

Alexandria Gazette Packet

25 CENTS

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FEBRUARY 22, 2024



PHOTO BY STEVEN HALPERSON/TISARA STUDIOS

Brian Hilton as General George Washington waves to the crowd.



PHOTO BY STEVEN HALPERSON/TISARA STUDIOS

Living Legends of Alexandria serve as Grand Marshals of the George Washington Birthday Parade Feb. 19.

By George!

Parade honors Washington, Living Legends.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

George Washington was proclaimed “Alexandria’s original Living Legend” as the city held

its 101st annual parade honoring Washington Feb. 19 in Old Town.

Living Legends of Alexandria served as Grand Marshals of the parade, with dozens of honored Legends from over the years turning out to lead one of the city’s signature annual events.

“It was a spectacular day for the Living Legends of Alexandria,” said LLA board president Mary Wadland. “The skies were blue and we had about 30 Legends walking beside our amazing float,

which was built by Jason and Loren Yates. And we were so proud to have our founder, Nina Tisara, who is 85 years old, help carry our banner and lead the group the entire parade.”

Living Legends of Alexandria honors individuals who have made lasting contributions to the quality of life in Alexandria. Tisara founded the organization in 2007.

Highlights of the parade included the City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums and SEE PARADE HONORS, PAGE 6



George Washington riding the signature Hard Times Café horse in the back of his 1941 Chevy pick-up truck.



The Bishop Ireton High School Varsity Cheerleading team.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

The City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums marches through the streets of Old Town during the 101st annual George Washington Birthday Parade Feb. 19.



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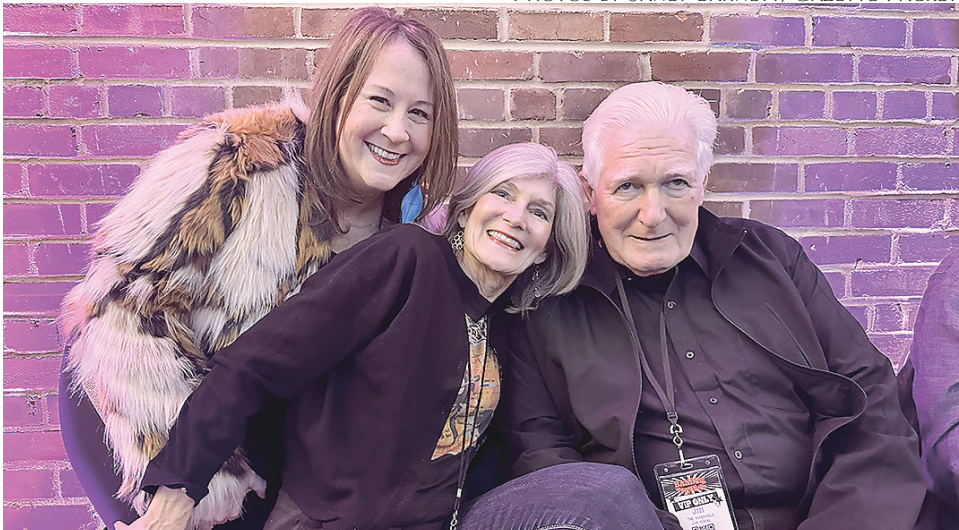
CAC GALA

“It takes all of us to end child abuse.”
— CAC board chair Melissa Riddy



Board chair Melissa Riddy, right, with Kate Marks, Sarah Wolf, Jessica Nehrman and Jennifer Henel at the Center for Alexandria’s Children Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Kate Moran, Debra Warren and Jim Moran at the CAC Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

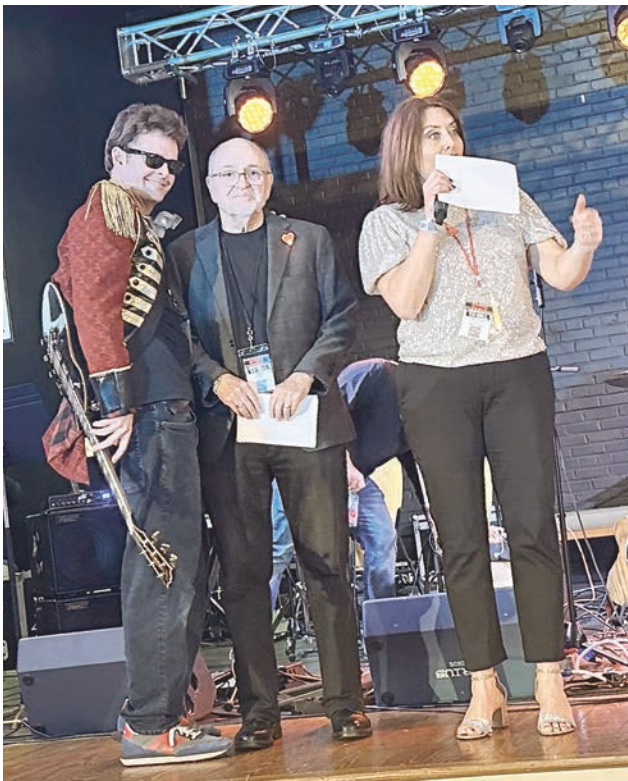


Margaret Orlando, recipient of the Outstanding Dedication to Alexandria’s Children Award, center, is flanked by Dominique Lewis, Kate Garvey, Donovan Orlando and Mac Slover at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

CAC GALA

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Bryan Porter, John Porter and Melissa Riddy join together to raise funds at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.



Tom and Chris Clark at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb 3 at the Durant Center.



Executive director Giselle Pelaez, left, with Michael and April Rouson at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

Banding Together

Center for Alexandria's Children raises \$140k.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The rock stars of Alexandria were out in force as the Center for Alexandria's Children held its Banding Together Gala, raising \$140,000 dollars for the fight against child abuse Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

"We are thrilled to have raised \$140,000 for the Center for Alexandria's Children," said CAC board chair Melissa Riddy. "This money will help provide vital programs to families who have experienced child abuse

and for prevention programs to end child abuse."

The Outstanding Dedication to Alexandria's Children award was presented to Margaret Orlando, who was in attendance to accept the award. Percy White was honored with the award posthumously. The Champion for Children award was presented to Ellen Kennedy Folts.

The gala featured performances by Indigo Thursday, Guilty Ghost and Colby's in the Car as part of the Banding Together theme.

"I want to thank all of our sponsors and everyone who came out to help us raise money for this incredible organization," Riddy said. "I also thank the bands Indigo Thursday, Guilty Ghost and Colby's in the Car for playing. It takes all of us to end child abuse."

www.centerforalexandriaschildren.org



Board chair Melissa Riddy, center, leads the dancing at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.



Pete O'Dell, Giselle Pelaez, Heather Peeler and Olivia Weinell at the CAC Banding Together Gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.



Brandi Yee, Sagittarius Qadir and Debra Collins at the CAC gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.



Colby's in the Car band performs at the Center for Alexandria's Children gala Feb. 3 at the Durant Center.

Over The Halfway Mark

BY ADAM EBBIN



Ebbin

The 2024 Regular Session of the General Assembly is now past the halfway mark, also known as Cross-over — the deadline for the Senate and House to complete consideration of bills introduced in their respective chambers.

Out of 737 pieces of legislation introduced in our chamber, the Virginia Senate passed 452 bills which are now being considered in the House.

From my own legislative package, 19 bills have now passed the Senate and are being considered in the other chamber. In the coming weeks, they will receive a hearing and a vote and hopefully make their way to Governor Youngkin's desk for his signature.

As a rule, if a bill reaches the governor's desk prior to the final week of a legislative session, the governor is required to act upon that bill within seven days.

For bills that reach his desk after that window of time, the governor has thirty days within which to review and act. Because the vast majority of bills do not pass until the final week of session, the "seven day bill" rule usually applies to a very small number of bills.

Thanks to broad support from both legislative chambers, several of my bills could reach Governor Youngkin's desk prior to the end of session — and could become seven day bills that he would be required to sign, amend, or veto prior to the final day of session on March 9. That could include bills to protect Virginians from gun violence, reform our criminal justice system, and to ensure the right to marry for two consenting Virginia adults.

SB101 — which would codify the right to marry in Virginia for two consenting adults — should be one of my first bills to reach Governor Youngkin's desk this year. I find it encouraging that the bill, and its House cognate HB174 carried by Delegate Rozia Henson, passed the General Assembly with bipartisan support in both legislative chambers. I sincerely hope that Governor Youngkin will sign this important bill that would create state-level protections for all Virginians regardless of who they love.

Another bill I expect to pass the General Assembly soon is SB362. This bill would provide more options for first-time nonviolent drug offenders so that individuals are treated with a rehabilitative model for a first offense. SB362 was unanimously supported in the Senate. I hope to see its full passage in the coming days in the House and ultimately its signing into law by Governor Youngkin.

I also expect Governor Youngkin will soon receive two of my gun violence prevention bills that would prohibit ghost guns in the Commonwealth (SB100), and ban the open-carry of semi-automatic assault weapons in public places (SB99). Even though these bills were advanced on party-line votes, I hope that the governor will listen to the voices of Virginians on this important public safety issue and sign these bills into law.

I am also looking forward to the following bills progressing into law in the coming weeks:

Banning Unfair Service Agreements (SB576): This bill would prohibit real estate service agreements that take advantage of unwitting property owners by binding them to a particular real estate company or realtor for an extend-

ed period of time.

Prohibit Junk Rental Fees (SB422): This legislation would protect renters from having to pay the most commonly-charged junk fees by making lease provisions unlawful that charge extra fees for maintenance requests.

Metro Study (SJ28): This bill would establish a Joint Subcommittee to study and make recommendations to achieve long-term, sustainable, and dedicated funding, and cost-containment controls and strategies, to ensure the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), Virginia Railway Express (VRE), and Northern Virginia regional bus systems can meet the future needs of the region and the Commonwealth.

Election Officials Security (SB364): This legislation would make it a Class 5 felony, punishable by 1-10 years imprisonment or a \$2,500 fine, for any person to attempt to bribe, intimidate, threaten, coerce, or otherwise willfully and intentionally hinder or prevent, or attempt to hinder or prevent an election official from carrying out their duty to administer an election.

VEC Reform Bills (SB381 & SB382): These bills would make needed reforms to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). SB381 would create protections for claimants when their former employer is not responsive to the VEC for information about the claimant's case. SB382 would establish a statute of limitations on collection of non-fraudulent overpayments, and require that the VEC cease collection efforts on overpayments upon death or bankruptcy.

I look forward to updating you further on these and other bills from my 2024 legislative package as we move closer to the end of the legislative session.

It is my continued honor to serve the residents of the 39th Senate District.

Metro Funding: Va. Should Contribute \$180 Million

BY STEWART SCHWARTZ
COALITION FOR SMARTER GROWTH

Last week we shared the joint statement of 18 non-profits thanking Virginia legislators for proposing \$65 million (+\$65 million from NoVA) but making the case that Virginia, DC, and Maryland should do more to Close the Gap. Failure to fully close the gap will mean service cuts, fare

hikes, and delays to important capital projects.

As a follow-up, please see our Coalition for Smarter Growth case for Virginia providing a combined \$180 million as its fair share to fully close the gap. With our partners we will be pressing DC and Maryland to increase their commitments as well (\$209 million for Md, \$275 million for DC).

Virginia is currently offering \$65

million for FY25 and \$84.5 million for FY26, to be matched 50/50 by Northern Virginia localities, for a total of \$130 million in FY25 and \$169 million in FY26. We thank officials for this commitment.

However, this will not fully close the WMATA operating gap, meaning some service cuts, fare increases, and delays to capital projects as capital funds are used to pay for preventative maintenance.

\$180 million would be Virginia's share to fully close the WMATA operating gap, with another \$209 million from Maryland, and \$275 million from DC.

The state is proposing \$1.3B or more in bonds and \$200 million or more in capital transportation spending for the proposed Wizards/Capitals arena in Alexandria.

SEE VA. CONTRIBUTION, PAGE 5

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Largest Government Subsidy of a Sports Arena Ever

To the editor:

Please publish this letter sent to the City Council on 2/20/24 regarding the proposed arena.

Council Members:

Mayor Wilson provided me with a link to a video discussion with the city's Finance Director and bond consultants. The video described financing of the proposed Arena and the results of HR&A's study. You need a second opinion.

You are on the verge of granting the largest government subsidy of a sports Arena in history — ever. If you bet wrong, you could leave Alexandria in crippling debt with radically higher taxes, reduced services and a huge white elephant draining its budget. You literally have the future of Alexandria in your hands. You need to get this right. That starts with reaching out for help from non-traditional sources. You are about to make

what may be the most impactful decision of your lives. You deserve — and should demand — the best possible guides to take you through billion-dollar decisions fraught with uncertainty and far-reaching impacts.

Preparing yourselves to make good decisions will take time. Take it. Please, please don't let other stakeholders rush you into decisions for the sake of a sports schedule. And don't let them bully

you into using input that is more of a sales pitch than a decision matrix. You are being asked to ante \$106 million and guarantee \$700 million more. You are putting more money on the table than Mr. Leonis; and you are risking more in terms of neighborhood integrity than Governor Youngkin. Not only should you be at the table. You should be at the head of the table.

Michael Diffley
Alexandria 22314,
City resident since 1987

www.AlexandriaGazette.com

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NEWS BRIEFS

Police Investigate Tuesday Night Sexual Assault

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a sexual assault that occurred overnight Tuesday, Feb. 20. An adult woman was walking after midnight in the area of Mount Vernon and Commonwealth Avenue when she was attacked and assaulted by a stranger. The woman is being treated at a local hospital.

The investigation indicates this is unrelated to the Main Line Boulevard incident that occurred on Feb. 4, 2024.

APD detectives will be canvassing the area and talking with members of the community.

If anyone in this neighborhood has security cameras that may have footage for review or if anyone saw someone or something suspicious, please contact Detective Kristina Loerch at 703-746-6785. Tips can remain anonymous.

Vehicle Strikes Pedestrian At Telegraph Road On-Ramp Off Duke Street

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024, at approximately 6:13 p.m. Alexandria Police officers responded to Duke Street and Roberts Lane for the report of a person being struck by a vehicle. Officers arrived and located the pedestrian, an adult male, in the roadway who was struck. The pedestrian was transported to the hospital in serious but stable condition.

The driver of the vehicle, an adult female, was not injured and remained on the scene to talk with investigators. The Alexandria Police Crash Reconstruction Team was called to the scene and determined the vehicle was traveling west on Duke Street and entered the westbound

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 10

OPINION

Va. Contribution to WMATA Budget Gap

FROM PAGE 4

The state is proposing huge sums for additional expansion of I-81.

Northern Virginia is still the strongest share of Virginia's economy and tax base, and Metro is critical to the economy and tax base, generating about \$1 billion in annual personal income and sales tax revenue to the state. The half mile around Metrorail stations comprised just 3% of the land but contains 30% of the property val-

ue, 40% of jobs, 50% of new apartments, and 65% of new office development.

A large share of the workforce continues to depend on Metrorail and Metrobus to reach their jobs, and Metro supports the Washington DC region's large tourism industry. They will be impacted by fare hikes and service cuts.

For these reasons, Virginia should combine with Northern Virginia for \$180 million as its formula share to fully close the WMATA budget gap.

Submit a Letter to the Editor

To submit a letter to the editor, email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or via the following form <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Ideally, letters will be original, about local issues and less than 300 words. Please submit letters by noon Friday before publication week, although letters received on Mondays can be considered. Letters must include your first and last name, home address and a phone number. Letters are routinely edited for libel, length, grammar, good taste and accuracy.

Your name and town will be published with your letter, other personal information will not be shared. If you are a student, your school name, age and grade will also be published.

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Mariam Church, winner of the George Washington Legacy Foundation essay contest.



First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line.



Marilyn Patterson with Living Legend Lillian Patterson.

Parade Honors Washington, Living Legends

FROM PAGE 1

Drums, the First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line and the Bishop Ireton High School Varsity Cheerleading team.

Mariam Church, a 7th grader at Saint Rita Catholic School, was featured in the parade as the winner of the inaugural essay contest sponsored by the George Washington Legacy Foundation. The Foundation is a nonprofit organization established to support educational and civic activities to increase public awareness about Washington and his legacy.

The essay contest was sponsored with the support of the Fraternal Order of Eagles 871. Church's prize-winning essay was titled "George Washington: Alexandria's Most Famous Citizen."

"We are so grateful to Sue Johnson and the George Washington



A classic car parade entry.



A salute in honor of George Washington.



Alexandria Police Department Motorcycle squad.

Birthday Celebration committee for honoring the Living Legends as Grand Marshals," Wadland said. "This has meant so much to the organization."

"We were so proud to have our founder, Nina Tisara, who is 85 years old, help carry our banner and lead the group the entire parade."

— Living Legends president Mary Wadland

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 7



A clown entertains along the parade route.



Acting Chief of Police Raul Pedroso at the Feb. 19 Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association breakfast.



Sons of the American Revolution.



Living Legends David Baker and Marion Moon with Sandra Von Kampen.



Kena Shrine Band.

News

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Town Crier Ben Fiore-Walker opens the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association breakfast Feb. 19 at the Mark Center Hilton.



Living Legends founder Nina Tisara, right receives the 2024 Ben Lynt service award at the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association breakfast Feb. 19 at the Mark Center Hilton.



Brian Hilton as General George Washington with Gant Redmon.



Brian Hilton as General George Washington with Living Legends president Mary Wadland.



Members of the First Virginia Regiment of the Continental Line.

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A chimney sweep with Rooftop Chimney Sweeps.

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WOMEN'S Leadership FORUM

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Screening of

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The powerful story of two people who find they are connected by blood and history to notorious Alexandria slave traders

Sunday, February 25
The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street
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Q&A following the film

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[@alexandriafilmfestival](https://twitter.com/alexandriafilmfestival)

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU FEB. 29

Love Is In the Air Exhibit. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory, Gallery 311, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association presents a group exhibition including jewelry, paintings, photography, mixed media work, hand pulled prints, and more during the month of February. Visit <https://www.torpedofactoryartists.com/> to learn more about the Torpedo Factory Artists' Association.

NOW THRU APRIL 15

Exhibit: "Searching for Truth in the Garden" at Freedom House Museum. At Freedom House Museum, 1315 Duke Street, Alexandria. Gonzaga High School's groundbreaking research on slavery, "Searching for Truth in the Garden," found new life at the Freedom House Museum. The traveling exhibition, on view through April 15, 2024, delves into the life of Gabriel, a teenager enslaved at Washington Seminary (now Gonzaga) in 1829. Gabriel's story offers a poignant lens through which to examine the complexities of slavery and its lasting impact.

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS

Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are assigned jobs on the ship, learn where they will work and live, how to load a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in the Naval History Theatre with a film about the ship. The Heritage center is a floating museum on the Alexandria waterfront. Visit <https://tallshipprovidence.org/>

NOW THRU MARCH 2

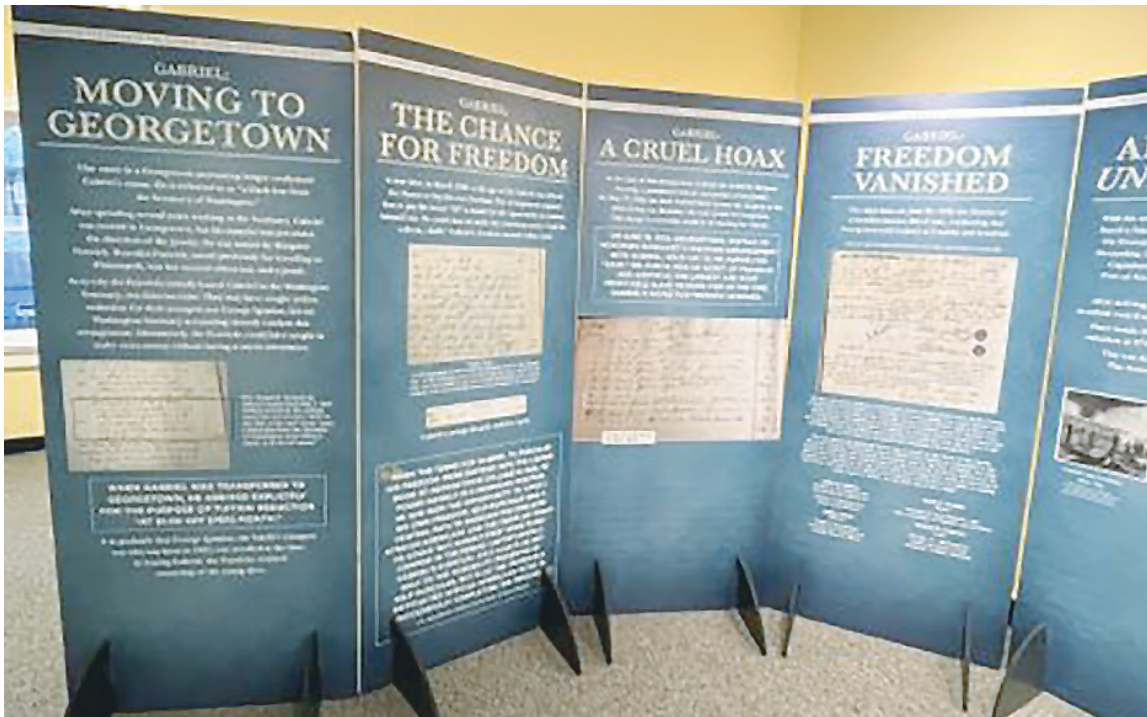
Native American Culture & Experience Exhibit. At Nepenthe Gallery, Hollin Hall Shopping Center, Alexandria. This special exhibit includes works by renowned photographer, Cara Romero, and historical painters, Bryant and Pamela White, among others. The exhibit will be up until March 2nd at Nepenthe's flagship gallery at the Hollin Hall Shopping Center in Alexandria.

NOW THRU FEB. 24

The "Visible Touch: A Look at Texture" exhibit features art that explores texture through physical form or visual illusion. Visitors will be allowed to touch some of the art (pieces are marked). Enjoy the visual and the tactile experience! View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, February 2, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed February 25). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

THURSDAY/FEB. 22

Black Dance: Housing the Past and the Present. 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Virtual via Zoom. Join a virtual presentation exploring how colonialism brought an end to authentic African dance with Associate Professor of Dance at George



The Exhibit: "Searching for Truth in the Garden" will be on view now through April 15, 2024 at Freedom House Museum.

Mason University Lawrence M. Jackson, who in 2011 co-authored and edited a special edition on Black dance in the Journal of Pan African Studies. In this presentation, he explains how Black dance keeps those African cultural traditions alive and is an affirmation of identity and independence. Visit alexandrialibraryva.org

SUNDAY/FEB. 25

Finding the Family of Joseph McCoy. 2 p.m. At Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Genealogist Char McCargo Bah will lecture on "Finding the Family of Alexandria's Lynching Victim Joseph McCoy." Join the Black History Museum staff in learning how Ms. Bah, the official genealogist for the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project, discovered the family of the first of Alexandria's lynching victims, Joseph McCoy, who was lynched in Alexandria on April 23, 1897. Learn the secrets to investigating a family tree that does not have many leads. The lecture is suited for beginners or established genealogists. The lecture is free, but space is limited, so register to attend. Registration at Finding the Family of Joseph McCoy - shop. alexandriava.gov.

TUESDAY/FEB. 27

Bright Star Theatre: George Washington Carver and Friends. 6 to 7 p.m. At Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Meet Black entrepreneurs and groundbreakers like George Washington Carver, Madame CJ Walker, Thurgood Marshall and more in this interactive theater performance. The event is for children grades K to 5. Visit alexandrialibraryva.org

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 28

Burke Book Club: "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison. 3:30 to 5 p.m. Virtual via Zoom. In honor of Black History Month, join a virtual Zoom discussion put on by Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library on the 1952 classic novel, "Invisible Man" by Ralph Ellison. This program will take place by Zoom and registration is required. After

registering, you will be emailed the link to join this Zoom meeting. If you have questions about the program or need help with set up, please contact Caroline at cpak@alexlibraryva.org. Visit alexandrialibraryva.org

THURSDAY/FEB. 29

African American Film Series: "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom." 2-4 p.m. At Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road, Suite 104, Alexandria. In honor of Black History Month, the library will be showing a series of films throughout the month. Visit alexandrialibraryva.org.

MARCH 1-31

Woodlawn Needlework Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At Woodlawn Plantation. Tuesday, February 27th at 10:00am - 1:00pm - Lotus Leaf Mat Workshop with Youngmin Lee (Fee \$165, includes materials) Learn traditional Korean needlework techniques at this in-person workshop conducted by renowned textile artist, Youngmin Lee. This workshop will teach you how to construct a lotus leaf shape Sangbo (covering bojagi) that you can use in daily life. Gamchimjil and Kkojipgi techniques and the Yeonbong (Lotus Bud Knot) technique will finish this simple and organically-shaped bojagi with raised line composition.

Every Wednesday and Friday at 2:30pm in March - Special Tours of 61st Anniversary Woodlawn Needlework Show (Fee: \$18, includes Needlework Show Admission) Join our special tour for a brief history of Woodlawn while discovering the unique stories behind many pieces of the Needlework Show as a Woodlawn guide and Nelly's Needlers expert lead visitors through the house.

Saturday March 16th, Monday March 25th, and Wednesday March 27th at 3:30pm - Beginners Needlework Techniques (Fee: \$25 per class or \$65 for all three, includes Needlework Show Admission and supplies)

Join members of Nelly's Needlers to learn the basics of three fundamental needlework techniques;

counted cross-stitch, canvaswork (needlepoint), and surface embroidery.

March 16- canvaswork coasters

March 25 - cross-stitch towel

March 27 - embroidered hat

Virtual Programs

(All virtual programs are free, with a suggested donation to support Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House)

Saturday, March 23rd at 4:00pm ET -What Linens Know with Ruth Tabancay

Enjoy a fascinating virtual presentation by multi-disciplinary artist Ruth Tabancay as she discusses "What Linens Know" on exhibit at the Woodlawn Needlework Show. Ruth's exhibit is an unique spin on this year's theme, "Needlework in Everyday Life" as she examines the uses of vintage linens in everyday living and embroiders a lasting memory of the remains.

MARCH 1-30

"The Power of Two" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that showcases two related items in one piece of art; for example, two-of-a-kind, complementary items, double-exposures, duos, twins, or multiple generations. "Double your pleasure, double your fun." Opening Reception: Friday, March 1, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed Sunday, March 31). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

MARCH 5 THRU APRIL 28

Mosaics by Nina Tisara and Photographs by Steven Halperson. At Green Spring Gardens, 4601 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. The Opening Reception is Sunday, March 10, 1-3 p.m. The mother-son team had worked together at Tisara Photography in Old Town for three decades. Steven now manages the Alexandria portrait studio as well as creating painterly photographic images and unique etched copper art. Nina creates intricate mosaics of unglazed porcelain tile which are widely exhibited and collected. Their work may also be seen by appointment

at Serenity Place Gallery, Nina's in-home gallery,

FRIDAY/MARCH 8

Women's Leadership Forum. 7:45-10:30 a.m. At The Westin Alexandria Old Town, 400 Courthouse Square, Alexandria. The forum will bring together women (and men) at all stages of their careers for an interactive, "straight talk" panel discussion filled with inspiration and insight. Cost is \$80 for Members | \$105 for Prospective Members.

MARCH 12-18

Spring Book Sale - At Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. The Friends of Beatley Central Library will hold their Spring Book Sale from Tuesday, March 12 through Monday, March 18. Members' Preview on Tuesday, March 12, 3:00 -7:30 p.m. (\$15 memberships available at the door); Wednesday, March 13, 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 14, 10:00 a.m.-7:30 p.m.; Friday, March 15, 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 16, 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sunday, March 17, Half Price Day, 1-4:30 p.m.; Monday, March 18, \$10 Bag Sale, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. \$4 or less, unless specifically marked: hardbacks, paperbacks, children's books, and media. All genres. Visit www.beatleyfriends.org

THURSDAY, MARCH 21

Alexandria Chamber 2024 General Assembly Breakfast, 8 a.m.-10 a.m. The Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 \$50 for Members | \$60 for Non-Members Register here To submit a question in advance please send it to Maria Ciarrocchi mciarrocchi@thechamberalex.com

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Historic Garden Week Old Town. Take a behind-the-scenes peek into the spectacular homes and gardens of six historic Old Town Alexandria properties kicking off the Garden Club of Virginia's historic annual statewide tour. Offering a glimpse into the town's storied past, the tour features homes dating from 1785. Expertly updated, tastefully furnished, and filled with spectacular floral arrangements designed by blue ribbon garden club members, each property features lovely, curated gardens filled with bountiful Spring flowers timed to bloom in concert with the tour. Tickets include admission to five private homes and gardens, Lee-Fendall House, a one-time private home with a rich history that now houses a museum and garden, as well as six nearby public properties, including: Mount Vernon, River Farm, Carlyle House, Gunston Hall and Green Spring Gardens. Advance tickets are \$55 online at www.vagardenweek.org and may be purchased tour day at the Alexandria Visitor's Center located at 221 King Street.

The Garden Club of Virginia's (GCV) eight-day statewide tour from April 20 to 27 includes 170 private properties throughout Virginia. The Old Town Alexandria tour is hosted by the GCV's two local garden clubs, Hunting Creek Garden Club and Garden Club of Alexandria. For more information, visit www.vagardenweek.org

February's Big Buzz About Bees

PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME

Could the Honeybee become a Virginia mascot?

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION



Of Virginia's 477 bee species, perhaps the best recognized is the Bumblebee (*Bombus*), often spotted visiting area flowers

In case you didn't know, since 2020, February has been designated Winter Honey month in Virginia, a fact perhaps not well advertised outside of the beekeeper community. In this session of the Virginia General Assembly, Delegate Patrick Hope (D-1) introduced HB 517 to designate the European Honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) the official state pollinator.

One might wonder, what is all this buzz about bees and honey this month? As the calendar swings around to February, most think of chocolate as the timely sweet, not winter honey. If one thinks 'honey' at all, it's likely as an endearment for that special someone to whom one might gift chocolate in recognition of February's Valentine's Day. While in ancient times, Egyptians and the Chinese used caramelized honey with fruits and nuts to make candies, in modern day, chocolate is the king cupid of candies.

What is 'winter honey'? Honey produced from the nectar of summer flowers, such as lavender, sunflowers, and clover, takes on slight hues from the flower and tends to a light color. Fall honey produced from the nectar of fall flowers, such as aster and goldenrod, is darker. The darkest color comes from borage, sumac and buckwheat nectars, the later bloomers. Winter honey is the darkest in color although all raw honey darkens a bit with age. There are more than 300 unique types of honey available in the United States, each originating from a different floral source.

There are about 4,000 bee species native to the United States, ranging in size from a tiny two millimeters Sweat bee, to the B-52 bombers of bees, the Carpenter bees, about the size of a grape. Only the honey bee makes honey that humans eat, but in that sense they can be considered livestock, and compete with native bees.

Most bees are solitary, nesting alone in the ground or dried plant stalks, rather than in social hives like the honeybee. All bees gather nectar and pollen. It's their job as important pollinators of plants in our ecosystem for which they are best known and prized.

The European honey bees were sent to Jamestown in 1622, when requested by colonists to help improve crop growth. George Washington raised bees at Mount Ver-

non and is said to have enjoyed honey and hoecakes almost daily for breakfast. Over the years, honey production has drawn both commercial enterprise and hobbyists. In 2022, Virginia produced 240,000 pounds of honey for sale, of the 125 million pounds sold in the United States. That's only a small niche of the market, compared to the number one producing state, North Dakota, which produced over 28 million pounds.

Most commenters on the General Assembly's public comment site largely poo-poo'd the idea of a non-native European as the Virginia pollinator mascot. Instead commenters lauded the host of the Commonwealth's native bees, including numerous species of Bumble (*Bombus* spp), Digger (*Apidae* spp) Mason (*Osmia* spp), Miner (*Andrena* spp), Nomad (*Nomad* spp) Plaster (*Colletidae* spp), and tiny Sweat (*Halictidae* spp) bees, totaling 477 Virginia native species.

Delegate Hope counters that Virginia already has several named Commonwealth mascots which are non-natives, including: the State beverage, milk, from cows introduced in 1609; the State dog, the Foxhound, introduced in 1615; and the recently added Chincoteague pony, from Spain.

A House committee member, who farms, and beekeepers 'droned' on in testimony about the Honey bee's great contribution to State agriculture. Senator Danica Roem 'waxed' on over adding the Bumblebee, a native bee, as well. Hope countered, alluding to the 'honeycomb' of intricacy related to determining which native bees might be added. In the end, the Honey Bee prevailed in the committees of both houses.

Perhaps it is the honey bee's unmatched celebrity, including on a cereal box, an oft used endearment, and a reputation as a hard worker, which gave it an edge over the shy, solitary native bees. Whatever the reason, the bee buzz soon will be moving to the Governor's desk.

For a list of Virginia's 477 bee species see, <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural-heritage/document/vainvertlist-bees.pdf>

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ FEBRUARY 22-28, 2024 ♦ 9



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

THOSE WERE THE DAYS -- Members of the Francis C. Hammond High School Class of 1968 stand in front of the new Hammond Middle School sign as part of a reunion of classmates last fall. Following a tour of their old school the group assembled at Clyde's to celebrate 55 years.

Special Exhibit at Nepenthe Old Town: Judy Heiser & Jennifer Lian

A special exhibit at Nepenthe Old Town features new works by two of Alexandria's most dynamic artists – Judy Heiser and Jennifer Lian. The exhibit will run from March 2 through April 14, 2024.

Judy Heiser has been painting for over 20 years. Her abstract expressionism uses a contemporary palette of mixed media layered in charcoal, acrylic, ink, encaustic, graphite, pastels and oils. Heiser's trademarks are her bold brush work and sweeping strokes of vibrant colors -- an action painter whose art is suffused with ideas, discovery and mystery.

Jennifer Lian has lived in Alexandria for most of her life and attended the College of William & Mary where she earned a degree in Business and a minor in Fine Arts. She has always had an artistic bent with many artists in the family who have influenced her. Her art draws inspiration from nature, travel, interior design and photography in both abstract and realistic forms. Lian has a keen interest in architecture which she enjoys incorporating into her work.

"What an honor it is to shine the spotlight on these two local treasures, both of whom have been Nepenthe artists and friends since the gallery opened two years ago," said owner Carrie Garland. "We are excited to present their latest artworks in this special exhibit at our Old Town location."

Nepenthe Old Town is Nepenthe Gallery's Old Town Alexandria location on the second floor of WINE GALLERY, 108 at 108 N. St. Asaph St. Nepenthe Old Town gallery hours are: Fridays 12-7, Saturdays 11-4, Sundays 2-4 or by appointment by calling/texting: 703-856-5277/703-864-2891

Contact: Anne Fafara anne@nepenthegallery.com (571)234-3602; Carolyn Johnson carolyn@nepenthegallery.com (703)314-5399 www.nepenthegallery.com

Nepenthe Gallery – 7918 Fort Hunt Rd Alexandria, VA 22308 Ph: 571-347-7961

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Jennifer Lian



Judy Heiser

FROM PAGE 5

ramp to Telegraph Road when the man was struck. The APD Crash Team continues to investigate. There are no pending charges at this time. Anyone with information or who may have witnessed this incident is asked to call APD Crash Team Investigator Officer A. Fillinger at 703-746-6677. Tips will remain anonymous.

Police Host Assessment Review for Accreditation

The Alexandria Police Department became a nationally accredited law enforcement agency through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) in 1986. The accreditation process is an ongoing effort to ensure police continue to improve performance, standards, and the services provided to the community.

As part of the accreditation process, the Alexandria Police Department will host its on-site assessment by CALEA assessors from Feb. 19-23. The on-site inspection occurs every four years to validate Department adherence to CALEA standards.

Community members can offer comments to CALEA through an online Public Comment Portal. The community can submit comments regarding the Department's compliance with the CALEA standards, engagement in the community, delivery of public safety services, and overall candidacy for accredited status. These comments can be in the form of commendations or concerns. The intent is to provide the Department with information to support continuous improvement and pursue professional excellence.

To provide a comment, Alexandria residents can do so directly to CALEA, by using this link: <https://cimsr2.calea.org/242>.

Police Investigate Attempted Sexual Assault on Feb. 4

Early Sunday morning, Feb. 4, at approximately 12:03 a.m., Alexandria Police officers responded to the 2200 block of Main Line Boulevard for the report of an assault which just occurred. Officers located an adult female who re-

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Obituary



In loving memory of
Josephine "Jeff; Jo" Garbiras Ruffino
Beloved Mom, Abuela, Aunt, Sister,
Daughter, Neighbor, Friend
April 6, 1932 – February 4, 2021.

Mom, can't believe it's been 3 years; we're still thinking we're going to see you again just as soon as you're back from your latest jaunt across the world. Love you and miss you every day. Friends of Mom, a funeral mass will be held later this year (2024), in the spring or early summer. The mass will be held at Our Lady of Mercy Church in Pottomac, Maryland. Please stay tuned for details on that service when they are confirmed.

Almost home, Mom.

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House of Delegates Considering SB 280, Medical Aid in Dying

Death with dignity bill passed in Virginia Senate.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE PACKET

Virginia is a battleground state within itself. State legislators are fiercely divided concerning proposed legislation, SB 280. If passed, it would allow an eligible adult diagnosed with a terminal disease to request an attending health care provider to prescribe a fatal dose of a controlled substance to be self-administered for the purpose of ending the patient's life.

Senate Bill 280, one of the two Virginia bills concerning Death with Dignity, passed the Senate. Its companion, House Bill 858, which was originally "put on hold for the day," failed in committee.

Crossover Day, Feb. 13, this year in the Virginia General Assembly was the legislative day of the session, where bills pass out of their respective chambers to be considered by the other chamber, or not.

End of life choice, which could allow a terminally ill person to die on their terms, is a controversial issue in the United States and Virginia.

U.S. Rep. Jennifer Wexton (D-10), announced she would not run for reelection after being diagnosed with incurable progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP). "If this bill becomes law in Virginia, it would return the control over to when, where and how our stories end to us, not to our diseases," wrote Wexton in a letter read in the Virginia Senate by Sen. Jennifer Boisko.

In ten states and the District of Columbia,

some patients with terminal illnesses can request medication from their doctors to end their lives.

Fifteen states, including Virginia, are currently considering Death with Dignity bills that would allow physician-assisted deaths.

In Colorado, an amendment would, among other things, remove the residency requirement and reduce the waiting period from 15 days to 48 hours in its End of Life Options Act (2016). In New Jersey, Assembly Bill No. 407 introduced by Assemblyman Robert Auth (R), would repeal the state's Aid in Dying for the Terminally Ill Act (2019).

Between now and Saturday, March 9, when the 2024 Regular Session of the Virginia General Assembly is scheduled to finish or adjourn sine die, the Senate can only hear bills that passed in the House of Delegates, and the House can only hear bills that passed in the Senate. No new bills can be introduced. If the bill passes before the General Assembly wraps up on March 9, it is sent to the governor's desk. The governor can veto it, sign it into law, or allow it to become law without his signature.

On Feb. 7, SB 280 passed on a party line vote (21-Y-19-N). SB 280 was introduced by Sen. Ghazala F. Hashmi (D-15). The tally sheet reports: YEAS--Aird, Bagby, Boisko, Carroll Foy, Deeds, Ebbin, Favola, Hashmi, Locke, Lucas, Marsden, McPike, Pekarsky, Perry, Roem, Rouse, Salim, Subramanyam, Surovell, VanValkenburg, Williams Graves--21; and NAYS--Craig, DeSteph, Diggs, Durant, French, Hackworth, Head, Jordan, McDougale, McGuire, Mulchi, Obenshain, Peake, Pillion, Reeves, Stanley, Stuart, Sturtevant, Suetterlein..

Hashmi said in her release regarding the passage of SB 280 that it was "inspiring to see such legislation, intended to bring ease from physical pain to those in the final stages of life, pass through the full Senate cham-

ber." She added that having spoken with numerous Virginians and many constituents, the legislation is vital for their families.

Boisko, co-patron of SB 280, reading from the letter by U.S. Rep. Wexton, said that Wexton's Progressive Supranuclear Palsy had worsened. "It has become clear that no matter how many medications I take or how many hours of physical, occupational, and speech therapy I do, I cannot stop PSP's inevitable progression."

In a statement by the Virginia Catholic Conference on "Assisted Suicide Legislation," dated Feb. 5, Bishop Michael Francis Burbidge, Catholic Diocese of Arlington, and Bishop Barry C. Knestout of the Diocese of Richmond wrote, "Human life is sacred and must never be abandoned or discarded. ... In Oregon, only 3.3% of the patients who died by assisted suicide since its legalization in 1998 were referred for psychiatric evaluation."

In an update on last week's rapid-paced Virginia General Assembly processes pending Crossover Day on Tuesday, Feb. 13, HB 858 Health Care — decision-making, end-of-life penalties introduced by Del. Patrick Hope (D-1) would have granted "immunity from civil or criminal liability and professional disciplinary action to any person who complies with the provisions of the bill and allows health care providers to refuse to participate in the provision of a self-administered controlled substance to a patient for the purpose of ending the patient's life," according to Virginia's Legislative Information System.

Following the Senate passage of SB 280, the Virginia Society for Human Life released a statement saying that Virginia Democrats voted to undermine state protective assisted suicide law. "Current law in Virginia protects vulnerable patients and doctors from being pressured into assisted suicide situations," states the release.

Same Old Story. Thank God!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not to be overly self-indulgent but, a 15-year anniversary of when I was originally diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer stage IV (on Feb. 20, 2009), is worth mentioning, if I do say so myself. And I do. Moreover, that diagnosis came with a "13 month to two-year" prognosis. In effect a "terminal" diagnosis. I was age 54 and a half — and was just told I might not make it to age 56. Stunned doesn't begin to describe my reaction. A non-smoker my whole life with no cancer in my immediate family, the diagnosis seemed peculiar. Not that I ever woe is me but receiving this kind of prognosis led me to wonder what I did to deserve this devastating news. My oncologist couldn't offer an explanation as to why. Sometimes, there's no rhyme or reason — or no straight line from "normal" health to the slippery slope that I was now on. Cancer is not arithmetic. It didn't matter why. It only mattered that it was. My oncologist was more interested in treating my forward than he was in examining my past.

And so, it has been for almost 15 years, as I write this column on Sun. Feb. 18. I certainly remember the beginning, middle and end of the diagnostic process: eight weeks from start to finish. And when Team Lourie met — for the first time, the doctor/oncologist who would become the center of my apparently shrinking universe, we entered totally foreign territory. I had never spent a night in a hospital or even broken a bone. Yet here I was sitting across from an oncologist.

We sat in the waiting room until my name was called. We were led to the doctor's office. He was sitting down waiting for us. He stood up from behind his desk and introduced himself. After the usual pleasantries, we all sat back down, across from one another. The oncologist began by reading the reports/summaries from all the doctors I had visited while trying to determine the cause for my original discomfort in my left-side rib cage. Discomfort that forced me to go to the emergency room on Jan. 1, 2009. First came the report from the emergency room doctor, followed by the pulmonologist, thoracic surgeon, general surgeon (who performed the biopsy), the pathologist (who evaluated the tissue sample), and the oncologist who summarized it all and thus had the grim task of telling me/Team Lourie what all the doctor's reports had indicated/confirmed: non-small cell lung cancer stage IV. Five opinions. I didn't think I needed a sixth.

As a result, a week later I had my first chemotherapy infusion. This would go on every three weeks for years. Each appointment lasted anywhere from two hours to six hours, depending on the chemotherapy infused. In addition, I was getting quarterly CT scans to monitor the tumors in my lungs characterized as "Too many. They're like weeds," by my oncologist. And what happened? I didn't die. I thrived even. My oncologist was perplexed. Non-small cell lung cancer stage IV is a killer. Yet here I was, years later, alive, and reasonably well. He called me his "third miracle."

As time passed — and I kept showing up for appointments, if you know what I mean, my oncologist occasionally reassessed my condition. But he didn't find enough convincing evidence to alter my treatment, re-stage my disease or even investigate too much further. It wasn't until I presented with a lump in my throat above my Adams apple that I was referred to an endocrinologist. I made the appointment and again Team Lourie showed up. It took the endocrinologist two seconds (I'm exaggerating. Maybe it was five seconds) to ask me about the lump in my throat. It took her another 10 seconds, after I explained that I'd had this lump for nine months or so — and it had never been biopsied (to her shock) to tell us that she was going to biopsy that lump then and there. (It was a needle biopsy, so it was quite manageable right in her office.) After the procedure, the endocrinologist told me she'd have the results of the biopsy in a few days. The next day I received a call from her. Apparently, in her opinion, I never had stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer. I had, according to her, — and since this was year 9/10, was very slow-moving papillary thyroid cancer. I wasn't anybody's miracle. Instead, I might have been somebody's error.

Now we got that sixth opinion: from the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University. We sent over my medical records and then set an in-person appointment to follow up with a thyroid cancer doctor. Again, we sat in an office across from the doctor who said quite simply and happily: "If you had lung cancer, we wouldn't be having this conversation." Meaning, if I had lung cancer, I wouldn't be alive. She confirmed the diagnosis and agreed with the medication I was taking and so we went home, as pleased as possible after receiving a cancer diagnosis. However, considering what our previous cancer diagnosis was compared to what the doctor thinks it is now, we felt, for the first time since the original diagnosis, hope.

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

NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 10

ported she was walking down an alleyway when an unknown male attempted to sexually assault her. Upon arriving, officers established a perimeter with the intention to arrest the suspect. One of the officers on scene initiated a foot pursuit with a man believed to be the suspect, however he escaped.

The seriousness of this crime evoked a heavy police presence with mutual aid support from other jurisdictions including Fairfax County Police Department and Metro Transit Police Department.

This investigation remains active. Detectives are speaking with witnesses, reviewing video footage, and following up on leads. APD is asking for the community's help by providing any information or video footage that could assist detectives in this case, please call APD Detective Matteson at 703-746-6721.

If you have video that could support this investigation, please use the link below or scan the QR code directly to upload material: <https://alexandriapdva.evidence.com/axon/community-request/public/mainlineblvd>

Additionally, APD is aware of community concerns surrounding a loud noise believed to be associated with this incident. There was no evidence of the use of a firearm and there were no reports of an explosion in this area related to this incident.

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Black History Month Events

ALMA THOMAS ART

When: Friday, Feb. 23, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Where: Beth Patridge Meeting Room in James M. Duncan Jr. Branch Library (2501 Commonwealth Ave.)

Admission: Free

Celebrate Black History Month by creating your own art piece inspired by Alma Thomas. All materials will be provided. The event is for children ages 6 to 12 and teens.

For reasonable disability accommodation for any of these events, contact jgregorio@alexlibraryva.org.

COMMUNITY SCHOLARS IN THE PARLOR:

A LOCAL BLACK HISTORY DISCUSSION SERIES

When: Saturday, Feb. 24, 1-2 p.m.

Where: Local History/Special Collections (717 Queen St.)

Admission: Free

Join local researchers in a discussion about Alexandrian Black History and its impact on the broader community.

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OPEN SAT 2/24, 1-3



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Lauren Bishop 202.361.5079
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Alexandria/Seminary | \$1,895,000

Stunning custom designed and built Williamsburg colonial on secluded grounds in the Seminary area. From the elegant entry foyer to the landscaped gardens with patios, pergola and gardener's outbuilding, this home is unique! Featuring formal living rooms and spacious family rooms, a primary suite on the main level and 3 more bedrooms upstairs with a sitting/playroom. By appointment Only. 3720 Seminary Rd
Kate Patterson 703.627.2166
www.KatePattersonHomes.com



OPEN SUN 2/25, 1-3



Seminary Ridge | \$1,575,000

This stately brick colonial has gorgeous curb appeal and has been completely redesigned & renovated for today's lifestyle. 5 bedrooms, 5.5 baths, gourmet kitchen, large dining area, open living/family room, finished lower level, and patio. 4012 N Garland St
Shay Linares 571.331.6000
www.novafineliving.com



Hunting Creek | \$1,500,000

Located in a peaceful neighborhood just minutes from the Metro, this stunning residence offers luxury living on a spacious quarter-acre lot. 6 bedrooms, 5.5 baths, open main living level with gourmet kitchen, screened porch, and beautiful yard with patio. 5825 Foley St
Kate Bertles Hennigan 202.321.3427
www.KateBertlesHennigan.com



Old Town | \$1,335,000

Stunning 2-bedroom, 2-bath Swann Daingerfield condo offers a blend of elegance with the ease of one floor living. Distinctive features include original heart pine floors, 11'6" ceilings, a fireplace, stainless kitchen. Private patio and 1 off-street parking space. 702 Prince St #2
Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421
www.BabsBeckwith.com

OPEN SAT 2/24, 2-4 & SUN 2/25, 1-3



Potomac Yard | \$1,195,000

This stunning, 4-level, end-unit townhouse was built in 2016 and features over 2,500 SF of sunlit space. Open main level with 10-ft ceilings, large kitchen with island, family room with gas fireplace, and balcony. Rooftop deck and 2-car garage. 1301 Van Valkenburgh Lane
Laura Schwartz 703.283.6120
www.GuidingYourMove.com



Parker Gray | \$1,049,900

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The Irmer Group 703.346.7283
www.TheIrmerGroup.com



Old Town Greens | \$929,900

Situated on a quiet street, this home has been carefully updated and beautifully maintained. Entry level with flexible office/bedroom and full bath. Kitchen with breakfast/sitting area, gas fireplace, & balcony. Primary suite with oversized bath & large loft. 703 Norfolk Lane
Mason Montague Bavin 703.338.6007
Susan Bruce Anthony 703.795.9536

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