

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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MARCH 7, 2024



A color guard leads the 41st annual Saint Patrick's Day Parade March 2 in Old Town.



Parade Grand Marshal 'Mango' Mike Anderson, center, enjoys the parade with wife Donna and Sheriff Sean Casey.

Sláinte!

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

'Mango' Mike leads 41st St. Patrick's Day parade.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Irish eyes were smiling on Alexandria as rainy skies dried up just as the 41st annual St. Patrick's Day parade kicked off March 2 in Old Town.

Sponsored by the nonprofit Ballyshanners organization, the parade is an effort to promote and preserve the Irish culture and history of the city. "Mango" Mike Anderson, a prominent business leader in the community, served as Grand Marshal of the parade.

"I am so honored to be a part of an amazing Alexandria tradition that started 41 years ago by fellow restaurateur Pat Troy," Anderson said. "I am hoping it's around for another 41 so my grandchildren can enjoy it."

Anderson was joined on the reviewing stand by his wife Donna, daughter Dakota Saba and grandsons Shae, 5, and Riley, 18 months.

Troy, who died in 2018, was one of several prominent business leaders who founded the Ballyshanners in 1980 for the explicit purpose of organizing a St. Patrick's Day parade,

which began in 1982. The volunteer organization's mission has grown to promoting and preserving Irish history and culture. Events include the Alexandria Irish Festival, held each summer as a fundraiser to support the parade.

"Alexandria's history is filled with the contributions of the Irish people who lived here," Troy said at the time in advocating for the parade. "It is appropriate that we celebrate and recognize their contributions."

Troy, who was born in Kilcormac, Ireland, immigrated to the U.S. in 1961. He arrived with \$50 in his pocket and worked for many years as a butler. In the 1980s, he opened The Irish Walk import store and Pat Troy's Ireland's Own Restaurant and Pub, famous for celebratory sing-a-longs and a St. Patrick's Day visit from President Ronald Reagan in 1988.

The parade is held annually on the first Saturday in March so that, according to Troy, Irish heritage would be celebrated all month long rather than on a single day. The parade features more than 2,000 participants including pipe bands, Irish dance schools, community groups and other musicians and performers.

www.ballyshanners.org

"I am so honored to be a part of an amazing Alexandria tradition that started 41 years ago by fellow restaurateur Pat Troy."

— Grand Marshal 'Mango' Mike Anderson



Murphy's Irish Pub

MORE PARADE PHOTOS, PAGE 6



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NEWS

Grudge Match

Biden, Trump win state primaries.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandrians turned out to vote March 5 as Virginia held Democratic and Republican presidential primaries as part of Super Tuesday, with 15 states across the nation also casting ballots to nominate presidential candidates.

For Republicans with 48 delegates up for grabs, former President Donald Trump defeated former U.N. Ambassador Nikki Haley, garnering 63 percent of the votes cast with 34 percent voting for Haley.

Four other candidates – Chris Christie, Ron DeSantis, Vivek Ramaswamy and Ryan Binkley -- remained on the ballot despite having previously withdrawn from the race. Two percent of voters cast ballots for the withdrawn candidates.

On the Democratic side to decide 99 delegates, President Joe Biden defeated Marianne Williamson and Rep. Dean Phillips.

Biden garnered 88.7 percent of the vote, with 7.8 percent of voters casting a ballot for Williamson and 3.5 percent for Phillips.

“It’s been a busy day,” said Haley volunteer Kelly Currie, who visited several polling places across the city. “But it is exciting to be out here in support of Nikki.”

Following the results of super Tuesday, both Haley and Phillips suspended their campaigns.

Biden and Trump are on track to secure their party’s nomination before the end of the month.



Volunteer Kelly Currie stands outside the City Hall polling station in support of Republican presidential candidate Nikki Haley March 5.



Sample ballots for the Virginia Democratic and Republican primaries are posted outside City Hall on Super Tuesday March 5.

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Empty Bowls

ALIVE! raises funds for hunger awareness.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

ALIVE! held its 7th annual Empty Bowls fundraising dinner March 1 in the Coffield Refectory at the Virginia Theological Seminary

“This is an exciting night,” said ALIVE! executive director Jenn Ayers. “This is our 7th annual event and we are sold out. We have some wonderful people from the city here – our business leaders, our sponsors, our volunteers --- all raising awareness about hunger in our community.”

The event raises funds and awareness for people facing food insecurity in the City of Alexandria. Attendees enjoyed food donated by area restaurants, local music, auction items, and a handcrafted bowl to take home. The Jen Walker Team was presenting sponsor.

“I am so excited to be here,” said Elizabeth

“We have some wonderful people from the city here ... all raising awareness about hunger in our community.”

— ALIVE! executive director
Jenn Ayers

Moon, CEO of Focus Data Solutions. “We are so proud to be a sponsor and to help ALIVE! be able to serve our community.”

Empty Bowls Alexandria is a fundraising dinner that benefits ALIVE!’s programs that

SEE ALIVE! RAISES FUNDS. PAGE 5
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Apprehension Mounts As City Council Considers Arena Proposal

Virginia General Assembly must create an authority that would own the property and lease it to Monumental for the plan to move forward.

BY JAMES LIBRESCO
GAZETTE PACKET

The proposed \$2.2 billion future home of the Washington Wizards and Washington Capitals would be an economic boon for Alexandria and help expand the commercial real estate tax base, according to a recent presentation from the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership. But many residents aren't buying the rosy projections, castigating the proposal as a tax break for millionaires.

According to an analysis presented by City Finance Director Kendel Taylor and Stephanie Landrum of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, the site is projected to generate new revenue of \$33.7 million in 2030, its first year, after accounting for bond payments. The project would be in "phase one" at this time, which would include the arena, a concert hall, parking sites and more.

"One of the other things we looked at was making sure that it didn't take a decade for us to start seeing revenue," said Taylor. "We are positive from the beginning."

While much of Taylor and Landrum's analysis focused on how \$33.7 million could impact Alexandria, an estimated \$25.3 million would be spent on costs associated with the development, such as traffic-calming efforts and park cleanups. This leaves \$8.4 million of projected revenue for city programs and services – less than 1 percent of Alexandria's budget.

Over time, though, this number is expected to increase. By 2037, the development site would be in its third phase and is projected to contribute \$47.3 million to the city, with an upgraded retail center providing much of that revenue.

"As that gap widens," said Councilmember Sarah Bagley at the meeting, "what that means in [terms of] teacher pay and building structures and investment is significant."

Taylor later spoke on how the arena could widen Alexandria's commercial real estate tax base. Currently, the residential tax base makes up 82 percent of the city's revenue—meaning the commercial tax base comprises just 18 percent. This is a stark difference from 2008, when it was over 30 percent.

"If we don't do something different, this is the trajectory that we have," Taylor said. "When we talk about doing something from a catalytic perspective ... this is what we're talking about."

The analysis also clarified a claim that the arena would provide Alexandria with 30,000 jobs, a statistic many residents questioned. According to Landrum, there are currently 12,330 permanent and 2,380 construction jobs in the Potomac Yards district, but this



JBC SMITH

The proposed Potomac Yards Entertainment District is expected to generate \$8.4 million for City programming in its first year, 2030, with revenue growing each year. The project still needs approval from the Virginia state legislature and the Alexandria City Council.

“Recognize a fairy tale when you’re told one.”

— Meredith Lair, Lynhaven

would increase to 29,555 permanent and 17,645 construction jobs with the arena and its accompanying development.

Even with the possible economic improvements, some Alexandria residents say the arena would disrupt the city's quality of life. Meredith Lair, whose neighborhood Lynhaven borders the proposed site, spoke at a public hearing on Feb. 24 about her community's feelings on the plan.

"Many of us are terrified of the financial and quality of life problems that will arrive if this boondoggle comes to pass," she said. "Even among ardent supporters of the arena plan, I never hear confidence that neighborhoods near the site will be preserved ... Please stop threatening my neighborhood. Recognize a fairy tale when you're told one."

Robin Baldwin, a resident of the Parker Gray neighborhood, worries that the part-

time jobs created by the proposal would not be very beneficial to Alexandria. She also doubts whether Alexandrians would be able to secure these jobs.

"The project labor agreement means the unions bring in the workers from out of town," Baldwin said. "I'm not against unions, but I want you to know they're not going to hire local people. They may tell you, but they're going to bring in people that belong to the union that need work."

Other residents worry that a \$1.35 billion public subsidy of the development site, the largest of its kind in U.S. history, will bring along financial problems for the city.

"I would love to see sensible development in Potomac Yard, but this ill-advised proposal is fiscally irresponsible and it is not the solution to increase the commercial tax base," Rosemont resident Lee Talbot said. "It will ruin the quality of life in Alexandria and endanger our financial position."

According to Moody's Investor Service, one of Wall Street's three main credit rating agencies, one factor to earn a AAA municipi-

pal bond rating is the availability of annual revenue that covers twice the debt service each year. Using Moody's methodology, it's possible that Alexandria's credit rating could be affected if the arena generates significantly less revenue than projected.

"This is a real risk because the inaccessibility of Potomac Yards will negatively impact attendance and visitors," Talbot said. "You're all basing your support on an 'if you build it, they will come' hypothesis. That's too risky."

At the legislative meeting, City Manager Jim Parajon defended the reliability of the projections.

"[There has been] a lot of serious discussion in the community about the validity of these numbers," he said. "We feel that the information you're going to have tonight does represent information that has been developed through experts in this field, as well as verified by our financial advisors."

Councilman Canek Aguirre later added his take on the matter.

SEE ARENA PROPOSAL, PAGE 11

The Final Countdown

BY SENATOR ADAM EBBIN

We're in the final week of the 2024 General Assembly session and we still have much work to do. As of this writing, 785 bills have passed both chambers and are on their way to Governor Youngkin's desk, while 306 bills await final action by the legislature.

Between now and the legislature's scheduled adjournment, Sine Die, on Saturday, March 9, the General Assembly must also complete work on the budget that will set Virginia state expenditures for the remainder of this year and the next two fiscal years.

My priorities for Virginia's budget remain steadfast, including reversing the \$300 million cut to public education that was contained in Governor Youngkin's introduced budget, and increasing our investments in K-12 public education.

New funding for Metro is also

at the top of my priority list; I encourage the Senate and House budget conferees to provide Metro with needed funding to prevent it from entering a death spiral.

Another issue related to ongoing deliberations over the state budget is Governor Youngkin's proposal for Potomac Yard. As I have said before, I believe that the Commonwealth's budget is not the appropriate legislative vehicle to consider the creation of a state authority that would issue bonds to pay for a proposed sports arena for the NBA's Washington Wizards and NHL's Washington Capitals.

I will continue to advocate these and other priorities to the budget conferees and I look forward to seeing them embraced in the final compromise agreement when it is released later this week. Under rules adopted by both the Senate



Ebbin

and the House of Delegates, the budget must be finalized in time to provide legislators with at least 48 hours to review the compromise prior to their voting on it.

Once the General Assembly votes on the budget, it will be transmitted to the governor. In addition to the ability to sign, amend, or veto individual bills, Virginia governors may take similar action on the state budget bills after they are passed by the General Assembly. In fact, past governors have in some instances proposed extensive amendments to the budget after it reaches his desk – actions that are either approved or rejected by the General Assembly when we return to Richmond for Reconvened Session scheduled for April 17, 2024.

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Disappointed in Letter on Abortion

To the editor:

As I was reading the letters to the editor in last week's Alexandria and Mount Vernon Gazette, I was disappointed that the letter writer did not have a better idea or a solution to end the weekly protests in front of the medical building on Sherwood Hall Lane.

I was also disappointed that your publication would publish an anonymous letter with many statements that are not true.

Since the Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade approximately 35,000 children's lives have been saved each year in the United States. The best way to locally stop these peaceful protests is for

SEE DISAPPOINTED, PAGE 8

Scam Season

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

With warmer weather on the way, I wanted to alert you to some common scams that you should be aware of during the upcoming spring and summer months. The Fairfax County Police Department recently sent out a notice to inform residents of driveway paving scams. This scam typically starts with a knock at your door. The fraudster then presents a deal to repave your driveway, seal it, or provide other stone or concrete work. They will then attempt to create a sense of urgency for the homeowner to agree to the work immediately, often without any formal contract. The fraudster will then take a monetary deposit from the homeowner, and will proceed to begin work, but fails to complete it, often leaving the homeowner's property in worse condition than it started.

So, how can you be sure that the solicitor who comes to your door is legitimate? Fairfax County has ordinances governing how solicitors must conduct themselves. Legitimate and reputable businesses typically abide by these ordinances, especially by obtaining a Fairfax County solicitor's license, which is a laminated card displaying the solicitor's photograph, fin-

gerprints, and personal information. When a solicitor knocks on your door to offer a service, be sure to ask to see their soliciting license. If they do not have a valid license, ask them to leave and close your door. Immediately call Fairfax County Police (non-emergency) at 703-691-2131 to report the violation.

What are examples of other commonly reported scams?

Fake delivery text messages that claim your U.S. Postal Service, UPS or FedEx delivery has been kept on hold because of an issue with your address, insufficient postage, or nobody was home to receive it. Unless you explicitly sign up for status alerts on a package, you won't receive a text from USPS. If UPS contacts you regarding a package, the UPS representative will always be able to provide a tracking number which can be further verified by you on their website. FedEx does not request, via unsolicited mail, email, or text, any personal information pertaining to your account credentials or identity.

Fraudulent bank account texts, robocalls, and emails that aim to obtain victims' personal banking information

Unsolicited phone calls during



Krizek

which crooks call and pretend to be a grandchild or other family member who's been arrested and needs bail money to get out of a nonexistent legal jam. These scams are becoming more sophisticated with artificial intelligence technology that

can mimic the voices of people you know.

Sweepstakes scammers who call or write to say that you've won a nonexistent prize, but in order to receive the payout, you must provide the scammer with personal information.

How can you discern between legitimate and illegitimate messages? Many of these types of messages have misspellings or awkward grammar, and request payments and seemingly unnecessary information. Never click on any link unless you can verify that it's legitimate. Be wary of a message or caller insisting that you take any immediate action. A good rule of thumb is to go directly to the source. If you're concerned that there might be a problem with a package you're receiving or have sent, contact the post office or company directly. Contact your bank directly in a way you know to be legitimate, either online or by

calling the phone number on your statement or debit card.

The General Assembly took action this session to crack down on fraud and scams, especially those targeting seniors. Del. Maldonado and Sen. Favola introduced legislation that I supported which permits financial institutions to allow an elderly or vulnerable adult to submit and periodically update a list of trusted persons who may be contacted in the case of the suspected financial exploitation of the adult, and permits financial institutions to conduct a training to instruct its staff on how to identify and report the suspected financial exploitation of an elderly or vulnerable adult.

If you have been a victim of a financial crime, please contact the Fairfax County Police Department by filing a report through the Financial Crimes Online Reporting (FiCOR) website or call 703-691-2131. Additionally, if you have been a victim of elder fraud, you can call the National Elder Fraud Hotline at 1-833-372-8311.

I also invite you to attend the 7th annual Scam Jam event hosted by the AARP and Fairfax County on April 19 from 9 am to 12 pm at the Fairfax County Government Center to learn more about how to identify the red flags to spot scams and protect yourself and your family.

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NEWS

ALIVE! Raises Funds For Hunger Awareness

FROM PAGE 2

provide essential groceries, transitional shelter, financial help, eviction prevention, and donations of furniture and housewares for

Alexandrians in need.

Food for the fundraiser dinner was donated by: Il Porto Ristorante, Beeliner Din-

SEE ALIVE!, PAGE 8



Jennifer Late, right, chooses a bowl at the ALIVE! Empty Bowls fundraiser March 1 at Virginia Theological Seminary.



Jen Walker, the Community Champion Sponsor, and Dr. Lauren Fisher stand before a display of the restaurants that donated to the ALIVE! Empty Bowls fundraiser March 1 at Virginia Theological Seminary.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

ALIVE! executive director Jenn Ayers, second from right, with Suzanne Kratzok, Kate Garvey and George Valenzuela at the 7th annual Empty Bowls fundraiser March 1 at Virginia Theological Seminary.



Christine Brown and Town Crier Ben Fiore-Walker check out the auction items at the ALIVE! Empty Bowls fundraiser March 1 at Virginia Theological Seminary.

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'Mango' Mike Anderson with grandson Shae, 5.



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'The Odd Couple' ACCT presents Neil Simon classic.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Odd Couple," one of the best-known plays by the award-winning Neil Simon, makes its debut March 8 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater.

First opening on Broadway in 1965, the classic comedy opens as a group of guys assemble for cards in the apartment of Oscar Madison, a recently divorced New York sportswriter. If the mess is any indication, it's no wonder that his wife left him.

Late to arrive is Felix Unger, who has just been separated from his wife.

Fastidious, depressed, uptight and tense, Felix seems suicidal; but as the action unfolds, hilarity ensues as the clean freak and the slob ultimately decide to room together.

The Tony-award winning play opened with theater luminaries Walter Matthau and Art Carney as Oscar and Felix. Subsequent movie and television versions starred the likes of Jack Lemmon, Tony Randall, Jack Klugman, Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick.

The ACCT production is under

the direction of Eddie Page with Marg Soroos as producer.

"We were looking for a comedy that had name recognition and one that would be fun to have on stage," Soroos said. "The Odd Couple fills that bill to a T."

The ensemble cast is led by Dave Wright as Oscar and Bruce Rauscher as Felix.

"It's easy to just classify Oscar as being the messy one, but there's more depth there," Wright said.

"He likes to portray outwardly that he doesn't care about anything and loves his messy life, but I think it's a bit of a front. Secretly, he's a lonely man who would rather make jokes than face up to his own mistakes. Even though Felix drives him crazy, he also learns a lot about himself through this relationship."

Added Rauscher, "If I or anyone even remotely familiar with the character had to describe Felix Unger in one word, it would simply be 'neurotic.' His excessiveness is due to his extreme insecurity about himself but underneath it all, there really is a true heart of gold. He is a man who'd do anything for anyone despite his low opinion of himself and his abilities. I'm hoping he'll

not only come off as a bit aggravating, which he is, but also someone you can't help but fall in love with." Rounding out the cast are Steve Rosenthal as Murray, Charles Boone as Vinnie, Joel Durgavich as Roy, and Peter Halverson as Speed. "Comedy is my favorite theatrical genre," said Page. "In many ways it's the most challenging, yet the most rewarding."



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

Bruce Rauscher (Felix), Steve Rosenthal (Murray), Charles Boone (Vinnie), Joel Durgavich (Roy), Peter Halverson (Speed), and Dave Wright (Oscar) star in the ACCT production of Neil Simon's *The Odd Couple* playing March 8-24. www.acctonline.org

"I hope audiences will have a good time, empathize with the characters, and appreciate what a major playwright Neil Simon was."

— Actor Steve Rosenthal

hopes the audience sees beyond the humor of the play.

"Beneath the humor, of which there's plenty, I think 'The Odd Couple' is all about relationships, and the work it requires to maintain them," Halverson said. "It takes vision, and empathy, and compromise, and the wisdom to accept changes in yourself and others and adapt accordingly. If seeing our production gives audience members just a touch of that grace,

we'll have done our job."

Added Rosenthal, "I hope audiences will have a good time, empathize with the characters, and appreciate what a major playwright Neil Simon was."

"The Odd Couple" is playing March 8 through March 24 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308. For tickets or more information visit www.acctonline.org.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Disappointed

FROM PAGE 4

citizens to push the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to change the zoning laws so abortion facilities are not permitted in our neighborhoods.

If Fairfax County does not change their zoning laws we need to lobby our state legislators to ban abortions and put an end to the largest human rights violation of our time.

The next statewide election is in November 2025 and if Virginia voters select one more pro life state senator and two more pro-life members of the House of Delegates, Virginia will become a pro life state and the weekly protests will end on Sherwood Hall Lane.

As a lifelong Alexandrian we should all be concerned about unborn children losing their lives every Saturday morning in our neighborhoods. As the anonymous letter writer wrote, "the harassment affects all of us," this is true, especially how it affects the unborn children of Alexandria.

Frank Fannon

Former member Alexandria City Council

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



Attendees check out the auction items at the ALIVE! Empty Bowls fundraiser March 1 at Virginia Theological Seminary.

ALIVE! Raises Funds

FROM PAGE 4

er, O'Connell's, Los Tios Grill, Sweet Fire Donna's, Chadwick's, Taverna Cretekou, Maribeth Bakery, Bread and Water, Cameron Café, Goodies, Wegmans, Taqueria El Poblano, Great Harvest, and Matt and Tony's All Day Kitchen and Bar. Music was provided by the Alexandria Citizens Band.

ALIVE! is the largest private safety net in the City of Alexandria dedicated to fighting poverty and hunger. Founded in 1969 as Alexandria Involved Ecumenically by 14 faith communities in response to rising levels of poverty, ALIVE! has grown to 50 member congregations. www.alive-inc.org

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.

MARCH 1-30

March Luck. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. March Luck explores the serendipitous forces that drive artistic expression. Join us to reflect on the role of luck in shaping both art and life in the Van Landingham Gallery. 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 March.

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 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 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

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



The 2024 Spring Garden Market at River Farm takes place April 12-13, 2024.

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.

SATURDAY/MARCH 9

Write Like a Woman Networking Workshop. 1-3 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Enjoy an afternoon of engaging conversation and writing! Facilitated by poet, author, and Poet Laureate of Alexandria, KaNikki Jakarta, this workshop welcomes amateur to professional women writers ages 18-100. Each workshop centers on uplifting and inspiring through writing and allows participants to enhance their writing styles. Space is limited, please RSVP to greatpublishing@yahoo.com

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

conjunction with line, and trios in hard edge abstractions of color and mood.

APRIL 12-13

2024 Spring Garden Market at River Farm. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At 7931 E. Boulevard Dr., Alexandria. Celebrate the start of gardening season with the American Horticultural Society's annual Spring Garden Market at River Farm. This much-anticipated outdoor event, one of River Farm's largest and most popular fundraisers, brings together plant, seed and garden accessory retailers, nature-focused artists and authors, gardening experts, food vendors, and fun for the whole family. Proceeds from the Spring Garden Market directly contribute to the maintenance, beautification and preservation of River Farm, headquarters of the AHS since 1973. Entrance to the Spring Garden Market may be purchased online beginning in March at www.ahsgardening.org/springgardenmarket2024.

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 four 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

TUESDAY/MARCH 19

March Madness at Lena's Wood Fired Pizza & Tap: Hoops Hour Happy Hour. In Del Ray/Alexandria. Lena's is kicking off Hoops Hour Happy Hour on March 19 with Happy Hour prices all day. Lena's Wood-Fired Pizza & Tap located in the heart of the Del Ray section of Alexandria has your March Madness watching covered. With 7 TVs and Happy Hour prices extended 4 - 9 p.m. on game days, Lena's Tap Room is your college hoops headquarters! \$6 Select Beers, \$6 Lena's House Wines, Great Prices on Snacks and Small Plates. For more information, visit <https://www.lenaswoodfire.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.

SUNDAY/MARCH 24

Ides of Bark Dog Festival. 1-4 p.m. At Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria. The day features treats from local canine businesses, playtime in the dog park, pet care and delicious food from local Mount Vernon District business, Chalkboard Wings & BBQ. The Festival is a paw-sitively wonderful way to connect with our community, meet new friends (4-legged and 2-legged) and enjoy a day in the park.

Activities:

Meet & Greet with the FCPD K9 Section in the field: 2:00 p.m.
PetTech demos: 1:30, 2:30, 3:30 p.m.

THURSDAY/MARCH 28

Jane Franklin Dance Presents Prime. 7 p.m. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Prime journeys through the visual art of exhibiting artist Christine Ruksenas-Burton whose "paintings are conversations of colors inspired by her homeland (Australia) as well as modern art, minimalism, modernist architecture, and design." Jane Franklin's work positions solo dancers in conversation with color, duets in

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BULLETIN

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.volunteeralexandria.org

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

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

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

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

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

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Apprehension Mounts As City Council Considers Arena Proposal

FROM PAGE 3

“The city has an AAA bond rating for a reason,” he said. “We look at the numbers very carefully; we have our experts that are looking at it; we get assistance from outside folks to double, triple, quadruple check our numbers.”

The latest analysis from a third-party? A study conducted by D.C. real estate consulting firm HR&A Advisors that was released by the AEDP on Feb. 16. Typically, the AEDP does not share their analyses, but this case was an exception.

“We heard very early on that the community and many stakeholders wanted more information,” said Landrum. “So we published the complete report,”

Still, some residents aren't pleased with it, especially sections containing redactions Landrum says are “proprietary information.”

“How on God's green earth are any Monumental projection numbers entitled to be confidential, restricted or privileged?” said John Rebstock at the public hearing. “It makes absolutely no sense.”

“That analysis is short on analysis; it's long on data,” said David Talmage, a resident of Del Ray. “It really doesn't analyze anything.”

A press release from Alexandria's Stop The Arena Coalition also pushed back and called the projections, which were shared at the legislative meeting, “misleading and one-sided.”

“[The] revenues are highly speculative, dependent on future projected new businesses, like two hotels at the Entertainment District site, a full slate of concerts and other entertainment events, and many projected new restaurants and other local service establishments,” it said.

The press release also provided comment from Jeff Ferry, the Chief Economist at the Coalition for a Prosperous America and an Alexandria resident.

“The Alexandria arena project is very likely to be a money-loser for the city and the state,” Ferry said. “Fifty years of economic



PHOTO BY JAMES LIBRESCO

The recently formed Coalition to Stop the Arena at Potomac Yard has gained support from many Alexandria residents.

“The city has an AAA bond rating for a reason.”
— Councilman Canek Aguirre

studies show an overwhelming consensus that stadium projects, when backed by the public sector, fail to deliver economic benefits for the local community.”

Although several people at the legislative meeting held signs in support of the proposal, Del Ray resident Bradley Beychock was the only person to speak in the arena's favor at the public hearing.

“I initially was a skeptic of this project,” Beychock said. “I had many questions like the ones you've heard from our citizens today. But once looking at the facts and benefits for the community, I became a supporter.”

Now working on the project's community engagement team, Beychock said that the development's assurance of including affordable housing is what sold the deal for him.

“The issues that I care about can be addressed by this economic development,

namely affordable housing,” he said. “There's already been 500 new units in Alexandria committed by the developer ... 500 is not an insignificant number.”

As the arena proposal develops further, Parajon says that he, Landrum and Taylor will continue providing “regular updates” to the City Council.

As of now, the plan is held up in the Virginia General Assembly, which needs to create a statewide authority that would own the property and lease it to Monumental.

Although the House's proposed budget does contain this funding, which is essential for the proposal to come to fruition, the Senate's version does not. Leaders from both chambers are now headed to a secret closed-door conference committee to reconcile their differences, and if they agree to finance the stadium authority, then the Alexandria City Council will have final say on the development.

“Anything we can get out of Richmond to discuss locally is beneficial to the City,” Councilman John Chapman said at the public hearing. “I would rather have our discussion and the future of the arena come down to a vote here in this building.”

Locked Up ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... but not freaked out. It's happened again, and I'm sure it won't be the last time, given it's me manning the controls. Not to worry though. I have a neighbor who, among many neighborly attributes, unlock my computer with his eyes closed (bit of an exaggeration but you get the point). The point being that all is not lost or all that could be found won't be delayed a week or so if I must take my computer to a store, where a computer professional will unlock the damage, I have “mouse-clicked.” What a resource for a person who if his (my) life depended on computer knowledge, like so many of us of a certain age I'm sure, it would be a life soon forgotten. Moreover, one of my greatest fears if ever I needed to be computer literate for my income/daily bread. Fortunately, I am not dependent on too much technology for food, shelter, dollars, and sense. However, being frozen out from my computer does present challenges that can be hard to overcome – without paying through the nose at your local repair geek.

Thankfully, I, as does everyone else in the neighborhood, have Robert to rely on. He's a middle-aged man who works out of his house along with his mother and sister, in an E-Bay world of buy and sell. Some of their recent purchases have been prom dresses, and bucket and buckets of hand sanitizer. Two purchases which cost pennies on the dollar, almost literally, and according to them are sure to return a profit. From the various items they've bought and sold/sold and bought, I imagine they could provide a layman's “Art of the Deal.” They may not have the panache of the original author, but they might have some prime examples of deals getting done – at the non-corporate level.

If not for Robert's expertise and/or my new relationship with my smart phone I can now (after a 90-minute phone call with Verizon) retrieve my emails which comes in quite handy after you've been locked out of your main computer. Meaning, I am not stuck, like I used to be. Can you imagine, as an example, that had I no other resource than my desktop, on the day, as it so happens that I'm waiting for an email from my oncologist to update me on my most recent PET scan. A PET scan which will indicate if there's been any growth in the papillary thyroid tumors in my lungs since I've been off my cancer medicine for two months. This is “... Kind of a big deal” to invoke Wayfair, Red Lobster and KFC advertisements. The anxiety I'm likely experiencing while waiting for the result – with commentary posted by the doctor, would be exponentially worse if I didn't have access to my computer/emails for more than a minute. Yes, when you're a cancer patient, sometimes, minutes matter, in your head anyway. As I've said to my oncologist on more than one occasion, time is of the essence and waiting for medical results can be excruciating. Whether they are good, bad, or indifferent, their substance can't be overstated. We need to know, we must know, we better know – do you know what I mean?

In this context, you can guess how important access to our computer/phone is. It's everything, and if cut-off from your doctor while awaiting results from a medical procedure which might indicate whether you're in medical trouble or not, it would be impossible to sit still, remain calm even breathe normally regardless of where your seat tray is. These kinds of rubber-meet-the-road moments matter way more than when rubber actually meets the road. That's transportation. This is life and/or death. But having a resource like Robert a phone call away, within walking distance no less and often available for an immediate rescue is to invoke a Jack Nicholson movie: “As Good As It Gets.” And when you're a dope like me, when it comes to computers, who is afraid sometimes to even stroke a key for fear of the consequences to the computer and by association your life that day on said computer is a problem; especially, if on that particular day, you're waiting to hear back from your oncologist concerning a recent medical scan which quite possibly could spell the kind of trouble you've rarely had in the previous 15 years of “cancer hood,” well; the impolite description is initialed s.o.l., the polite version is you're screwed. There really isn't an appropriate way to describe the level of fear, anxiety, and impatience that one might experience – when your life may be hanging in the balance and you're waiting to hear, and now you have no means of computer access to learn your fate. Eliminating all this drama is what Robert provides. If there was a neighborhood award for knowledge and availability above and beyond the call of neighborliness. I would nominate Robert. I am forever in his debt. I just wish I would hear back from my oncologist. I've eliminated the problem on my end. Now I need him to eliminate the problem on his end. It's been three days since my scan was completed. As my late mother would say: “It's enough already.”

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

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 10

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

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for “Space of Her Own,” and “Space of His Own,” serves

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

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth.

Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at suzjdoyle@gmail.com or 571-403-0673.

FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

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Mount Ida | \$2,650,000

Located in close proximity to SSSAS Lower School and ACDS while DC and Old Town Alexandria are easy commutes. Built in 2008, this home has been recently updated. There is flex space throughout on 4 levels with 5-7 bedrooms and an in-law/nanny suite on the lower level with private entrance. The main level features a primary suite – one of three – great gathering rooms, and separate private spaces. The kitchen's premier appliances, butler's and storage pantries, and oversized island are eloquent. And there is an oversized 2-car garage. 3107 Russell Rd
Janet Caterson Price 703.622.5984
www.JanetPriceHomes.com



Old Town | \$2,900,000

Wonderful Potomac River views! Renovated 3-bedroom, 3-bath home features hardwood floors, chef's kitchen, and spacious rooms for entertaining. Primary suite deck overlooks the river. Finished lower-level rec room, and 2 off-street parking spaces. 610 South Lee Street
Babs Beckwith 703.627.5421
www.BabsBeckwith.com

OPEN SUN 3/10, 2-4 PM



Old Town | \$1,485,000

Exquisite 1808 Federal style townhome with 4 upper-level bedrooms, 2 full and 2 half renovated baths, original wood floors, an expansive parlor, a large dining room, lovely kitchen, gorgeous staircase, library, brick patio, and ample storage. 307 N Washington Street
Lauren Bishop 202.361.5079
www.LaurenBishopHomes.com

OPEN SAT 3/9 & SUN 3/10, 12-2 PM



Alexandria | \$1,075,000

A dreamy Cape Cod-style detached home that boasts 5 bedrooms and 2.5 baths across 3 levels, close proximity to King Street, Braddock Shopping Center and a short drive from Old Town Alexandria. 2014 Scroggins Road
Jillian Hogan Homes 703.951.7655
www.JillianHoganHomes.com

OPEN SAT 3/9, 2-4 PM



Del Ray | \$915,000

Charming 3-bedroom, 1.5-bath Colonial with 1-car garage on no-through street. Traditional layout, updated kitchen, beautiful hardwood floors, wood-burning fireplace, large bedrooms, and a brick patio. 2718 Hemlock Avenue
Chris Fischer 703.930.6349
www.FischerRealEstate.com

OPEN SUN 3/10, 1-3 PM



Old Town \$1,775,000

Stunning Old Town rowhome updated from top to bottom. Bright open floor plan with hardwood floors, soaring ceilings, plantation shutters and a custom, vintage-brick exposed wall. Family room off the kitchen leads to the deck and 2 off-street parking spaces. 707 Prince St

Kari Steinberg 703.343.5242
www.kariyouthomedmv.com

OPEN SAT 3/9 & SUN 3/10, 2-4 PM



Old Town \$1,265,000

Quintessential historic property with 2 bedrooms and 2 baths on 3.5 levels. Original hardwoods, a wood-burning fireplace, and authentic shutters reflect the architectural nuances of yesteryear. Formal garden with fountain. 3 off-street parking spaces. 323 N St Asaph Street

Barbara Cousens 703.966.4180
www.BarbaraCousens.com

OPEN SUN 3/10, 2-4 PM



Quaker Village \$714,900

Gorgeous 3-story garage townhouse just minutes from Old Town. With 3 bedrooms & 3.5 baths, it offers ample room for everyone. A new roof, stainless appliances, refinished wood floors and new carpeting are recent updates that make this home truly move-in ready. 33 Arell Court

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