't have an agriculture program here." She explains that in Fairfax they still do a lot of animal science and horses.

But she says that when they did a survey of 4-H summer camp participants the youth said they wanted to learn about agriculture in Virginia which is the number one industry in the state. So they are going to bring the Virginia State University mobile agriculture van to summer camp this year where the campers will be able to walk in and learn about agriculture in Virginia.

Sharon Toth, 4-H Youth Extension Agent for Alexandria says the 5-day overnight summer camp at Front Royal is the biggest event they do. There will be 200 youth from the northern Virginia area participating in canoeing, yoga, archery, high ropes and this year performing arts. It will be technology free and will concentrate on leadership, teamwork and self motivation.

Madden says the 4-H core values of learning self-reliance, to be a good citizen and life skills have always been the same over time; it's just that the programs are designed to fit the environment. For instance, in Arlington they have programs in recreation centers and schools that focus on things like urban gardening, culinary education and STEM. She adds they are rebuilding programs on entomology and embryology where they will hatch chickens from eggs.

Barcroft Elementary has an after school club focusing on water and air quality. She says they also have a military club at Henderson Hall that concentrates on STEM. This club has also included creative writing, aviation and cooking. "The youth director decides."

Madden says, "Currently I am still working with Williamsburg Middle School on Teen Cuisine, a six-week program offered during extended day. It looks at nutrition." She recalls the chicken bite salsa. "We're also looking at sugary snacks, good and bad fat. Next they will head into embryology and then a gardening program."

"We plan to have a full 4-H Club at Drew Elementary in two months, then Carlyn Springs library in the fall with drop in activities for teens.

"I'd like to test the waters on a teen club. We're missing out on the biggest opportunity in this age group."

In Alexandria Toth says they are working in recreation centers and schools to rebuild programs. Currently there are two clubs, one focusing on wellness and adventure at John Marshall Library and the other focusing on nature and animals at Billy Ford Nature Center. "All it takes to set up a 4-H club is an adult mentor to serve as a leader and positive role model and with a topic the youth have an interest in. The



Arlington blue ribbon winners (from left): Landon Gould, Meridian Nilles, Annabelle Cunningham, Deborah Madden (Arlington County 4-H Agent), Samien Chowdhury.



Alexandria 4-H outing in October 2022 to team build with youth and leaders and support Virginia farmers.

programs are youth-driven to instill leadership. And when kids are busy, they are less likely to engage with drugs."

She remembers she was in a traditional 4-H program in New Jersey. It had the same goals, same focus on youth leadership. 4-H is designed to fit its environment.

Toth says she would really like to start a dog training club — how to take care of your animal, the different breeds. "I think it would really do well in Alexandria. They really love their dogs."


She adds that Gabriella Coussens Douglas MacArthur Elementary School in (4th grade) Alexandria recently won a blue ribbon for her project on entomology at the 4-H Fairfax County Contest Day. It focuses on the importance of

insects and why they are important to the ecosystem.

In Arlington blue ribbon winners included: Landon Gould (10), Taylor Elementary—1st place Presentations; 1st place, Extemporaneous Speaking; 2nd place, Share-the-fun. Meridian Nilles (9), Oakridge Elementary—1st place, Table Setting; 1st place, Extemporaneous Speaking. Annabelle Cunningham (12), Gunston Middle School, 1st place Table Setting. Samien Chowdhury (11), Barcroft Elementary—1st place, Presentations; 1st place Extemporaneous Speech.

These winners will advance to the Northeast District Contest in Spotsylvania, Va. on April 15, 2023. Toth says 4-H programs are open to kids age 5-19.

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

IDES OF BARK

Ides of Bark Lets the Dogs Out

Don't say it's
'the cat's meow'
of dog events

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE GAZETTE

In what's become a dogs' rite of spring, held most years since 2015, Supervisor Dan Storck's Ides of Bark presents an opportunity to enjoy the arrival of the milder season with the company of your family pup at an event billed as "the ultimate event for you and your four-footed friend."

Supervisor Storck says, "Spring is about new life, connection, and new opportunities. Key for all of that is meeting and connecting with each other. Dogs are one of the best ways we do that." Plenty of pups were on hand to facilitate those community interactions inevitable when dog owners meet.

Held at Grist Mill Park on Mount Vernon Highway, the Ides of Bark, this year on March 26, had music, vendors, pet oriented demonstrations, free admission, and plenty of treat sampling. Ides provides the chance to interact with vendors and shop their pet themed wares and services, often while your pup is sampling a courtesy dog treat or two.

One of the treat bakeries attending with sample wares was Pawfectly Delicious Dog Treats, a non-profit organization in Alexandria, founded in 2017. The bakery employs people with developmental and physical disabilities and takes pride in providing meaningful work while celebrating each person's gifts, talents and abilities. Their jobs provide work that connects them with the community and provide dogdom with more delicious treat options. Their products can be found online at www.pawfectlydelicious.org.

The event was not an opportunity for all dogs attending to relax, play, and eat treats. Some were there on the job. Ggideon, a three year old Belgian Malinois, a member of the Army's Fort Belvoir military police team was exercising, attending with two of his canine team mates. Ggideon is a patrol and explosives detection dog, who also can perform bite work. Nearby, Fairfax County Police dog, Duke, attended with handler Mike Scatchard. Although Duke was not actively working during the event, he could be called to duty as needed to track a missing person.

Along with family pets, and po-



There was no 'longest ears' contest, but Stubbs, 5 yr old Basset Hound, seemed a likely winner, as demonstrated by owners Max Cowan and Sam Giller of Alexandria.



Stubbs may have been dismayed at being challenged for the "longest ear" recognition with the arrival of 4 yr old Basset Hound, Chewy, of Kingstowne with Kevin Webb.

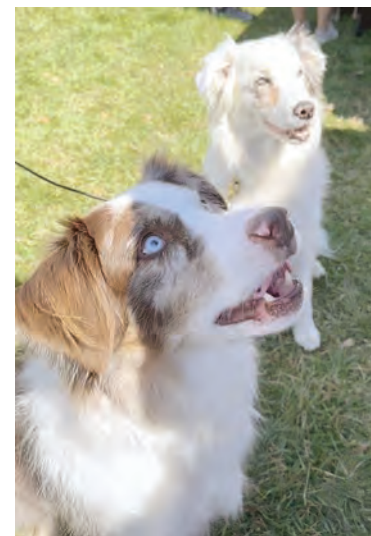


Fort Belvoir Army military police dog, Ggideon, 3 years old, follows a jump command from handler, Trey Adams, to stay in shape for patrol, explosive detection, and bite work.

PHOTOS BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION



Ice, 2 year old Australian Shepherd, demonstrates the enthusiasm that spring, bunnies, and especially treats, can generate for dogs, with Debbie Ford, of Alexandria.



Drax and Arizona, both 8 years old, who live with Zane & Tamara Ward of Alexandria, wait open-mouthed with an expression that suggests "put it here!"



Marty Sanchez-Lowery and Celeste, a 14 year old Silky Yorkie, of Alexandria, met when Celeste needed a new home at the age of six.



Co-founder, marketer, salesman, and baker, Bryan Tuccillo, of non-profit bakery, Pawfectly Delicious Dog Treats, introduces Max Svilich, of Mount Vernon, to the bakery's treats.



Rachel Michael, of Mount Vernon, attending with 8 month old Shitzu, Theo.



Although Frolick Dogs teaches agility skills and obedience, which typically includes staying off furniture, representative Rigatoni, a one year old Brittany Spaniel demonstrates following a place stay command on a table, anticipating the reward for good behavior



Working police dog, Duke, a 2 year old Bloodhound tracks missing persons, which handler Mike Scatchard says for Duke is "where all the fun is".



Working hard to find new homes are 2 yr olds, Scobysnacks, with Julie Ann Frid, and Doc, with Camille Level with Lost Dog & Cat Rescue of Falls Church.

lice and military working dogs, several rescue dogs were at work as well.

They strutted through the area displaying their "looking for a for-

ever home" bandannas and collars. Their behaviors showed how perfectly suited they could be to the role of family dog if only given the opportunity.

SENIOR LIVING: CAREGIVERS CORNER

Help Is Available, Seek It Out

BY DEBORAH TOMPKINS JOHNSON
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE PACKET

Dear Caregiver: You are not alone. Thankfully, many of us have family and friends to support us and who can share the lessons learned from their own family caregiving experiences. Here in northern Virginia, we also have many resources available to us through several organizations.

Some of these entities offer direct services to older adults. Other agencies or offices are experts in health care, aging and legal and financial planning.

Another resource for us is to attend workshops or conferences offered by caregiving agencies or support organizations. A conference I attended recently convened by the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia offered experts, research data and personal experiences regarding family, home and budget priorities for older adults.

According to data from Insight Region, the research arm of the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia, "three core priorities are crucial to successful aging:"

- ❖ Family and proximity to support
- ❖ Home and the ability to age in place
- ❖ Budget and thriving on a fixed income

Elizabeth Hughes, Senior Director, Insight Region, asked the audience several questions as she reviewed the data. Questions were presented for us to consider as professionals who provide support to older adults,

as family caregivers or those aging and making decisions for themselves.

For example, if we focus on the home and the ability to age in place priority, Hughes asked the audience whether our homes or the homes of our loved ones are equipped for aging-in-place? Ideally, to age best in place, the home would not only have stair-free entry/exit, but also ALL the following rooms would be located on that entry level: bedroom; kitchen; full bathroom; and laundry.

As for the location of our ultimate home, we must also consider our transportation options if we are not able to drive.

Proximity to family, income and home layout are of course important considerations to think and act on sooner than we might have thought we needed to. The adage, "sooner than later" applies to so many aspects of our lives.

If you are younger, say in your 40s or 50s, you may already be a caregiver. Being educated now on elder care, housing, income needs, etc., will not only help you perform the caregiving role, but can also help you ensure you can have your needs and desires met and as well maintain your desired quality of life.

Just know you do not have to tackle this on your own. Just reach out ... it will make a world of difference.

Let's be thankful the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia has placed all the materials from the Shape of the Region conference on their website, www.cfnova.org.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director, Senior Services of Alexandria, left, is joined by Peggy LeReche, board member of Herndon-Reston FISH, and Bettie Samuel, Business Relations Director of Capital Caring Health at the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia's regional conference on aging March 23 at Northern Virginia Community College Annandale Campus.



Senior Services of Alexandria would like to thank all our sponsors, donors, and volunteers for making SSA's 55th Anniversary Gala an overwhelming success. We are very grateful to Goodwin Living for being this year's Presenting Sponsor. Congratulations to Donita Greene and Retired Sheriff Dana Lawhorne for receiving the Community Service Award in recognition of the many ways they have made Alexandria a better place for all our residents. We would also like to thank the families of the Reverend Dr. George Pera and The Honorable Kerry Donley for allowing SSA to pay tribute to such outstanding leaders and their lifetimes of service.



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Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home
Elance at Alexandria, Elance at West End, and Paul Spring Communities
H. Arthur Sauer
Sunrise of Old Town

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CALENDAR

ALEXANDRIA EARTH DAY

April 2023, various events, Virtual and In-Person. Help commemorate the 53rd anniversary of Earth Day with a month full of environmentally focused events, activities, and online initiatives that center on the Eco-City Vision in which Alexandria's residents, businesses, and City government participate in a vibrant community that is always mindful of the needs and lifestyle of the generations to come. We all need to do our part and what better way than through fun, educational, and engaging opportunities. For more information go to: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/EarthDay>

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.

NOW THRU APRIL 1

The "Fun With One" exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans features monochromatic artwork by members. Come see the variety that can be accomplished using just one color. The artist awards are juried by Robin Croft. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA.

Opening Reception: Friday, March 3 from 7-9pm. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed on April 2). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

ONGOING

Cherry Blossom Water Taxi to The Wharf. Departures beginning at 1:30 p.m. Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Cruise from Old Town Alexandria to Washington, D.C., to enjoy the famous cherry blossoms. City Cruises Potomac Water Taxi offers a 25-minute direct water taxi from Old Town to The Wharf development in D.C. From the dock at The Wharf, it is a 10-minute walk to the cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin. The water taxi docks at the Transit Pier, 950 Wharf St. SW, near the Tidal Basin, the National Mall, Hains Point and a Capital Bikeshare station. Visit citycruises.com

BEGINNING SATURDAY/

MARCH 18

Traveling Exhibit, We The People: Portraits of Veterans in America. At National Museum of the U.S. Army, 1775 Liberty Drive, Fort Belvoir. Exhibit tour with artist Mary Whyte. In 2010, Whyte set out on an inspirational seven-year mission to paint 50 large-scale watercolor portraits of current-day American veterans. WE THE PEOPLE, depicts military veterans of all ages and in all walks of life. Images including a Missouri dairy farmer, a Rhode Island lobsterman, a Pennsylvania

science teacher, a South Carolina single mother, and 46 other moving portraits will be showcased. Visit theNMUSA.org.

NOW THRU APRIL 16

Cherry Blossom Guided Tours with Pedego Electric Bikes Alexandria. Departures at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. on weekends; by appointment on weekdays. Admission: \$69 per bike (\$10 for passenger riders on cargo or tandem bikes). At Pedego Alexandria, 210 North Lee St., Alexandria. Join a three-hour guided tour from Old Town Alexandria to the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C., including a ride through the blossoms around East Potomac Park. The views of the blossoms from a Pedego are fantastic, and you don't have to fight traffic or find a place to park downtown. Weekend tours fill up quickly, so contact Pedego early to make your reservations. Call 571-312-5168 or email info@pedegoalexandria.com. Pedegoalexandria.com

MARCH 23 TO APRIL 30

Matthew McLaughlin Art Exhibit. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception: Sunday, March 26, 4 - 6 p.m.; Artist Talk: Sunday, April 30, 2 - 3. Matthew McLaughlin's work explores how people define space in relationship to themselves on multiple levels, through personal and public forums, by bringing together those themes via mixed-media works from multiple series. The exhibition covers three distinct

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 9

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CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 8

ries, Proxemic Boundaries, Plotting Truths, and Reflective Cartography.

THURSDAY/MARCH 30

Book Talk with Lilianne Milgrom. 7 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria L'Origine: The secret life of the world's most erotic masterpiece. She will be speaking about her serendipitous encounter in Paris with a notoriously controversial 19th century painting that changed the course of her life. Topics open for discussion include the relevance of art then and now, what makes a work of art timeless and how becoming an author has shaped her studio practice as an artist. A short reading from L'Origine will be included in the program.

THURSDAY/MARCH 30

France and the Gauls: From Caesar to Astérix at The Lyceum. 7 to 9 p.m. At Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St., Alexandria. How did Gaul come under Roman rule, and what is the legacy of the Gauls in France today? In this lecture offered by the Office of History Alexandria, Dr. Jennifer Paxton will look at the complex chain of circumstances that led Julius Caesar to undertake the conquest of Gaul and explore the resonance of the Gaulish past in French politics and popular culture.

SATURDAY/APRIL 1

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

SATURDAY/APRIL 1

"The Grandest Congress": The French and Indian War in Alexandria at Carlyle House. 12 to 4 p.m. At

Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. In 1755, Major General Edward Braddock, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America, lodged at Carlyle House. While staying at Carlyle House, he convened a meeting of five colonial governors. One of 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.

SUNDAY/APRIL 2

Del Ray Dog Fest. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. At George Washington Middle School Parking Lot, 1005 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Dog Fest is a springtime festival celebrating dogs, their owners and the Del Ray community. This fun outdoor event which will include dog-centered activities, doggie menu items, live music and vendors and will be capped with Yappy Hour specials along Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray. The event is dog friendly and will take place outdoors, rain or shine.

APRIL 7 TO APRIL 29

"A Tale of Two Studios." Del Ray Artisans partners with Art Enables Gallery & Studio in an open-themed showcase of the inspiring art of these two community organizations to convey an essential story about creative expression and art-making. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, April 7 from 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays 12-6 p.m., and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed April 30). [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](https://www.DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

APRIL 14-15

Spring Garden Market. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The American Horticultural Society presents the ultimate two-day shopping experience, the Spring Garden Market, on Friday, April 14 and Saturday, April 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at River

Farm in Alexandria. Join 2,000 fellow gardening enthusiasts, 30+ vendors, food trucks, and the ever-popular alpacas for family-friendly festivities on the beautiful 25-acre historic property along the Potomac. This year, the AHS celebrates 50 years at River Farm. www.ahsgardening.org/sgm

THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

MARCH

Fri. 31: An Evening with Drew & Ellie Holcomb "The Residency Tour" \$49.50

APRIL

Sat. 1: Drew & Ellie Holcomb "The Residency Tour" \$49.50 SOLD OUT!

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Fri. 7: Bob Schneider w/ Ashley Ray \$35.00

Sat. 8: The Sun Ra Arkestra \$35.00

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Sat. 15: Oh He Dead \$29.50

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Fri. 28: Ohio Players \$69.50

Sat. 29: Eaglemania – The World's Greatest Tribute to the Eagles \$45.00

Sun. 30: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone \$55.00

BULLETIN BOARD

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

THURSDAY/MARCH 30

2023 General Assembly Breakfast. 8-10 a.m. At The Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King Street, Alexandria. Presented by Transurban, \$50/members; \$60/non-members. Featuring Sen. Dick Saslaw, Sen. George Barker, Sen. Adam Ebbin, Del. Charniele Herring and Del. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker.

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

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<cal1>Looking for Softball Players
<cal2>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.

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.

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Obituary

Obituary



Peter Kupstas died peacefully at his wife's home among family on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, in Fairfax, Virginia. He is survived by his daughters, Maria Buchert and Gloria Kupstas, and his second wife Alcira Pinto. His first wife, Lois Parsons Kupstas, died on October 25, 1999.

Peter was a wonderful Catholic father and steadfast provider for his family whose love was unconditional! He came from humble roots. Born in Plymouth, Pennsylvania, a small Lithuanian coal mining town, to devout Lithuanian Catholic parents, John W. Kupstas, a coal miner, and his mother Mary Brachulis Kupstas, a homemaker. Peter was one of six children, with brothers Johnny and Eddie, and sisters Mary, Helen, and Dorothy.

In his early years, Peter worked as a New York City taxi driver and then moved to Arlington, Virginia for training in broadcasting. He received his associate's college degree as an electronic engineer and then worked for the Melpar company. He was an avid dancer and met his first wife, Lois Parsons, at a hotel dance in Washington, DC, they married in 1960, and were blessed with two daughters. His career occupation of 33 years was as a civilian electronic technician with the Department of the Navy, Naval Oceanographic Office at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland. He flew on board the P-3 Navy planes all over the world to collect oceanographic data. He loved his work, the people, and the many places he traveled to. Peter received several awards from the Navy for his work and accomplishments.

During his retirement years, he continued to keep fit, eat healthy, and stay active. He enjoyed part-time work as a driver for a local bank and for Enterprise Car Sales. Peter married his second wife, Alcira Pinto, in 2004 and they enjoyed dancing, traveling, and shows.

Peter was one in a million, ready to help, direct, support, and guide! He enjoyed being among people--warm, kind, with a generous heart! Always ready to help others and lend a hand!

Peter loved learning new things and was a real history buff!

He enjoyed music, especially country music, shows, movies, travel, bowling, sports, and dancing, especially swing, salsa, and Lithuanian Polka dancing! He won swing dance competitions back in the day and won several bowling trophies! Peter was a long-standing member of the Knights of Columbus Catholic fraternal service order at St. Lawrence Catholic Church. He made so many friends wherever he went in the world! He was well loved!

May God bless his soul! May he be forever in heaven at peace and happiness with all of his loved ones for all eternity!

A funeral mass is scheduled for Friday, March 31, 2023, at 11 am at St. Lawrence Catholic Church, 6222 Franconia Road, Alexandria, Virginia, followed by interment at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Please visit Mr. Kuspas's tribute page at <https://www.everlywheatley.com/tributes/Peter-R-Kupstas>

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Legals

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PLAY BALL VIRGINIA ALEX COMMONS, LLC trading as Glory Days Grill, 3141 DUKE STREET, ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22314-4518. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Mixed Beverage license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Jesse Steven McPherson, Managing Member. Date notice posted at establishment: March 23, 2023. 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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PHOTO BY FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE

How close is too close? In some places, townhouses look right out to the tracks.

Ohio Derailment Highlights Rail Safety Locally

Could derailment with hazardous chemical spill happen here?

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

At night around eastern Springfield, it's not hard to forget the presence of a railroad line that runs on a north-south trajectory along I-95. The trains run all night long. When thinking of the recent train accident in Ohio, many may be wondering, are we safe from a similar catastrophe?

On Feb. 3, at 8:55 p.m., 38 cars of a 150-car Norfolk Southern freight train carrying hazardous materials derailed in East Palestine, Ohio. This caused a fire and nearby residents were told to evacuate. The train was carrying toxic materials which spilled into a nearby stream and killed many fish in the stream. Following the derailment, the Environmental Protection Agency began sampling the air and water around that area to determine the danger to the nearby residents.

Following the Ohio train derailment, there was another train derailment reported, this one in West Virginia on March 8 that resulted in an "unknown" amount of diesel to spill into New River.

Northern Virginia has been on the safety radar though, says Connor Spielmaker Sr. Communications Manager at Norfolk Southern. The actual train accident numbers are down, he said. Norfolk Southern partnered with emergency responders from Alexandria last summer for the latest Operation Awareness & Response training session aboard the Norfolk Southern HazMat Safety Train. Team members from the Fairfax County Fire



PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County took place in rail emergency exercises last summer.

and Rescue Department learned firsthand from safety experts about the fundamental steps required for an adequate response to a locomotive emergency.

Spielmaker did add that there are other freight carriers in the Northern Virginia area too. "Norfolk Southern is not the only railroad in the DMV," he said.

Fairfax County has a Hazardous Materials Response Team that consistently conducts training specific to railway incidents. They coordinate efforts with the Northern Virginia Regional Intelligence Community to gather information about the hazardous materials that are transported through this area to develop effective and realistic emergency response plans for any hazardous spills that may occur, said the Fairfax County Department of Emergency Management and Fire and Rescue.

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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 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 omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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A Definite Maybe



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For the first time in 14 years, my current scan interval has been almost five months. This represents a quantum leap from my long-standing every-three-month scan and is a record. After years of "stable" results, my wife, Dina, who has been a part of every Kenny-with-cancer decision acquiesced at our last – and first face-to-face meeting with my oncologist (the first in two+ years) and agreed, per my oncologist's suggestion, to increase the time between my previously quarterly scans (a recurring discussion between Team Lourie and my oncologist). The apparent slow-growing cancer that I have combined with the risk of accumulating radiation from the various scans I regularly have, leading to possible new cancers/tumors as a side effect, convinced her to agree/allow this change. This month (March) is that first scan at the "record" interval.

To say I'm anticipating trouble when the results are emailed to me is a bit of an overstatement. To say I'm worried about the possible consequences of having waited an extra two months – to see what's going on inside my lungs, where my papillary thyroid cancer has spread, is more accurate. Though the reason for extending the interval seems logical and prudent, all things considered (14 years a cancer patient and the tumors have moved and/or grown so marginally that what amount of growth or movement would likely occur during that extra month or more is a minimal risk, according to my oncologist). Still, the waiting and wondering during that extra month or two is hardly for the weak of heart. Nevertheless, it is a goal of every cancer patient to be able to increase the interval of their scans because they conquered or at least stalled/survived, the cancer. That's progress and the beginning of a less cancer-centric lifestyle. It's what every cancer patient undergoing treatment dreams about.

I'd be lying if I said waiting for the results of the first scan after having extended the quarterly interval was just another day in the office, so to speak. Hardly. I kind of feel that my future hangs in the balance somehow. I'm not any more symptomatic than I've been, I'll just have to wait longer to find out/have it confirmed. Even though I've been down nearly every road in my 14-plus years as a cancer patient, this road (interval) represents a road not travelled and as such, it seems to be giving me pause. Not fits by any means. But a more challenging fall-asleep at night.

Part of this anxiety/insecurity comes from having been given a "terminal" diagnosis originally in Feb. '09. Ever since I've lived with the inevitability that one day, to invoke Bob Marley, "the bottom will drop out" and one of these scans is going to show tumor growth and movement or involvement with another major organ (like my kidneys, as an example); end-of-life-type trouble. That's the fear I've been loathing every time I've had these scans up until I receive the all-clear (sort of) from my oncologist. The reality is cancer is an insidious and semi unpredictable intruder and quite often it wins, while the patient loses. And 14 years is an awfully long time for a "terminal" patient like me to keep winning while the cancer is losing/not doing what it almost always does: create havoc and in many cases, death.

Every time, in person when we had post-scan appointments with my oncologist or I received an email indicating that scan results were in, I almost always closed my eyes, took a deep breath and said a bit of a prayer when the oncologist knocked on the door of the examining room where Dina I were waiting or when at home, when I would I click on the message on the provider's website.

The evolution of our sitting and waiting experience has matched the evolution of how we all communicate nowadays. Back in the day, we always had to go to the facility for an in-person appointment with the oncologist specifically to discuss the results of my most recent scan. Now, the results are released automatically from the radiologists before my oncologist has likely even seen the report. The report is not lay-person friendly. It is in doctor-speak and not particularly clear. Though there are sections titled "Findings" and "Impressions," there's a lot of additional information that might be telling, that is if I knew what I was being told.

This has been my life every three months for the past 14 years. Now it's my life every four months. Is it better or worse? I can't say yet. As long as the results are "stable," then I'd say it's better.

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

McEneaney Associates has always had one motto in mind... not to be the biggest, but the best. For more than 40 years, our Associates have lived in and supported Alexandria, helping to build our town into the thriving community it is today. To learn more about our Associates and our firm, visit www.WeAreAlexandria.com

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OPEN SUN 4/2, 2-4PM

Hollin Brook Park | \$989,000

This beautiful home has been thoughtfully updated and expanded lending a wonderful flow for entertaining inside and out. Abundant storage, an oversized two car garage, four generous bedrooms and a super cool bonus room. 7868 Middy Lane
Robin Arnold 703.966.5457
www.RobinArnoldSells.com



OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 1-3PM

Del Ray | \$875,000

Completely renovated down to the studs! This light-filled, end-unit townhome features 2 bedrooms, 2 full baths, a large seated kitchen granite countertop, Wolf stove and KitchenAid appliances, finished basement, back patio, fenced-in yard, & garage. 572 E Nelson Ave
Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 1-3PM

Del Ray | \$799,900

3-bedroom, 2.5-bath semi-detached townhouse. Open & bright floor plan. Kitchen features granite counters. Large dining area and living room with a cozy fireplace. Patio and fenced-in backyard. Driveway. Walk to the fun on "The Avenue." 1400 Wayne Street
Jen Walker 703.675.1566
www.JenWalker.com



OPEN SUN 4/2, 2-4PM

Belle Haven on the Green | \$785,000

This townhome lives like a single family home! Updated throughout this is easy living! With 2 large primary suites, a study & bonus lower level guest space there is a comfortable, flexible floorplan, private rear yard and garage! Close to Metro & DCA. 1796 Duffield Lane
Janet Caterson Price 703.622.5984
www.JanetPriceHomes.com



OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 2-4PM

Mary Lea Park | \$675,000

Opportunity is knocking! 3-bedroom 3-bath rambler located on a flat half-acre lot. Large, versatile front living space with a wood-burning fireplace. Huge kitchen. Family room with a fireplace leads to the large screened porch, also with a fireplace. 8725 Oak Leaf Dr
Bobby & Shannon Mahoney 703.298.1161
www.TheMahoneyGroupNow.com



OPEN SAT 4/1 & SUN 4/2, 12-2PM

Hayfield Farm | \$670,000

This 2-level, 4-bedroom, 2-bath home has "don't miss" features like a remodeled, open concept kitchen, a luxury lower level bath with a steam shower, fresh interior paint, brand new carpet in the basement & more. Huge fenced backyard. 5443 Broadmoor Street
Jillian Keck Hogan Group 703.951.7655
www.JillianKeckHogan.com

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===== 2022 =====

TOP AGENTS

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OLD TOWN HISTORIC DISTRICT
ALEXANDRIA | KINGSTOWNE CENTRE



PLATINUM CLUB

\$50 - \$100 Million



Chris White Family Real Estate
Chris, Mark, Mike & Peggy White

MASTER'S CLUB

\$20 - \$50 Million



The LizLuke Team
Elizabeth Lucchesi



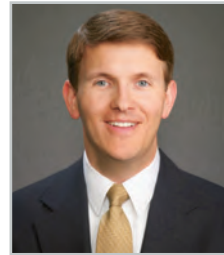
The Poole Braun Team
Peter & Lee Braun



The Carey Team
Kendra Carey



The Capalbo Team
Steve Capalbo & Leah Knight



Brad Kintz



The Irmer Group
Martine & Alexander Irmer

FOUNDER'S CLUB

\$10 - \$20 Million



Morgan Willemssen



Dan Martin



The Gillette Team
Ally Gillette



Michael Manuel



Kari Steinberg



Kim Muffler



Mary Taylor & Pat Tierney



Dianna Bentley & Chu Pak



The Gorman Group
Bette & Betsy Gorman



Kristy Odend'hal

CHAIRMAN'S CLUB

\$5 - \$10 Million



Rich Ragan



Areizo Anderson



The Tassa Team
Rita & Tim Tassa



Loretta Gray



Georgia McLaughlin



Brian Hong &
Jerry Beamer



Victoria Giovenco



Gary Ansley



Paul Scott



Brandi Buzinski



Sheryl Lambson

PRESIDENT'S CLUB

\$3 - \$5 Million



Janet Mwobobia



Elfie Biankini



Julie Martin



Julia Hufford



Shagufta Hasan



Ellen Young



Meg Tracy



The Kohler Realty
Group



Deborah
Linton-Blake



Anne Harris



Judy Pisciotta



Ann Logsdon & Emily Capelli



DIRECTOR & EXECUTIVE CLUBS

\$1 - \$3 Million



Connie Arega



Mary Bourke



Mindy Brubaker



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Beverly Copeland



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Jill Dipasquale



Norma Gants



Tiana Hickman



Nancy Higgins



Inderjeet Jumani



Steve Kindrick



Ihor Makara



Larry Mungin



Fawzia Noori



John Randolph



Franki Roberts



Mary Sellman



Bob Skinner



Annelise Smith



Adam Tabaka



Vicki Van Horne



Christine Vanderhyde



Ginger Webre



Pat Wilson

*Not Pictured Dena Leonard

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