

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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FEBRUARY 29, 2024

Local Couple Feared Dead in Yacht Hijacking

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry were longtime residents of Del Ray prior to selling their possessions to buy a catamaran and sail during their retirement. The couple is now presumed dead after their yacht was discovered abandoned with signs of violence in the Caribbean.

Former Del Ray residents Brandel, Hendry missing in Caribbean.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The news has reverberated around the world: An American couple is presumed dead after their catamaran was found adrift in the Caribbean with signs of violence discovered on board. But in Alexandria, the heartbreak is especially profound as the search continues for answers to the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry.

Brandel and Hendry were longtime residents of Del Ray before selling their home and possessions to live their dream of spending their retirement sailing aboard *Simplicity*, the catamaran they had sailed from Virginia to Antigua at the end of 2023 before spending the winter sailing the Caribbean islands.

"I have cried so many tears over this," said Donna Anderson, owner of Sweet Fire Donna's restaurant in Carlyle. "It is just the most horrendous thing I have ever heard of in my life."

Brandel and Anderson have been friends for decades; Brandel served as a bridesmaid in Anderson's 1988 wedding to "Mango" Mike Anderson.

"Kathy and Ralph have been out on the water for several years now," Anderson said.



Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry aboard their yacht *Simplicity*.

"Kathy and Ralph were just now beginning to talk about coming in to land again since Kathy just had a grandson."

— Donna Anderson

"They were just now beginning to talk about coming in to land again since Kathy just had a grandson."

Both Brandel and Hendry were seasoned sailors vacationing in Grenada at the time of their disappearance. They were members

SEE LOCAL COUPLE, PAGE 10



Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry were married for 27 years. They are shown in an undated family photo.



Kathy Brandel had a passion for being on the water.

Living Legend Carolyn Lewis

Educator improving the lives of others.

BY MIKE SALMON
GAZETTE PACKET

Since her early days in Alexandria, Carolyn B. Lewis put her energy into improving the lives of young people and helping them move forward with a promising future. Although she has been involved with a number of programs, Project Discovery Alexandria was her baby and she's seen it grow to an organization with 20 chapters in seven states providing guidance to students pursuing higher education.

Project Discovery Alexandria (PDA) prepares and motivates low income and first-generation college-eligible students to access opportunities in higher education. Through workshops and trips to college campuses, Project Discovery Alexandria provides vital information about how to set and achieve educational goals. This program is supported by the Project Discovery Advisory Board whose mission is to raise funds, promote community involvement and foster positive public relations.

"A former superintendent of schools was one of our Project Discovery kids," Lewis said, looking back on her many accomplishments.

Iburia Hall-Haynes has known Lewis for more than 30 years and saw the result of her efforts including Project Discovery. "Through her leadership as co-founder of Project Discovery of Alexandria as a teacher, mentor, principal, church member, family member and friend, she has made a substantial difference," said Haynes in a summary of her experiences with Lewis.

Project Discovery wasn't the only thing on Lewis's plate in Alexandria. She was involved with Brother's Keepers, a community organization, Feed the Five Thousands, and Tree of Lights, while she volunteered at the polls, AARP and helping those attending adult high school. Along the way she's seen generations of families grow through the city programs.

One Alexandria resident who is now a grandmother went on to explain her impact. "Ms. Lewis is the person who contributed to my success and is the one responsible for my graduation from high school," the woman told Haynes. She said that Lewis would come to her home and make sure that she came to school and encouraged her every step of the way.

Brother's Keepers is a community initiative, run by the historic Alfred Street Baptist Church that Lewis has been involved with since 1969. In July, Lewis was involved in a church initiative giving out school supplies to families in the D.C. area. It's the initiative's 22nd year helping families in underserved communities. The church choir is one of her passions. "I love singing, only in the choir though, no solos," she said.

In 2002, Lewis was recognized by Alexandria's Commission for Women in the Annual Salute to Women Awards in the Education/



PHOTO BY STEVEN HALPERSON/TISARA STUDIOS

Carolyn B. Lewis was named a 2023 Living Legend of Alexandria for her impact on the lives of young people.

Carolyn Lewis has seen Project Discovery Alexandria grow to an organization with 20 chapters in seven states providing guidance to students pursuing higher education.

Training category.

Lewis was born and raised in Whitakers, N.C. She was one of 12 children – eight girls and four boys. "It was wonderful growing up with so many siblings," said Lewis, who was the youngest girl and third youngest in her family. After graduating from Swift Creek High School, she attended North Carolina Central University majoring in physical education with a minor in education and biology.

"I didn't want to have a career that kept me inside," Lewis said. "I wanted to be able

to go outside. I didn't really want to teach but back when I was coming along they really only told you that you could be a teacher or a nurse."

Following her college graduation, Lewis learned that the Alexandria school district was looking for a PE teacher at what was then T.C. Williams High School. She applied but was instead sent to Parker-Gray, where she began her career in 1969. When that school closed its doors she ended up at T.C. She met her husband at T.C., where he was

a music teacher. Now divorced, they had one son, Elwood "Woody" T. Lewis Jr., and she has one granddaughter, Sophia.

"But you can't tell kids in Alexandria that I only have one son," she laughed, "because according to them I have hundreds of kids."

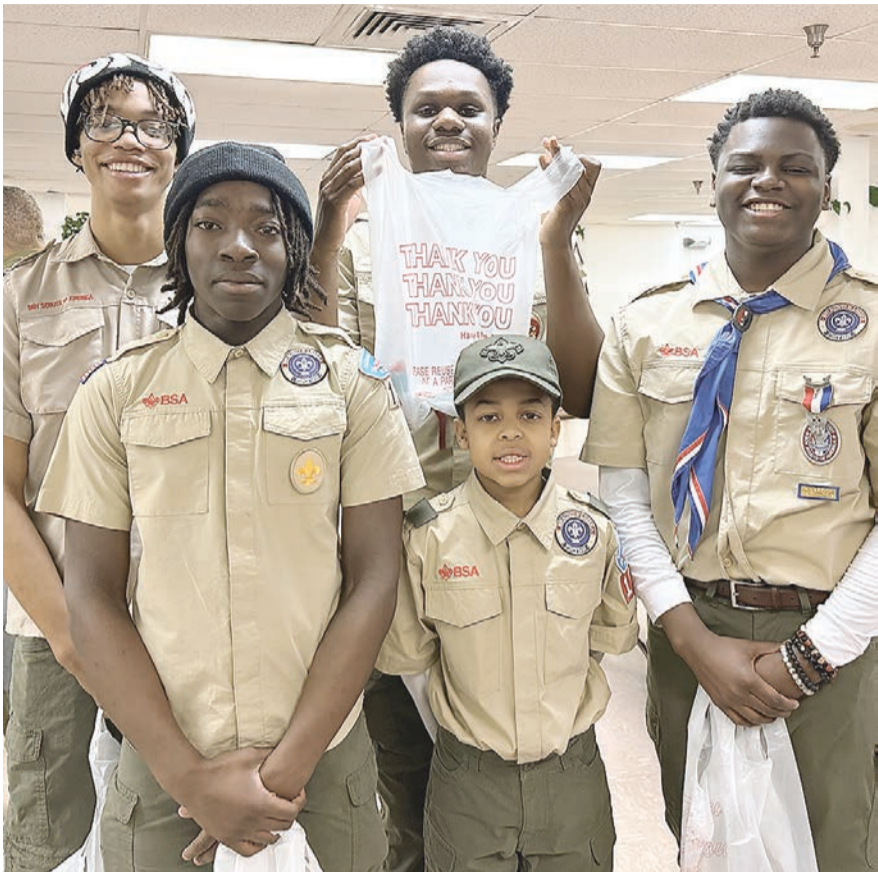
One of those hundreds, Joseph Williams, is especially close to Lewis.

"Joe really considers himself my son and he is really close to me," said Lewis, who is also close to Williams' wife Meryl, daughter Lillian and son Warren.

It's her family along with the network of friends that she has cultivated over more than 50 years in Alexandria that keeps her optimistic as she is being treated for Stage IV breast cancer.

"No matter what I am going through now I know I have had a good life," Lewis said. "I am truly blessed."

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Alfred Street Baptist Church Troop 133 members gather for a photo after assembling 1,000 cold weather kits for distribution at homeless shelters. Pictured in back: Aidan Scott, Evan Kinsel, Alijah Myers. Front: Jalen Moore, Chase Monterio.

Alfred Street Baptist Church Troop 133 Eagle Scouts gather Feb. 24 to assemble 1,000 cold weather survival kits for distribution at homeless shelters.

Eagle Scouts Soar

ASBC Troop 133 prepares cold weather kits for people experiencing homelessness.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Members of Alfred Street Baptist Church Scout Troop 133 gathered Feb. 24 to assemble 1,000 cold weather kits for distribu-

tion to area homeless shelters. “We are making 1,000 cold weather survival kits for the homeless and the needy that will be distributed at shelters,” said 16-year-old Eagle Scout Evan Kinsel. “This is a service project for myself but I also really want to do for others. That’s always been a

philosophy for my family.” Each cold weather survival kit contained essential items such as an emergency thermal blanket, thermal socks, a winter hat, gloves, a scarf, 10-hour hand warmers, disposable washcloths, soap, toothpaste, and toothbrushes. Feminine hygiene supplies for

women were also collected. Led by Scoutmaster Bryan Nails and ASBC Deacon and Homeless Outreach minister Vernon Hammett, the group also assembled 250 lunch kits for distribution to those in need.

SEE EAGLE SCOUTS, PAGE 5

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Guest speaker Hank Van Putten, a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Facilitator, addresses attendees at the CCNA Community Stakeholders breakfast Feb. 13 at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church.



Col James Paige with Michelle Millben at the CCNA Community Stakeholders breakfast Feb. 13 at St. Joseph’s Catholic Church.

Bridging the Gap

CCNA hosts community leaders to address health, education inequities.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria, in partnership with St. Joseph’s Catholic Church, held a Community Stakeholders breakfast Feb. 13 as part of a Black History Month. The gathering focused on issues affecting Black families in the city.

Held at the church on N. Columbus Street, the theme of the breakfast was Bridging the Gap: Strategies for Advancing Access and Equity in Education, Health and Social Justice for the Black

Family.

Coordinated by CCNA executive director Col. James Paige, featured speakers at the event included Hank Van Putten, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Facilitator/Trainer for the Peace and Justice Institute in Orlando, Natalie Talis of the Alexandria Health Department, and attorney Rawle Andrews Jr.

“As the community celebrates Black History Month, one of the challenges that we don’t often discuss is mental wellbeing,” Andrews said.

“So one of things that Col. Paige has asked us to do is get together as a community of

SEE CCNA HOST, PAGE 7

OPINION

Bills To the Governor

Governor can sign, veto, amend or take no action on bills that reach his desk. Read on to see what happens next in each case.

BY SENATOR ADAM EBBIN

With the last two weeks of session finally upon us in Richmond, the Senate and House are hard at work. More than 400 bills have passed through both chambers, and more than 700 are still under consideration. In the waning days of the session, the bills passed by the Senate and House will be transmitted to Governor Youngkin.

The governor has provided little in the way of a preview of what legislative actions he may take, including whether he will sign, amend, or veto bills that would increase the minimum wage and better protect communities from gun violence. Like most Virginians, I hope Governor Youngkin will allow these important bills to become law this year.

As part of the legislative process, the Governor of Virginia can take four actions on bills that reach their desk:



❖ **Sign:** Legislation that is signed into law by the governor will go into effect on the next July 1st, unless otherwise provided for in the bill.

❖ **Veto:** When a governor vetoes a bill, it is transmitted back to the legislative chamber in which it was introduced. That chamber, whether the Senate or the House, may vote to approve, or reject, a veto from the governor by a simple majority vote in both chambers. At least two-thirds of the members elected to a given chamber can vote to enact a bill notwithstanding a veto from a governor (a.k.a., an override of the veto). In the Senate, this requires at least 27 Senators; in the House, at least 67 votes are required. Because of the high threshold voting requirement, and the near evenly-divided General Assembly, overrides of gubernatorial vetoes are rare in recent Virginia history.

❖ **Amend:** If a governor wants to change legislation that has reached his desk, they can propose an amendment to that bill. If they so

choose, the bill is then transmitted back to the legislative chamber in which it was introduced. That chamber, whether the Senate or the House, may vote to approve or reject the proposed amendment from the governor by a simple majority vote. If the amendment is rejected, the House and Senate can also vote to pass the underlying legislation notwithstanding the objection, or amendment, of the governor. Such an action requires approval of at least two-thirds of the members elected to each legislative chamber, akin to a veto override.

❖ **Take No Action:** Though historically rare, the Governor of Virginia need not sign a bill in order for it to become law. As a matter of fact, any bill sent to the governor's desk will become law if it is not acted on.

As the work of the 2024 session continues towards its end point, please keep in mind that the final step in the process is the governor, who must take action — or take no action — on all bills within 30 days of adjournment of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly will then reconvene on April 17 to vote on any vetoes and amendments proposed by Governor Youngkin. I look forward to updating you further on these and other bills as we move toward the end of the legislative session.

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

250 Years Of Revolutionary History

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, I wanted to highlight another anniversary in Virginia's revolutionary history.

This May 6 will mark 250 years since our predecessor, the Virginia House of Burgesses, was dissolved in 1774. George Washington was one of many revolutionary figures who served in the House, holding office from 1758 until he was appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental Army in 1775. The watershed decision to dissolve the House came after burgesses adopted resolutions in support of Boston following the



harsh British response to the Boston Tea Party. The House served at the call of the British-appointed colonial governor, who abruptly ended session as punishment for such a clear display of revolutionary sentiment.

But a number of burgesses remained in Williamsburg, asserting that they had been properly elected and could not be dismissed so easily. They moved to a small tavern and continued their duties there, eventually passing a resolution to convene a meeting in August of 1774 that would become the first Virginia Revolutionary Convention.

Despite gaining a reputation as a reserved and cautious legislator during his fifteen years

of service, Washington joined the remaining burgesses and became a member of that first Revolutionary convention. It was a bold choice, one that came with many risks, but it represented his full commitment to revolution, a decision that would define the rest of his life.

Here in Virginia, the dissolution of the House of Burgesses paved the way for our first state constitution and the transformation from the colonial House of Burgesses into the House of Delegates, both of which were laid out in the fifth Virginia Convention.

Washington was leading the Continental Army by that point and could not participate, but he had already helped lay the groundwork as part of the initial spirit of revolution in Virginia in 1774, 250 years ago.

Is This Acceptable?

If you have driven down Sherwood Hall Lane on a Saturday morning you have most likely seen the anti-choice protestors who congregate in front of the medical building.

Protestors set up tables with donuts and coffee, park in the medical building and bank parking lots, and block the sidewalk. They set up signs and banners with pictures of supposedly aborted remains which are extremely graphic in nature. They block pedestrians and vehicles on private property while pressuring people to take brochures. They follow people into the building and stand on the sensors that allow the doors to close in order to verbally abuse and intimidate patients. In the past few weeks they have brought in

bull horns and microphones to amplify their message which has angered the people who live in the townhouses next door.

LETTER We write this simply to ask the community if this is acceptable? Is it ok for this behavior to be normalized, and if not then how do we come together as a community to protect people's right to privacy and decency?

We champion the right to protest and have participated in peaceful protests in the past, but we feel that in this case the line between protesting and harassment has been crossed and it affects all of us.

Nearby Neighbors
Alexandria

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Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue.

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

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Jeanne Theismann

jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

Janet Barnett, John Bordner, Mark Mogle

Contributing Photographers
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Photographer and Writer
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Eden Brown, Bridgette Adu-Wadier, Glenda Booth

Contributing Writers
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Hope Nelson

Food Writer
hope@kitchenrecessionista.com
@kitchenrecess

Michael Pope

Senior Reporter
michaelpope@gmail.com
@michaelpope

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Disply Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment Advertising
703-778-9431

Publisher

Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

Editor Emeritus:

Mary Anne Weber

CIRCULATION Circulation Manager:

Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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Eagle Scouts Soar

FROM PAGE 3

“The Scouts were able to collect so many additional donations,” said Trinette Chandler, Kinsel’s mother. “In addition to the 1,000 cold weather survival kits that were distributed, there are enough that the church can continue using them next month. This really highlights the Eagle Scouts and the impact of their service to the community.”

“I really want to do for others.”
— Eagle Scout Evan Kinsel

PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET



Deacon and Homeless Outreach minister Vernon Hammett with Eagle Scout Evan Kinsel and Kinsel’s mother Trinette Chandler Feb. 24 at Alfred Street Baptist Church.



Alfred Street Baptist Church Troop 133 Scoutmaster Bryan Nails and Deacon and Homeless Outreach minister Vernon Hammett Feb. 24 at ASBC.

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Six in 10 People with Dementia Will Wander

Alzheimer's Association offer tips to prepare for this emergency situation.

On March 7, 2023, Fairfax County Police on alerted on Twitter: "#Missing 79-yr-old Catherine Hudgins last seen 1:20 pm leaving the 2200 block of Colts Neck Rd in Reston. 5'7", 162lbs, grey hair, brown eyes, gray jacket, blue jeans, gray sneakers. Endangered due to mental &/or physical health concerns. Call 703-691-2131. #FCPD"

The alert was like a bolt of electricity throughout Northern Virginia where so many people know and love the former Hunter Mill Supervisor Cathy Hudgins. Fortunately, a police license plate reader led authorities to a bus driver who had seen Hudgins. The information led to finding her safe and returning her to her home.

While many episodes of wandering don't get farther than the driveway or a helpful neighbor, not all end happily.

Wandering and getting lost is common among people living with Alzheimer's or other dementia and can happen during any stage of the disease. Six in 10 people living with dementia will wander at least once; many do so repeatedly. Although common, wandering can be dangerous — even life-threatening — and the stress of this risk weighs heavily on caregivers and family.

According to the Alzheimer's Association, on Feb. 8, Judy Hollon, a woman with dementia, wandered from home and was found deceased in the North Fork of the Shenandoah River. Just a few weeks earlier, Eucharia Eleweanya, also a woman with dementia, wandered from her home in Prince George's County and was found deceased a week later.

"Anyone who has memory problems and is able to walk is at risk for wandering," said Cindy Schelhorn, senior director of communications and marketing with the Alzheimer's Association National Capital Area Chapter. "Even in the early stages of dementia, the person can become disoriented or confused for a period of time and may not remember his or her name or address."

Behaviors that may indicate an increased risk of wandering include:

- ❖ Forgetting how to get to familiar places
- ❖ Talking about fulfilling former obligations, such as going to work
- ❖ Trying or wanting to "go home," even when at home

The stress experienced by families and caregivers when a person living with dementia wanders and becomes lost is significant. Planning ahead and being prepared is critical when this dangerous — and potentially fatal — situation occurs. When preparing an emergency plan, be sure to:

- ❖ Ask neighbors, friends and family to call if they see the person alone.
- ❖ Keep a recent, close-up photo and cur-

rent medical information on hand to give to police.

- ❖ Know your neighborhood and any dangerous areas nearby, i.e. bodies of water, dense foliage, bus stops or busy roads.

- ❖ Create a list of places where the person may wander, including past jobs, former homes, places of worship, or a favorite restaurant.

- ❖ Consider enrolling the person in a wandering response service.

"When a memory-impaired person goes missing, don't wait. Begin looking immediately," said Schelhorn. "Many people who wander are found within 1.5 miles of where they disappeared. If the person isn't located within 15 minutes, call 911 and report that a person with Alzheimer's disease or dementia is missing."

Wandering situations can happen even to the most diligent of caregivers. Following are strategies to help lower the chances of a wandering incident:

- ❖ Identify the time of day the person is most likely to wander. Plan activities, such as folding laundry or preparing dinner, to keep the person engaged and reduce anxiety, agitation and restlessness.

- ❖ Reassure the person if he or she feels lost, abandoned or disoriented. If the person wants to "go home" or "go to work," use communication focused on exploration and validation. Refrain from correcting the person.

- ❖ Ensure all basic needs are met, including toileting, nutrition and hydration.

- ❖ Avoid busy places that are confusing and can cause disorientation.

- ❖ Use devices that signal when a door or window is opened. This can be as simple as a bell placed above a door or as sophisticated as an electronic home alarm.

- ❖ Do not leave someone with dementia unsupervised in new or changed surroundings. Never lock a person in at home or leave him or her in a car alone.

- ❖ If the person is no longer driving, remove access to car keys — a person with dementia may not just wander by foot. The person may forget that he or she can no longer drive. If the person is still able to drive, consider using a GPS device to help if they get lost.

The Alzheimer's Association can provide families and caregivers with additional guidance on keeping people with memory issues safe. For more information, call the Association's free 24/7 Helpline at 800-272-3900 or visit alz.org/safety.

About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia.

SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

Annual Gala and Silent Auction

The 2024 Senior Services of Alexandria Annual Gala and Silent Auction is Saturday, March 16 from 6-10 p.m. at The Westin Alexandria Old Town

400 Courthouse Square Alexandria, VA 22314

Save the date for SSA's Annual Gala and Silent Auction on Saturday, March 16, 2024. The Gala will be honoring four amazing Alexandrians: Debra Collins, Lucky & Brenda Elliott, and Donnan C. Wintermute. They are pillars in our community supporting the lives of older adults. Join SSA, Alexandria City officials, and other community leaders, along with Presenting Sponsor, Benchmark at Alexandria, for this exciting evening, featuring dinner, games, a live raffle, and a silent auction. Celebrate SSA's 56th anniversary and help make Alexandria a place where all can age with dignity. Presenting Sponsor: Bench-

mark of Alexandria

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Tickets on Eventbrite

SSA Connection Goes Live! - Thursday, March 21, 10 - 11:30 am -

Beth El Hebrew Congregation - 3830 Seminary Road

Senior Services of Alexandria's March 21 "Senior Living in Alexandria" event will be a fun one. The popular weekly newsletter, SSA Connection, is coming to you in person! "SSA Connection Live"

will feature inspiring guest speakers, interactive presentations, and so much fun! The March "SSA Connection Live" workshop is free and open to the public, but please RSVP by emailing events@seniorservicesalex.org or calling 703-836-4414, ext. 110.

Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) is a non-profit organization that has as its mission, "to foster independence and self-sufficiency, enabling seniors within the City of Alexandria to age with dignity."

SSA operates the Meals on Wheels delivery program, a fee-free Groceries to Go service, a Friendly Visitor Program; AniMeals; DOT Paratransit transportation; and Education and Information programs including monthly Senior Living in Alexandria events and the Senior Ambassador Program.

<https://seniorservicesalex.org/>

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.

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.volunteerallexandria.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.volunteerallexandria.org/ALIVE>
Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to

helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com.

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

ALIVE! offers numerous programs

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PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Col. James Paige, Ebony Fleming, Natalie Talis, Sheriff Sean Casey and Rawle Andrews Jr. at the Community Stakeholders breakfast Feb. 13 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

CCNA Hosts Community Leaders To Address Health, Education Inequities

FROM PAGE 3

leaders to talk about how we can better address the mental health and emotional needs of our community. We need to look at whether we are succeeding because of or in spite of some of the barriers that have been put before us."

Community leaders in attendance included Sheriff Sean Casey, Ebony Fleming of the City of Alexandria, and Michelle Millben, a leader in the business and ministry communities.

"We have stakeholders here that work in city government, health, employment, Senior Services, and clergy who serve directly in the community supporting mental health services," Millben said.

"As the community celebrates Black History Month, one of the challenges that we don't often discuss is mental wellbeing."

— Rawle Andrews Jr.

"We are all coming together to learn about the impact of health, poverty, housing -- all things that are important to our health and happening in our community."

Announced at the breakfast was a grant of \$18,000 from the American Psychiatric Association to CCNA to help community wellness initiatives.

Added Millben, "We're trying to rally together to see what strategies look like, what resources look like, and make sure that there is more of a coordinated effort so that Alexandria can be a place where everybody lives, works and can raise a fam-

ily." www.ccnaalexandria.org

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

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

teer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

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

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of

opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org

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THE CHAMBER ALX

THE CHAMBER ALX'S women's leadership forum

PRESENTED BY TING INTERNET

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ENTERTAINMENT

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 31

Christine Ruksenas-Burton Exhibit. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Christine Ruksenas-Burton's body of work is composed of hard-edge color field linear abstractions, a style rooted in a movement that began in New York City in the 1940s and pioneered by Mark Rothko, Josef Albers, Carmen Herrera, Fanny Sanin, Barnett Newman, Ellsworth Kelly and Clyfford Still.

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.

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 alexlibraryva.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 through-

out 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 the 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 a 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.

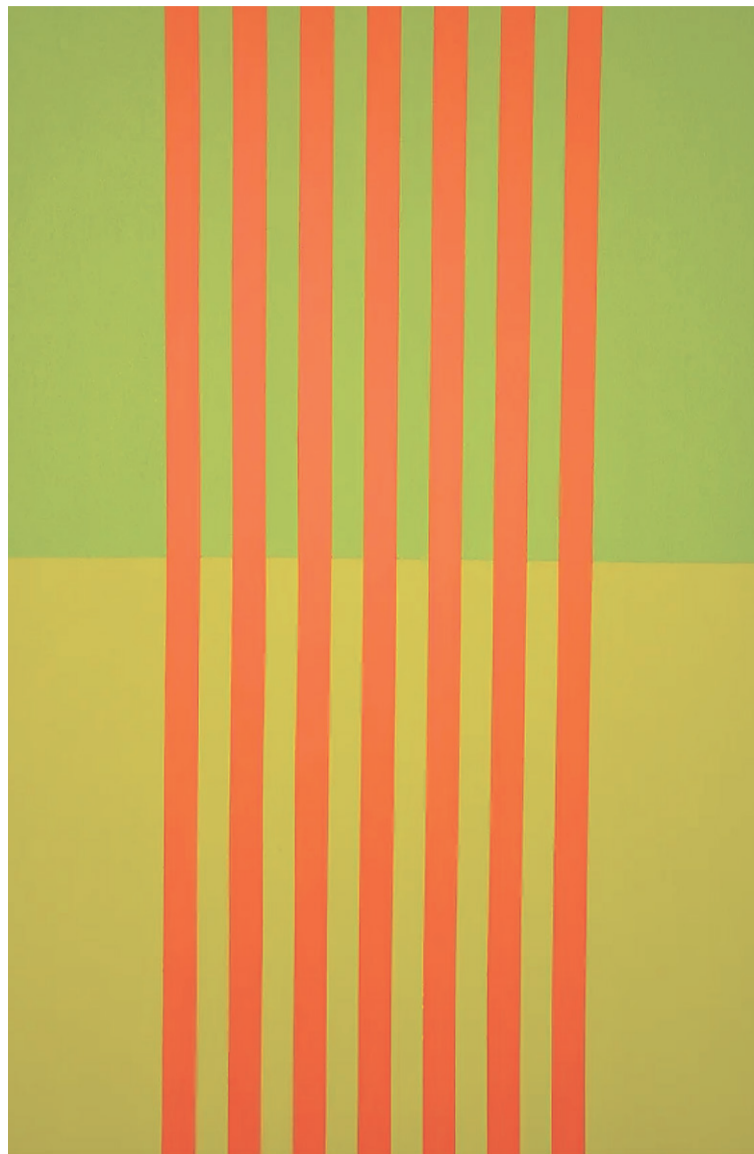
MARCH 1-30

"The Power of Two" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernonn 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

FRIDAY/MARCH 1

Welcome Nepenthe Old Town.

4-7 pm. At 108 N. St. Asaph Street, Alexandria. Join Wine Gallery 108 and Nepenthe Gallery's featured fe-



The Christine Ruksenas-Burton Exhibit will be held now through March 31, 2024 at The Athenaeum in Alexandria.

male artists for a wine and cheese reception.

SATURDAY/MARCH 2

Stuff the Bus. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Mount Vernon Shoppers, 7660 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Stuff the Bus is a partnership between Fairfax County Government and local nonprofits to help restock the shelves of food pantries during the winter months after the holidays. Since launching in 2011, Stuff the Bus has collected more than 281,500 pounds of food to feed people experiencing food insecurity in Fairfax County. You can help Stuff the Bus and Un-Stuff the Bus for United Community by volunteering on March 2 or dropping off food donations at the Mount Vernon Shoppers.

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 Court-house 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

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 13

Potomac Harmony Chorus Concert.

7:30 p.m. At The View Alexandria (formerly The Hermitage), 5000 Fairbanks Avenue, Alexandria. The Potomac Harmony Chorus

invites you to their upcoming free performance as they prepare for regional competition. This will be the first competition for Potomac Harmony following the hiring of their new director, Allison Lynskey. As part of their preparation, they will host a Friends & Family night to hone their skills in full costume and make up in front of a live audience. Contact Jackie Bottash, backrowlead@aol.com

THURSDAY/MARCH 21

2024 General Assembly Breakfast.

8 a.m. to 10 a.m. At The Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King Street, Alexandria. Join in a timely conversation with our General Assembly delegation where they will discuss the 2024 session and the opportunities and challenges currently facing the Commonwealth. Sen. Adam Ebbin and Del. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker will attend.

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

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

Third Annual ALX Dog Walk.

8 a.m. to 11 a.m. A 2-mile dog walk and celebration is back in Old Town Alexandria. Walkers meet at Oronoco Bay Park in Alexandria for an unforgettable experience. Walk and spread awareness about the importance of plastic-free and sustainable living. It's time to educate the community and make a positive impact. Pre-event registration check-in on Wednesday April 17th, from 12 pm to 7 pm to check-in and collect your sustainable Goodie Bag, t-shirt and doggie bandana, treat, and more. Register now! www.alxdogwalk.com/register

THE BIRCHMERE

At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m.,

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

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NEWS

St. Patrick's Day SoberRide

A local nonprofit organization will sponsor free safe rides to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2024 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide program will be in operation beginning at 12 p.m. noon Sunday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) and operate until 12 a.m. midnight on Monday, March 18 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During this twelve-hour period, area residents 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2024 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide promo code will be posted at 11 a.m. on Sunday, March 17 on www.SoberRide.com.

"Nearly half of U.S. traffic fatalities during St. Patrick's Day involve drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Erickson, WRAP's President.

During the 2023 St. Patrick's Day campaign, over 900 people in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's SoberRide program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide program on Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays through and including New Year's Eve.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

or call RSVP at 703-403- 5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

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City of Alexandria FISCAL YEAR 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET



A summary of the City of Alexandria's proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget is set out below.

Notice is hereby given of a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2025 budget for the City of Alexandria.

The March 11, 2024 Budget Public Hearing Meeting of the Alexandria City Council is being held in the Council Chamber (301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314) and electronically. Members of City Council and staff are participating either in-person or from a remote location through a video conference call on Zoom. The meeting can be accessed by the public through: Zoom hyperlink (below), broadcasted live on the government channel 70, and streaming on the City's website.

Budget Public Hearing:

The Webinar will open at 5:00 PM to allow individuals to join while the Public Hearing will begin at approximately 5:30 PM. If you wish to use Zoom to watch this meeting or to address Council, you must register first. Those wishing to address Council should also submit a Speaker's Form using the link below.

Registration link:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_X-26Nf50RUuZTzldmYfirA
Webinar ID: 914 9481 9301
Webinar Passcode: 252986
Dial-in number: 301.715.8592

Speaker's Form: <https://survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/2020-VIRTUAL-City-Council-Speakers-Form>

Those wishing to address Council should submit a Speaker's Form. Submission of written statements is encouraged. Please sign up after the docket is created and you are able to verify the meeting date on the City's website. If the docket is not posted, you will have to return at a later date to complete the speaker's form in order to speak at a Council meeting.

Public Comment will be received at this meeting: All persons wishing to speak before City Council must complete a Speaker's Form (see link above). If you have a prepared statement or written comments for the record, you may email it to the City Clerk at gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov. Speakers are encouraged to submit their written comments to the City Clerk. When your name is called to speak, the Zoom host will prompt you to unmute your microphone. If you are participating via smartphone, press *6 to mute/unmute your microphone. You will be called on by your name or the last 4 digits of your phone number when it is your turn to speak. When you are finished speaking or at 3 minutes (whichever comes first), you will be muted again. If you would like to submit a written comment, you may use the "Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Input" form (linked below). Fiscal Year2025BudgetPublicCommentForm: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/34d1375e0c6c41a5a46e093c25650526>

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the City Council meeting may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 703.746.4550 (TTY/TDD 838.5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made. City Council meetings are closed-captioned for the hearing impaired. Individuals requiring translation services should contact the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov or at 703.746.4550. We request that you provide 24-to-48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made. Please specify the language for translation when you make the request.

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2025

	General Fund FY 2025	All Funds FY 2025	Capital Improvements FY 2025
City Council	\$717,149	\$717,149	
City Manager	\$6,083,214	\$6,083,214	\$46,418,128
City Attorney	\$4,455,086	\$4,455,086	\$158,000
City Clerk and Clerk of Council	\$509,497	\$509,497	
Circuit Court Judges	\$1,732,010	\$1,732,010	
18th General District Court	\$169,180	\$169,180	
Clerk of the Circuit Court	\$1,990,682	\$2,055,682	
Commonwealth's Attorney	\$4,889,190	\$5,165,064	
Court Service Unit	\$2,170,398	\$2,368,888	
Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court	\$97,023	\$97,023	
Other Criminal and Justice Services	\$6,853,725	\$7,616,408	
Registrar of Voters	\$2,126,899	\$2,126,899	
Sherif	\$35,074,045	\$35,467,255	
Finance	\$14,432,324	\$15,673,016	\$367,619
General Services	\$15,005,873	\$15,186,881	\$97,492,000
Human Rights	\$1,184,413	\$1,220,485	
Information Technology Services	\$16,732,078	\$17,334,097	\$11,304,456
Internal Audit	\$467,900	\$467,900	
Management and Budget	\$1,734,373	\$1,734,373	\$152,800
General Fund Debt Service (City)	\$50,743,148	\$50,743,148	
Debt Service (ACPS)	\$45,527,862	\$45,527,862	
Non-Departmental - Contingent Reserve	\$775,575	\$1,075,575	
Non-Departmental - Insurance, Memberships, Other	\$7,679,443	\$18,982,099	
Human Resources	\$5,811,240	\$5,811,240	
Communications & Public Information	\$2,430,283	\$2,430,283	
Performance Analytics	\$901,799	\$901,799	
Fire	\$67,136,836	\$70,438,506	\$2,010,400
Code Administration	\$0	\$9,187,443	
Emergency & Customer Communications	\$10,132,222	\$10,255,120	
Police	\$71,361,652	\$73,697,262	
Health	\$9,516,009	\$9,645,474	
Community and Human Services	\$60,468,887	\$110,912,514	
Community Policing Review Board	\$653,618	\$653,618	
Other Health Activities	\$1,327,082	\$1,327,082	
Housing	\$12,251,938	\$16,728,898	\$7,854,000
Economic Development Activities	\$8,597,318	\$8,597,318	
Project Implementation	\$0	\$2,490,900	\$10,820,919
Planning and Zoning	\$7,775,983	\$8,494,611	\$199,700
Historic Alexandria	\$4,411,196	\$5,439,956	\$265,200
Library	\$9,133,637	\$9,730,105	
Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities	\$29,886,436	\$31,956,864	\$14,889,400
Transit Subsidies	\$50,511,206	\$61,103,610	
Transportation and Environmental Services	\$44,985,857	\$93,349,220	\$191,189,097
Other Educational Activities	\$15,570	\$15,570	
Schools	\$269,034,300	\$373,657,890	\$87,608,600
General Fund Cash Capital	\$24,256,175	\$24,256,175	
GRAND TOTAL	\$911,250,331	\$1,167,590,249	\$470,730,319

Any person desiring to review the proposed budget may visit the City's website (alexandriava.gov/budget).

PROPERTY TAXES

The proposed budget includes no change in the real property tax rate from \$1.11 per \$100 of assessed valuation based upon an assessment ratio of 100% fair market value. It should be noted that City Council will set the maximum tax rate to be advertised at its March 12, 2024 meeting, at 7:00 pm and that Council may not adopt a rate that exceeds this tax rate but may adopt an equal or lesser tax rate. The proposed budget includes no change in the current motor vehicle personal property tax rate of \$5.33 per \$100 of assessed value. All other personal property tax rates, including vehicles specially equipped to transport persons with disabilities, which are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$3.55 per \$100 of assessed value; Business tangible property, including office furniture, fixtures, computers and unlicensed vehicles are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$4.75 per \$100 of assessed value and machinery and tools are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$4.50 per \$100 of assessed value; Privately owned boats and water craft that are used for recreational purposes only are proposed to be taxed at the present rate of \$0.01 per \$100 of assessed value, are unchanged. The amount of real estate tax rate dedicated for affordable housing and to support existing debt service related to affordable housing is 1.0 cents.

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Obituary **Obituary**

Joan Elizabeth (McGraw) Rushkowski, 91, of Jupiter, Florida, and long-time resident of Alexandria, Virginia, peacefully passed away on January 18, 2024, with her husband of 67 years by her side.

She was born to the late John and Dorothy McGraw on June 17, 1932, in Oneida, N.Y., and graduated from Vernon Verona Sherrill High School, Verona, N.Y.

Joan married Ed Rushkowski in 1956, and resided in TN, OK, KY, Germany, MA, HI, VA, and FL. Joan is survived by her husband, Ed, and daughters Debbie Ford of Bristow, VA, Jeanne Mullis (Leon) of Georgetown, S.C., Ann Grifana (Ken) of Woodbridge, VA, Sue Rushkowski (Leon) of Jupiter, FL, and her sister Pat Byrom of Jacksonville, AL. She was predeceased by her son Scott McGraw, and daughters Mary Ann Maiden, Patty Dunkin and Lynda Hedges. She is also survived by 18 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 4 great-great grandchildren.

Joan's loved ones described her as, "...unselfish, spirited, strong, strong-willed, talented, loving, she sewed great Christmas stockings, loved Elvis and the Redskins, fierce, determined, fearless, sassy, a pretty lady, caring, relentless, and she loved unconditionally." She was a cherished caregiver for many in her local community of Stratford on the Potomac and was well known for her elaborate Halloween and Christmas displays.

Funeral service will be held at the Old Post Chapel, Ft. Myer, VA, and burial at Arlington National Cemetery on June 6, 2024 at 2:45pm.

The family wishes to thank Home Suite Home Assisted Living of Jupiter, Florida, and Trustbridge Hospice of Palm Beach County Florida for their compassionate care.

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NEWS

Local Couple Feared Dead in Yacht Hijacking

FROM PAGE 1

of the Salty Dawg Sailing Association, an informal boaters club, who said that the couple would spend summers in New England and winters in Caribbean waters. Their boat was found abandoned in St. Vincent on Feb. 19.

Brandel's 71st birthday was Feb. 21, the same day that their boat was discovered abandoned. March 2 would be Hendry's 67th birthday. Brandel was a retired real estate professional while Hendry, founder of Potomac Wealth Management, continued to work remotely while sailing.

"Ralph and Kathy are two of the most beautiful souls," said Anderson, who also noted that Brandel is godmother to her daughter Chelsea. "I used to teach aerobics for Ralph and was one of the people that introduced him to Kathy when she came to work out with me."

Authorities in Grenada say the search is continuing for Hendry and Brandel although at this point they are now presumed dead. Three suspects have been taken into custody related to the couple's disappearance. Police said the three were previously in custody following charges of robbery with violence but managed to escape and were found in St. Vincent. It is presumed that Brandel and Hendry were hijacked by the escapees after returning from dinner near a beach in Grenada.

Royal Grenada police released a statement saying in part, "Collaboration with our regional counterparts in St. Vincent and the Grenadines have led to the recapture of these men by the Royal St. Vincent and the Grenadines Police Force yesterday, Wednesday 21st February 2024."

Brandel and Hendry have been married for 27 years, sharing sons Christopher Buro, Nick Buro and Bryan Hendry along with daughter Jeannette Buro. Tragedy first struck the family in 2005 when Brandel's son Christopher was gunned down at a friend's home in McLean on Christmas Day. Her daughter Jeanette died in 2020 of a fentanyl overdose.

Upon receiving the news of the couple's disappearance, Bryan Hendry and Nick Buro traveled to St. Vincent where they remain at this time.

"Kathy and Ralph were very faith driven," Anderson said. "When Christopher was killed Kathy went over to Rwanda and spoke to and helped people who

SEE LOCAL COUPLE, PAGE 11
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Local Couple Feared Dead in Yacht Hijacking

FROM PAGE 10

were victims of genocide. She shared her story with them and stayed for about a month and helped them. She was an incredible pillar of strength -- I never met anybody that was as strong as that woman was."

Anderson remembers Brandel as a friend "that would always tell me the truth."

"Kathy would tell me like it was," Anderson said. "When Mike gave me this plaque at Christmas saying they were going to name Sweet Fire Donna's after me her reaction was, 'Snap out of it. That man has done nothing but build you a job and you're going to work your ass off. Don't thank him for that.'"

Anderson added with a laugh, "And she was right."

Bryan Hendry and Nick Buro released a statement, saying in part, "We live in a world that at times can be cruel, but it's also a world of profound beauty, wonder, adventure, love, compassion, caring, and faith. Our parents encompassed all those values and so much more. If we have learned anything from this tragic event, it's that we know they left this world in a better place than it was before they were born. Ralph and Kathy lived a life that most of us can only dream of, sailing the eastern coast of the United States, living on their home Simplicity, making friends with everyone they encountered, singing, dancing and laughing with friends and family -- that's who Ralph and Kathy were and that's how they will be remembered in our hearts. While the end of their life may have been dark, they brought light, and that light will never be extinguished from the hearts and minds of the people who knew, loved and cared so deeply about them."

A prayer service was held for the couple Feb. 24 at Christ the King Sanctuary on N. Quaker Lane. Any future services are still pending and a GoFundMe has been created to assist the family.

"Kathy was just an incredible human being," Anderson added. "So was Ralph. They were the kindest people in the world."



Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry in an undated photo.

Kathy Brandel, second from left, served as a bridesmaid at the 1988 wedding of "Mango" Mike and Donna Anderson.



Kathy Brandel and Ralph Hendry, right, with longtime friends and Alexandria residents Marcy Anderson and Kurt Guterrez.

A Rocky Road Ahead



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

According to my most recent lab work, which depending on the month/cycle may include orders from four doctors: internal medicine, endocrinology, oncology and now nephrology (kidney specialist) as well, my health is in play, if you know what I mean?. As a result, I am getting some kind of medical assessment every four weeks. These results have been particularly scary for the past few months as I have been off my cancer medicine as if I were in remission. But I haven't been nor am I. I may be in trouble (not as amazingly healthy as I mostly have been these last 15 years) though.

It appears I may be sliding down that slippery slope that I've written about in recent columns: stage IV chronic kidney disease is now complicating my stage IV papillary thyroid cancer. And why this combination is so bad, so far as I understand, is the medicine I take (have taken daily for over three years) which has kept the thyroid cancer in check has been/is damaging my kidneys. Damaging enough that to avoid renal failure/ needing to go on dialysis, I'm off my daily pill. Which means that my thyroid cancer is not being treated anymore. And untreated cancer is generally not going to maintain the stable status quo that I've come to appreciate (as I've said repeatedly over the years: "stable is my new favorite word. Stable is not the problem"). Due to this totally expected kidney side effect, my thyroid cancer is now being viewed/described as the underlying disease. Cancer as the 'underlying disease,' that can't be good. Cancer is typically the "big dog." Now there is another 'big dog' (figuratively speaking) on "the porch:" chronic kidney disease. Unfortunately, most porches are not made to handle two dogs -- if you get my drift?

A major problem of kidney disease is that it can't be reversed, it can only be maintained. The damage is irreparable. Right now, my kidney function is 25% of normal. And that's significant enough to stop the medicine that, despite its success in treating my thyroid cancer, it's simultaneously leading me down the garden path pass the porch to God probably knows where. What happens next, most immediately is another lab appointment, a PET scan -- moved up from its previously scheduled early June appointment, and a first-time, face-to-face appointment with a nephrologist I've never met and who is new to my presumptive medical team. In the interim, the nephrologist has told me to reduce my daily fluid intake to two liters in an attempt reduce the stress on my kidneys by minimizing their workload, so to speak. A workload that has been overwhelmed by years of chemotherapy for non-small cell lung cancer stage IV, which didn't exist while a slow-moving thyroid cancer went unknown/untreated. And if you didn't know, chemotherapy, if filtered through the kidney (some aren't, most are) is extremely damaging to the kidneys. But a diagnosis of cancer often comes with a heavy dose of chemotherapy. The doctors sort of must let the chips lie where they may because they have to treat "the big dog," first and foremost, and cancer is the biggest dog around, on or off the porch. It's sort of a "damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead." type mindset.

Oddly enough, I am living proof. Despite the doctors' worst efforts, I likely was infused with the wrong chemotherapy for nearly 10 years and though I have lived to bemoan it, I am nonetheless finally "side-effected" by it and the consequences at this late date are discouraging. (You can't undo the ravages of chemotherapy either. As Curly Howard of The Three Stooges said in an episode when they were tree surgeons: "We kill or cure.") As it appears recently, I am not cured, far from it in fact. I mean, a positive attitude can only do so much, and after surviving 15 years I may have hit the limit.

I guess you could say, to what I know to be the truth: I am between a rock and a very hard place. It reminds me of another Three Stooges line. In an episode when the Stooges were to be executed for something, Curly was asked how he like to die; either to be burned "at the stake or have his head chopped off." His answer was in a column a few weeks ago which is not relevant here. What is relevant is the bad choice he had. Regardless, it was going to be an unhappy end. And I fear that my end, having to choose between thyroid cancer and chronic kidney disease will be unhappy as well. For the moment though, life goes on, and I'm definitely happy about that.

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

ENTERTAINMENT

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unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

FEBRUARY

Wed. 28: Sara Evans. \$69.50. 2nd Night Added!

Thu. 29: Sara Evans. \$69.50. SOLD OUT!

MARCH

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Sat. 2: Mac McAnally. \$69.50. SOLD OUT!

Sun. 3: Mother's Finest. \$45.00

Mon. 4: Mac McAnally. \$69.50

Wed. 6: The Celtic Tenors. \$35.00

Thu. 7: Syleena Johnson. \$35.00

Fri. 8: Eaglemania -- The World's Greatest Tribute to The Eagles. \$45.00

Sat. 9: Avery*Sunshine. \$69.50

Fri. 15: Newmyer Flyer Presents LAUREL CANYON. \$35.00. SOLD OUT!

Sat. 16: Tom Rush with Matt Nakoa & Cheryl Wheeler. \$49.50

Sun. 17: WATCH Awards -7pm- \$20.00. SOLD OUT!

Fri. 22: Who's Bad -- The Ultimate Michael Jackson Exp. \$39.50 (Resched from 1/26).

SOLD OUT!

Sat. 23: Oleta Adams. \$45.00

Sun. 24: Honoring Teddy Pendergrass, with Gladys Knight & Eddie Hendricks Tributes. \$39.50

Wed. 27: The Zombies w/ Wendy Colonna. \$59.50

Thu. 28: Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives w/ Wyatt Ellis. \$76.00. SOLD OUT!

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