

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

APRIL 11, 2024



Burke answered many questions from attendees.



Left to right: E. Hunt Burke, and Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society officers, Sallie Lyons and Glenn Fatzinger.

Old-fashioned Banking, Thriving for 172 Years

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
GAZETTE PACKET

Burke and Herbert Bank has survived the Union Army's Civil War occupation, the 1930s Great Depression, toughened federal regulations, the computer revolution, super-bank-merger mania, economic downturns, economic upturns, the coronavirus pandemic and more.

In 1852, John Woolfolk Burke, 27, and Arthur Herbert, 23, opened the Burke and Herbert Banking and Exchange Office in Alexandria. That year, Franklin Pierce became the U.S. president, the Studebaker Brothers Wagon Company was established and the book Uncle Tom's Cabin came out. "Downtown" Alexandria, today called "Old Town," was a bustling port and mix of warehouses and modest shops. Gas lights and running water had just arrived.

On April 7, 2024, E. Hunt Burke, the bank's chairman and great-great-grandson of founder John Burke, walked through the bank's history and philosophy with 50 engaged attendees at a talk sponsored by the Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society at the Sherwood Regional Library. Hunt started working at the bank at age 13 reviewing cleared checks to see if they were correctly endorsed, literally working in a smoke-filled room where 12 women constantly puffed away. Burke is the fifth generation of Burkes to work there. His nephew, Taylor Burke IV, a



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

E. Hunt Burke gave a talk on April 7 to the Mount Vernon Regional Historical Society.

lending officer, is the sixth.

Downhome Trust

"We opened on a handshake," Burke told the audience. "We ran it that way for 81 years. A handshake goes a long way." He gave the example of his father, C.S. Taylor Burke Jr., who grew up on Prince Street, making a home loan to a Pentagon colonel. "My dad trusted the military," he explained, and practically approved a loan on the spot.

The website states the bank's purpose: "To serve and inspire people to achieve their financial goals and realize their dreams." It lists as core values, "inspire trust, respect one another, act with integrity, em-



The audience filled the room at the Sherwood Regional Library.

brace our differences."

Now in its 172nd year, Burke and Herbert is the oldest, continuous bank in Virginia with its original name. It has more than \$3.6 billion in assets, 25 branches and over 400 employees who represent 41 different nationalities. It offers traditional checking, savings and lending, plus digital banking, business management financing, wealth management, retirement planning and other services.

A Physical Presence

The neoclassical building at the corner of King and South Fairfax Streets, home to the main offices and built in 1905, is based on London's Westminster Bank, Burke explained, a style designed to convey stability, financial soundness and responsible capitalism. Bank branches in Alexandria and Fairfax, Arlington and Prince William counties, plus a new one in Richmond, all are different architectur-

al styles, basically whatever building the bank bought.

A Historic Move

In August, Burke and Herbert Bank took an unprecedented step and announced a merger with Summit Community Bank, headquartered in Moorefield, West Virginia. The combined banks will have over 75 branches in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland

SEE OLD-FASHIONED, PAGE 6

Spring Market Has Arrived!



FOR SALE

904 W Braddock Road, Alexandria, VA 22302 | Timber Branch/Temple Terrace

Come home to this welcoming brick abode, originally built in 1947 but carefully and comfortably brought forward into the twenty-first century. Beautiful evergreen plantings surround a lush front lawn and provide a rich adornment to the façade of this charming residence where shutters and flower boxes add to the inviting countenance while a driveway to the side leads to a separate brick garage. 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Offered at \$998,000.



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Area Sky Watchers See Rare Solar Eclipse

Weather cooperates for shared view of the celestial phenomenon.

BY SUSAN LAUME
THE CONNECTION

If you expected to see a Chinese celestial dragon devour it, a boy named Tcikabis catch it in a snare, a black squirrel gnawing on it, a demon named Rahu swallow it, a sign of displeasure, or a human like fight going on in the sky, you may have been disappointed in Monday's celestial spectacle.

But if not holding to the vision of one of the many legends, such as those from ancient China, Togo, Benin, the Hindus or Incas, or the Native tribes of Ojibwe, Cree or Choctaw, then you were most likely astounded to witness the rather



PHOTO BY COLIN DIXON

Clouds during portions of the eclipse on April 8, 2024 made it possible to photograph with an iPhone.

SEE SOLAR ECLIPSE, PAGE 7

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Sherwood Regional Library hosted eclipse viewing on April 8, 2024.



People gathered at Sherwood Regional Library to watch the eclipse.



Eclipse watchers at Sherwood Regional Library



The scene at Sherwood Regional Library where people gathered to watch the eclipse. The library hosted the viewing.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

Leonard Tango of Vienna selected a spot for comfortable viewing, later rising to share his viewing glasses with others

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PHOTO BY COLIN DIXON

Anna Dixon with daughter Ada, 6, view the eclipse in Cabin John.



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAUME/THE CONNECTION

A pinhole projection view of the eclipse on the sidewalk was safe, but perhaps not as dramatic as viewing with solar glasses

Batters Up for the Mount Vernon Varsity Singers

Choir travels to Fredericksburg to sing the National Anthem at a Minor League baseball game.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

Just before the Fredericksburg Nationals played the Delmarva Shorebirds at the stadium in Fredericksburg, the Mount Vernon High School choir gave a booming performance of the national anthem for the nearly full house of baseball fans.

The students from Mount Vernon were happy to be on the road Saturday evening, April 6 and have traveled to Fredericksburg as well as a few other locations to sing the anthem. The first time they were invited to Fredericksburg, the game was rained out but last Saturday their singing was heard by a stadium full of fans despite the chilly temperatures.

"The students really enjoy singing at the game each year and seeing 'behind the scenes' of performing in a different venue, and then of course, hanging out at the game," said choir director Chelsea Huber.

An ensemble totaling 18 students of the Mount Vernon Varsity Singers made the 45-mile trip to the game. This

group is the Advanced Honors Chorus at Mount Vernon and the total number of students in this particular class is 33.

The choir frequently sings the anthem on campus for sports events, especially during the football season, where they sing at every home game. Each school year the choir also signs up to sing the national anthem for an FCPS school board meeting too. This year they will be performing for the meeting on May 9.

During the holiday season, the choir performs carols in off-campus venues such as the Mount Vernon Estate and local libraries. On campus, they perform quarterly concerts in the Mount Vernon Little Theater. The choir's final chorus concert this year will be on Tuesday, May 21 at 7 pm.

Many chorus students can also be seen performing in the school's spring musical, The Addams Family, from April 25-27. Times and tickets to "The Addams Family," are available online at mvhstheatrearts.com

For more on seeing the Fredericksburg Nationals, <https://www.milb.com/fredricksburg>



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The choir picked a perfect time to open the game for the Fredericksburg Nationals, who beat the Delmarva Shorebirds in three games straight.



PHOTO BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

In the Saturday night game, the Fredericksburg Nationals hit a grand slam against the Delmarva Shorebirds.

STATIONARY ENGINEER APPRENTICESHIP



Applications for the IUOE Local 99 Apprenticeship Program will be accepted during the period of May 6-10, 2024, inclusive. Applications must be completed in person by the applicant at Engineer Center 9315 Largo Drive West, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. \$35 application fee includes drug screen.

For additional information scan the QR Code.



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connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

Spring Flower Show in Mount Vernon

The Yacht Haven Garden Club held a National Garden Clubs Small Standard Flower Show, "Around the Sun Sixty Times," April 4, 2024, at the Mount Vernon Yacht Club, Alexandria, Va.

The flower show celebrated the garden club's 60th anniversary. Patsie Uchello was the general chairman of the show. The wet spring contributed to an outstanding display of horticulture exhibits.

The show focused on exhibits of broadleaf evergreen shrubs and spring blooming trees; bulbs, corms, and tubers; and flowering and non-flowering container-grown plants. Visitors can see and learn which plants do well in the area and be introduced to new ones.

The design section of the flower show included four arrangements of a Creative Line Design, a Petite Design, a Featured Plant Design us-

ing roses, and a Semi-formal Functional Lunch Tray for One. The designs were individually judged and were creative and diverse.

"At a flower show, members and the visiting public get a view of plants that grow locally and are introduced to new species," says Yacht Haven President Wanda Ragland. "They are one way that we help to educate the public about plants and creating floral designs."



PHOTO COURTESY OF YACHT HAVEN GARDEN CLUB

The Yacht Haven Garden Club held a flower show. From left, Anne Dremluk – Design Chair; Karen Bennett – Hospitality Chair; Patsie Uchello – General Chair, Wanda Ragland – President; Carla Amerau – Horticulture Chair.



Spring blooming trees and bushes.



Creative Line Designs.



Spring blooming bulbs, corms and tubers.



Creative Line Designs.

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Burke and Herbert Bank's main building at King and South Fairfax Streets, Old Town, Alexandria.

Old-fashioned Banking, Thriving for 172 Years

FROM PAGE 1

and Delaware. Burke attributed the merger to the fact that his bank has been “so safe so many years. It’s a beautiful merger,” he commented. The announcement press release called it a “merger of equals,” that “is expected to result in a combined earnings per share of approximately \$7.90 in the first full year of combined operations (assuming fully realized cost savings).” The merged bank will retain the Burke and Herbert name.

Survival Secret

Many locals view Burke and Herbert as a stable, friendly, some say, “old fashioned,” community institution because “we don’t do goofy things,” Burke explained, citing the 2023 Silicon Valley bank crisis.



The Sherwood Hall branch of Burke and Herbert Bank in the Mount Vernon area.

He continued, “Banks fail because they chase the easy money. We’ve always been very conservative. We

have a nice following. We are community oriented.” Glenn Fatzinger, president of the

historical society, agreed. “It is truly a family bank and there are not many family banks today. For many

years, they loaned money to churches when no one else would. The bank funded many economic development projects that changed both Old Town and Mount Vernon over the years from the 1960s to today.”

Why Be a Banker?

Given his lineage, Burke apparently has a “banking gene,” but he’s a banker not because he was born into it, but because he loves it. “It’s fun to get to know everyone in town. It’s great to be part of a community and have a place in the community.”

In his street-level office with the doors open to King Street and pedestrian chatter on a balmy April afternoon, with his beagle, Rose, nearby, he affirmed that devotion to banking and his community.



In his South Fairfax Street office, Hunt Burke and a Chinese gong, a gift to his father, C. S. Taylor Burke.



Hunt Burke and a poster of the beloved Runyon.

Avian Advertising, Runyon the Parrot

Hunt Burke’s father, C.S. Taylor Burke Jr., was the bank’s president from 1963 to 1992, a legend around town. He had “an unusual personality for a banker,” Hunt commented, citing his father’s quirky, fun-loving streak. “He made banking fun.”

One day, his father came home with a lime-green parrot perched on his shoulder, a bird he bought at G.C. Murphy’s Department Store. The female parrot, named Runyon, became a popular image for the bank.

C.S. Taylor Burke testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Banking Committee with Runyon on his shoulder. “I don’t know if he got any votes,” Hunt quipped. The pair made NBC television’s “Saturday Night Live” comedy show. The host asked, “Would you trust your money with this man?”

Runyon “was worth millions in free advertising,” Burke touted. Runyon’s replacement is Harvie, who’s now 40 and lives with Hunt’s sister. Parrots can live for 80 years, Burke noted, enduring like the bank.



Minutes before the 3:20 p.m. moment of greatest coverage, the staff of Fairfax County Circuit Court Records Office gathered outside the courthouse for a chance to view the eclipse with office head, Chris Falcon (right).

Area Sky Watchers See Rare Solar Eclipse

FROM PAGE 3

rare phenomenon of the sun nearly disappearing from the sky on Monday.

The partial solar eclipse viewing from our area, with great hype, did not disappoint with its show amidst the only wispy clouded sky. Watchers, some prepared with eclipse glasses, pinhole projectors, or blankets, gathered and shared with friends, or came out on their own, to share in the rare event, in the safe cautious way the ancients may not have known.

Some traveled to regions of the U.S. with more significant totality. But for those who stayed in this area, there was no particular or heightened location to reach. Any open area worked with a direct view, or with a sidewalk or armed with paper if using a pinhole projection. The eclipse created a shared event we all could see and enjoy together.



Santiago Navarro of Springfield watched every 15 minutes or so from 2 p.m. on, and was impressed. Watching with him was 10-month-old Zoey.



Elizabeth Siles of Springfield helps Jia Liu of Centreville shield her phone camera to capture the sun's disappearance. Outside the Courthouse in Fairfax.



Clerk of the Circuit Court Chris Falcon expresses his awe at the eclipse



Connection reporter Susan Laume taking in the eclipse. When covering celestial events, even a reporter can't resist getting caught up in viewing.



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Youngkin Amends Mobile Home Park Bill

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

Good news! My years-long effort to empower mobile park residents continues with the passage of HB 1397, which I introduced this session to expand resident and locality rights. But, bad news: the Governor removed important provisions in my bill. Nonetheless, it still increases relocation expenses statewide, offering flexibility in its use. Moreover, the bill allows localities the authority to impose fees on park sales, potentially offsetting compensation for immobile homeowners.

Over 350,000 Virginians reside in manufactured home parks, constituting 6% of existing single-family housing in the Commonwealth. According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, these homes serve as a significant source of naturally occurring, non-subsidized affordable housing nationwide. However, many of these communities face threats such as rising rents, unreasonable rules, and redevelopment schemes displacing low to moderate-income residents.

Notably, the 16th district is home to five parks: Audubon Estates, Harmony Place, Engleside/Rays, Penn Daw Terrace, and Woodley Hills. Residents in these parks, often homeowners, face unique challenges as they own their homes but rent the land beneath them.

Contrary to their name, mobile homes become immobile after a few years, making relocation financially prohibitive. Forbes estimates that in 2024 the average cost to move a home is around \$9,000, but it can be higher. The size, condition, distance, permits, and insurance needed contribute to the cost, often much higher than residents can afford. That's why I passed legislation in 2020 to assist residents facing park redevelopment by providing relocation funds of \$2,500, or \$3,500 for Northern Virginia, which with my new bill



will be upped to \$5,000 now from July 1, 2024, statewide. Although that is still too low to move most of these homes, politics is the art of the possible.

To make matters worse, basic tenant rights under the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act did not include residents of manufactured home parks. That will now change with the recent signing of legislation I worked on and that was spearheaded by Sen. Ghazala Hashmi and Del. Karrie Delaney to extend those protections to manufactured home park residents. These rights include halting automatic lease renewals, rejecting changed lease terms, capping late rent fees, and granting the right of redemption. For example, fees for late rent payments are now capped at 10% of rent or 10% of the balance the renter owes the landlord.

The right of redemption is the right to remain in one's home after receiving a court-ordered unlawful detainer for late or missing rent if one has paid off the owed amount. Originally, my bill aimed to extend the notice period a manufactured home park owner must give residents of any potential sale before final acceptance of an offer, grant resident associations, nonprofits, and localities the opportunity to purchase their park, and prohibit the inclusion of a penalty clause in an offer to purchase the park that requires park owners to pay a penalty if the sale isn't finalized. In a recent case in my district, Fairfax County stepped in to assist residents in financing an offer to purchase their park, but even after submitting an offer surpassing the

original, the owner could not accept the higher offer due to a penalty clause. The bill also provided the right of first refusal for the locality to purchase the manufactured home park provided that they maintain it as a park for at least 30 years following the sale. This would have enabled localities like ours concerned about losing affordable housing the right to purchase at-risk mobile home parks to maintain that critical affordable housing in their community. All of these provisions together would give residents a fighting chance to acquire ownership of their parks and thereby save their homes.

While I was disappointed to learn that the Governor's amended version of HB 1397 struck out many of these provisions, the remaining portion that increases relocation expenses to \$5,000 and expands them to park residents statewide is a step in the right direction. In addition, while past iterations of relocation expenses had to be put toward moving the

manufactured home, now that money can be used as the residents see fit. Also included in the amended version was eliminating the prohibition on localities from charging fees to park buyers and sellers to help cover the cost of compensation to owners whose homes are too old to be moved.

Half a loaf is better than no loaf, so I plan to accept the Governor's recommendations. Nevertheless, it frustrated me to learn that the companion budget item to my legislation, which would have created a revolving loan fund to assist nonprofits and associations of tenants residing in manufactured home parks in acquiring the land on which homes sit, was stripped out in the Governor's new recommended budget.

The housing crisis is not going away unless we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating and preserving affordable housing for Virginians. I remain resolved to continue fighting for manufactured home park residents in future sessions.

Over 350,000 Virginians reside in manufactured home parks, constituting 6% of existing single-family housing in the Commonwealth.

These homes serve as a significant source of naturally occurring, non-subsidized affordable housing.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Make Fort Hunt Park House a Visitor Center

Dear Editors:

I was pleased to read that the house in Fort Hunt Park was undergoing an "exterior stabilization" in the April 4 Mount Vernon Gazette. As someone who walks in the Park on a regular basis, I worried about the deteriorating condition of the property. However, I was disappointed to read that, after the project is completed,

the house will not be open to the public or available for rent. It was unclear if the interior would be restored but it would make a wonderful, small Visitors Center to explain the fascinating history of the Park and a great addition to our Mount Vernon community.

Carol Cooke
Alexandria

Submit a Letter to the Editor

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

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

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

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ENTERTAINMENT



“Agatha Christie’s Murder on the Orient Express” will be featured March 23-April 13, 2024, at the Little Theatre of Alexandria. <https://thelittletheatre.com/performances/>



Japanese Inspiration will be featured April 4 to May 12, 2024 at The Athenaeum in Alexandria.

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/>

MARCH 23 – APRIL 13, 2024 Agatha Christie’s Murder on the Orient Express. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria. Adapted by Ken Ludwig. It’s 1934, just after midnight, and a snowstorm has stopped the opulent sleeper train in its tracks. A wealthy American businessman is discovered dead, and the brilliant and beautifully mustachioed Hercule Poirot must solve the mystery before the murderer strikes again.

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.

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.

MARCH 9 TO APRIL 14

“Every Brilliant Thing.” At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Workhouse Arts Center Performing Arts, announces its newest production, Every Brilliant Thing, a heartfelt one-person play that celebrates the little things that make life brilliant. “Every Brilliant Thing” is an interactive solo performance piece that explores the resilience of the human spirit and the capacity to find joy in all the little things. Showtimes are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are on sale now and range from \$25 to \$35. For more information, visit the website (www.workhousearts.org).

BEGINNING MARCH 20

Water Taxi to The Wharf to See Cherry Blossoms. Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Cruise from Old Town Alexandria to Washington, D.C., to enjoy the famous cherry blossoms. City Cruises Potomac Water Taxi offers a 25-minute direct water taxi from Old Town to The Wharf in D.C. From the dock at The Wharf, it is a 10-minute walk to the cherry blossoms at the Tidal Basin. The water taxi docks at the Transit Pier, 950 Wharf St. SW, near the Tidal Basin, the

National Mall, Hains Point and a Capital Bikeshare station.

MARCH 16 THRU APRIL 21

Cherry Blossom Cruises with City Cruises. Departs from the Alexandria Marina, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Traverse the Potomac River from Old Town Alexandria and cruise past the cherry blossoms in Washington, D.C. on the Monuments Sightseeing Cruise from City Cruises. View and listen to the history of the iconic monuments, memorials and bridges as the D.C. region awakens to spring. See beautiful cherry blossom trees as you glide past the Tidal Basin and head onward to Georgetown. The cruise is 45 minutes one-way and approximately 90 minutes roundtrip. Riders also have the option to explore Georgetown and return on a later boat.

MARCH 23 TO APRIL 14

Pink Torpedoes: Cherry Blossom Art in An Old Munitions Factory. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union St., Alexandria. Explore all three floors of Torpedo Factory Art Center, home to the nation’s largest collection of working artists’ open studios under one roof, to view a building-wide exhibition of art inspired by the iconic cherry blossoms. Participating artists will exhibit one or more unique artworks in their studio or gallery. Each artist will explore their interpretations of the cherry blossoms—culturally, colorfully and viscerally—and visitors will discover new ways of thinking about the region’s seasonal pink event. Visitors will receive a “Pink Torpedoes” building map with locations of the artwork to discover. Each studio artist in the Art Center is selected by art experts and rank among the best in the region. Artists work in front of the visitor and discuss their work on view. Visitors may shop for one-of-a-kind art inspired by the cherry blossoms, plus more. Can’t visit the

exhibition? A select exhibition of artwork will be on view at torp

APRIL 1-30

Cherry Blossom Dreams. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Gallery 311, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Embrace the ethereal beauty of spring this month in the Van Landingham Gallery. Cherry Blossom Dreams features a collection of works presented by the Torpedo Factory Artists’ Association. Artists participating in the exhibition interpret the essence of spring through a diverse range of mediums and styles.

APRIL 4 TO MAY 12

Japanese Inspiration: Sean Donnan, David Gootnick, Yoshiko Ratliff. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. To complement Washington’s festivities celebrating the Japanese cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin, the Athenaeum Gallery is featuring the work of three local contemporary artists whose work is influenced and guided by traditional Japanese art. Sean Donnan is an illustrator whose fanciful posters are inspired by Japanese mythology, anime, video games, and pop culture. David Gootnick creates lacy and delicate designs out of wood using an ancient Japanese artform called Kumiko. And Yoshiko Ratliff’s paintings are bold, but intricately detailed representations of Japanese characters and Kimonos.

APRIL 27-28

Metropolitan School of the Arts to Present Spring Ballet: Coppelia. At George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria. Showtimes at 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. Coppelia, a captivating tale of love, mischief, and mechanical dolls. Audiences can experience a village brought to life by dance, where fantasy and reality blur in this heartwarming story, perfect for all ages. In addition to the perfor-

mances, MSA will also feature a Springtime Marketplace and a meet-and-greet session after the show. Tickets are from \$18 to \$25 and can be purchased at metropolitanarts.org

MAY 3 TO JUNE 2

“The Art of Tea” exhibit at Del Ray Artisans gallery features art that explores themes and stories woven around this aromatic beverage. From tea cups and tea pots to the Mad Hatter or Boston Tea Party, this exhibit intrigues and delights. Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Reception: Friday, May 3, 7-9pm. Open Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm (June 2, 12-4pm). DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

APRIL 4 TO MAY 12

Special Gallery: “Japanese Inspiration.” At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. To complement Washington’s festivities celebrating the Japanese cherry blossoms around the Tidal Basin, the Athenaeum Gallery is featuring the work of three local contemporary artists whose work is influenced and guided by traditional Japanese art. Sean Doonan is an illustrator whose fanciful posters are inspired by Japanese mythology, anime, video games and pop culture. David Gootnick creates lacy and delicate designs out of wood using an ancient Japanese art form called Kumiko. And Yoshiko Ratliff’s paintings are bold, but intricately detailed, representations of Japanese characters and kimonos.

APRIL 5-27

“Same But Different” Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that explores notions of identity, distinctions and similarities in our natural and manmade

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11

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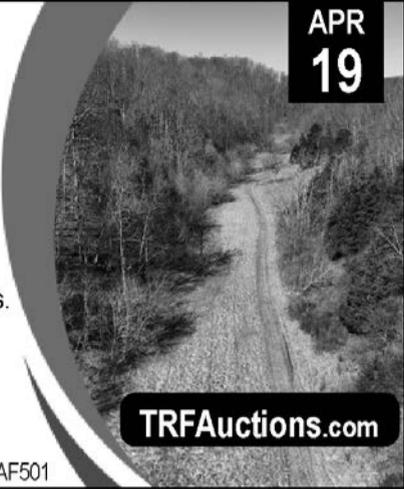
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NEWS

Brace Yourself
for the 2024
Atlantic
Hurricane
Season



Prepare for
Hurricane
Season

Researchers at Colorado State University are forecasting an extremely active 2024 Atlantic hurricane season, which starts June 1 and lasts until Nov. 30. According to their report released on April 4, they anticipate 23 named storms, 11 hurricanes and five major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson scale).

These numbers are well above the 1991-2020 averages of 14 named storms, seven hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

The CSU team cites record warm sea surface temperatures in the tropical and eastern subtropical Atlantic as a primary factor contributing to their prediction of a hyperactive season. As stated in their report:

"Sea surface temperatures in the eastern and central Atlantic are currently at record warm levels and are anticipated to remain well above average for the upcoming hurricane season. A warmer-than-normal tropical Atlantic provides a more conducive dynamic and thermodynamic environment for hurricane formation and intensification."

Another key factor is the anticipated transition from the current El Niño conditions to a La Niña pattern by the peak of the Atlantic hurricane season (August-October). La Niña typically decreases upper-level westerly winds across the Caribbean and tropical Atlantic, favoring hurricane formation and intensification.

The CSU team also emphasizes that their April forecast has a higher-than-normal confidence level, given the robust signals from their primary predictors. However, conditions can change between April and the peak of the season.

The forecast also includes the probability of major hurricanes making landfall along the U.S. coastline and in the Caribbean. CSU predicts a 62% chance of at least one major hurricane striking the entire U.S. coastline, a 34% chance for the U.S. East Coast, a 42% chance for the Gulf Coast, and a 66% chance for the Caribbean. These probabilities are well above their long-term averages.

As the hurricane season ap-

SEE PREPARE NOW, PAGE 11

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 9

world. This exhibit showcases the interconnectedness of humanity and the uniqueness of things that may appear to be the same. Opening Reception: Friday, April 5, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

THURSDAY/APRIL 11

United States Air Force Band. 7:30 p.m. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 Netherton Dr, Alexandria. Join the United States Air Force Band Airmen of Note for a Jazz Heritage Series concert featuring pianist Dave Kikoski. A highly regarded jazz pianist, Mr. Kikoski emerged in the New York jazz scene in the 1980s and quickly established himself as one of the top players, well known for his post-bop style and spontaneous swinging play. The Airmen of Note is one of the six performing ensembles within The United States Air Force Band, the premier musical organization of the U.S. Air Force.

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. Online tickets are now available for River Farm's annual plant and nature-inspired marketplace. Visit www.ahsgardening.org/springgardenmarket2024.

SUNDAY/APRIL 14

Epics & Fantasies. 2 p.m. Featuring the President's Own United States Marine Band. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Alexandria. John Mackey's Wine-Dark Sea carries a bulk of the narrative in this Marine Band concert of poetry and stories. The 30-minute work draws its inspiration from Homer's *Odyssey*, distilling the epic poem into a handful of musical highlights. Vocal features include Sousa's "Annabel Lee," set to the chilling verses written by Edgar Allan Poe, and a whimsical tale of "The Green-eyed Dragon" by Wolseley Charles. Debussy's *Syrinx* flute solo derives its name from a nymph in Greek mythology and the instrument known as "panpipes." The Marine Band's new Assistant Director 1st Lt. Jose Toranzo will also make his debut, conducting Alfred Reed's *El Camino Real*, also known as *The Royal Road: A Latin Fantasy*.

On Sunday April 14th at 2PM Alexandria non-profit Local Motion Project will be hosting "Dance on the Green," their first outdoor community dance event in John Carlyle Square Park. This highly interactive workshop



The 2024 Spring Garden Market at River Farm takes place April 12-13, 2024. <https://ahsgardening.org/about-river-farm/events-programs/springgardenmarket2024/>

promises to be an active and enjoyable event

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

Jive After Five Wine Tasting. 6-9 p.m. An exhilarating evening of professional networking and camaraderie at the upcoming Jive After Five event, hosted by the Northern Virginia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Set against the picturesque backdrop of Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria, this exclusive gathering promises an opportunity for businesses to foster meaningful connections and cultivate prosperous relationships.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

Rock the Ave Block Party. 12-4 p.m. At SaltBox, 4700 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. This outdoor, free, family-friendly event will feature kid-friendly activities, local Eisenhower businesses and area artisans, live music from Yellow Door Concert Series, a pop-up Cider Garden hosted by Lost Boy Cider and much more. The Eisenhower Partnership will also be offering bike valet services provided by Two Week Valet, to encourage individuals to bike to/from the event.

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.alxdog-walk.com/register

BEGINNING WEDNESDAY APRIL 24TH, the Friends of the Duncan Library will be holding their Spring Book Sale. In addition to providing an opportunity to get great books on the cheap, this sale benefits the operations of one of Alexandria's neighborhood library branches.

Driving Home a Point



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I've had very few car accidents in my life, a fender bender or two but nothing approaching totaling a car – even in high school, when such incidents seemed common. I've certainly gotten my share of speeding tickets and a few moving violations: rolling through stop signs, "running" a red light, et cetera. In general, very rarely have I been exchanging insurance information with another driver as we both considered the accident that brought us together.

Nevertheless, I have developed a car-driving reputation among my family and friends (presumably those who know me/my tendencies best). Regardless of the pavement, either driving through neighborhood streets or on highways, I have often heard – and the opinions are always the same: "Kenny, you're a lousy driver." And my wife, Dina, a constant passenger who admittedly knows me best, takes an additional pot shot at me when she says: "Even your brother thinks you're a lousy driver." (After 45 years of marriage – and having spent multiple hours together in the car, Dina has often invoked a family member of mine, particularly my late brother Richard, as a further reinforcer of her opinion/my below-average driving skill. If my brother said it, it must be true; that's the argument.)

Disputing this negative description of my driving skill (or lack thereof) has been a recurring conversation between Dina and me. As often as we have discussed – both while we drive and/or while we don't, this driving issue, this topic, has failed to disappear into the ether. It is as common today as it has been for decades and has spawned many an argument. Unfortunately, I see no sign of relief as I have few defenders or any credible evidence to the contrary. Perhaps it's time to embrace the problem.

Since I can't do much, apparently, about my driving, especially since I don't agree with much of their criticism, I thought maybe I could take a pro-active approach to other drivers – and to satisfy Dina's regular rants and warn the other drivers. How, you ask? The solution is simple. I saw it yesterday. It was a bumper sticker stuck on the back of a car I'm sure many of you drivers have seen. It said: "Student Driver. Please Be Patient." Perfect, I thought. I'll place it on the back of my car. Thereby giving my fellow drivers a heads-up that yours truly, an allegedly poor driver, is behind the wheel. With this warning, I might get a wider berth on the road or be given more time to parallel park – as but a few examples, because the driver is a student/novice. Who's going to know the truth that I'm just a bad driver? It's not like I'm advertising it. I'm simply trying to avoid meeting by accident. When another driver sees that bumper sticker, you would think – for his own safety, he would pull back on the throttle some and/or manage his aggressive driving. No driver wants to be the victim of his own stupidity. I can hear it now: "Didn't you see he's a student driver. Give him some room/time." And he'd have no defense. After all, he was warned.

All of the above being said, I have been reminded recently by some friends who think they know me and my driving, of a few incidents when my driving has come into question: when, as an example or two: while backing up the car, my rear bumper hit and dented the downspout on Martha's garage, when I destroyed a fancy decorative bush when backing out of John and Lynne's half-circle driveway and another when I nearly backed into a ditch while reversing out of Cheryl's elevated driveway. Yes, I'll admit, there's been a few incidents. Fortunately, nobody got hurt, and respectfully, the damage was minor. (You'll notice, all the examples I gave were when I was backing up the car. Let me digress: you'll never see me backing my car into a parking place. It would take me too long, and besides, I just don't see the advantage of going to all the trouble to back in. I've spent too many minutes sitting in my car, idling my time away while watching the driver twist and turn and attempt to look at all their car's mirrors simultaneously while attempting to fit in between two parked cars. Way too much trouble and effort – from my perspective.)

I think I may have stumbled onto a solution/compromise here: the bumper sticker. Without directly admitting/agreeing with the Kenny's-a-lousy-driver premise, and without giving in to these "nattering nabobs of negativism," to quote Spiro Agnew, the one-time governor of Maryland and also our 39th vice president, I might be able to preempt some of the inevitable/occasional questions/situations when my driving might come into play. Nevertheless, consider yourselves warned.

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

Prepare Now for 'Extremely Active Hurricane Season'

FROM PAGE 10

proaches, Fairfax County residents should prepare by stocking up on emergency supplies, being prepared to secure their homes and having an evacuation plan in place. Areas like Mount Vernon that have sometimes experienced flooding could be more vulnerable to tropical storms.

Hurricane Season Safety Tips

Stay informed: Monitor weather reports and follow instructions from local authorities. Sign up for severe weather alerts from Fairfax Alerts.

Prepare an emergency kit: Include essentials like non-perishable food, water, first-aid supplies, and batteries. Our Department of Emergency Management and Security has more information.

Secure your home: Be prepared to clear loose objects from your yard, trim trees and shrubs and board up windows.

Know your evacuation routes: Identify safe shelters and have a plan to get there if ordered to evacuate.

Protect important documents: Store essential documents in waterproof containers or have digital backups.

Have a communication plan: Establish a way to stay in touch with family members in case of separation.

Pet preparedness: Have a plan for your pets, including supplies and potential sheltering options.

Remember, it only takes one hurricane making landfall to make it an active season for your community. Thorough preparations should be made every season, regardless of predicted activity.

Source: Fairfax County Emergency Information



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