

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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APRIL 18, 2024



Mayor Justin Wilson
\$3 million for City Mental Health Staff Stabilization: More than 20 percent of Alexandria's client-facing mental health positions are vacant, and Wilson wants to change this by making pay more competitive with neighboring regions.



Vice Mayor Amy Jackson
\$250,000 for MetroStage Theater: Old Town may soon see a new performing arts venue that would be home to MetroStage, which has been searching for a permanent home for years.



Councilwoman Aliya Gaskins
\$4 million for a COLA for teachers: After original budget projections deemed it unlikely ACPS educators would receive a cost-of-living adjustment, this request may provide the payment a path to light.



Councilman John Chapman
\$150,000 for an Economic Sustainability Summit: Chapman hopes for Alexandria to hold a summit, similar to one held in 2007, that would discuss fostering economic development, diversifying revenue and allowing greater investment in infrastructure.



Councilmember Canek Aguirre
\$3 million for Affordable Housing: Co-submitted with Sarah Bagley, Aguirre's measure would help finance affordable housing projects that were approved by the city but have not been fully funded.



Councilman Kirk McPike
\$550,000 for Guaranteed Income: A popular pilot program called ARISE has provided over 150 low-income residents with payments of \$500 each month, but it will be canceled if this request is not approved.



Councilwoman Sarah Bagley
\$80,000 for an E-Bike Rebate Program: If you're in the market for an e-bike, you may want to hold your purchase until after the budget is approved, as this measure — co-submitted with McPike — would provide 50 Alexandrians with a 50% rebate.

Balancing the Books

Members of the city council identify priorities.

BY JAMES LIBRESCO
GAZETTE PACKET

Affordable housing, teacher pay and guaranteed income are among the topics being considered by members of City Council as they approach a budget vote on May 1. After City Manager Jim Parajon presented his proposed budget last month, council members had the opportunity to request more or less funding in specific areas. Council members are expected to hold a work session finalizing the requests.

Many of the proposed revisions aim to provide more resources to low-income families. One, submitted by council members Sarah Bagley and Canek Aguirre, would continue a guaranteed income pilot program called ARISE. The program, which started in late 2022, provides \$500 monthly payments to 170 residents at or below 50 percent of the area median income. At the April 13 budget public hearing, several residents shared their support for ARISE.

"Everyday, I see how stressed my mother gets because of the high cost of living," said Walter Piche, a freshman attending Alexandria City High School. "She has no days off, all to be able to pay the high cost of rent and to provide what is necessary for us. ... My wish is that you support us because there is not enough housing here for families like mine. We need programs like ARISE."

If it is not included in the final budget, the program would end.

"Cities all over the country [provide guaranteed income] as pilot programs because we as Americans just simply can't bring ourselves to give money to poor peo-

ple," said Jonathan Krall, a co-founder of Grassroots Alexandria. "Study after study show the economic benefits of doing so to the entire community."

Also being considered by the City Council is a \$3,000,000 one-time payment for affordable housing projects. The payment was requested by Councilman Kirk McPike and would be spent on projects that have been approved but not funded.

"I've always described [Alexandria] as a tale of two cities," said lifelong resident Amanda Eisenhour. "Nearly unfathomable levels of wealth situated just blocks from families that can barely get by ... As any resident will tell you, the rent is simply too high."

Another item proposed by McPike, as well as Councilwoman Aliya Gaskins, is to broaden a tax relief program for disabled and/or elderly residents. The program currently provides relief to Alexandrians earning less than \$72,000 annually, but with the proposed \$1 million suggested by McPike and Gaskins, eligibility would be expanded to incomes up to \$100,000. Linda Paulson, who is disabled, spoke at the public hearing on how the tax relief has affected her.

"[This program] has made it possible for me to stay in my home. This is a really big deal," Paulson said. "While I can't speak for the hundreds of other people who are helped by this program, I can tell you the idea of having to move while this sick is terrifying."

Two other requests, both submitted by McPike, also aim to support underserved Alexandrians: an additional \$200,000 towards community-based food hubs and \$100,000 for a twice-per-week shuttle service for people who can't walk between the Mark Center

bus stop and the Del Pepper Community Resource Center.

Another theme prevalent throughout budget revisions was support for city youth. Perhaps the most significant request was from Gaskins, who proposed spending \$67 million to update several schools. Gaskins and McPike also requested a cost-of-living adjustment for school staff, something notably absent from Parajon's proposed budget despite a recommendation from the School Board to include it.

"What could be more important to a student's academic success than a dedicated teacher with years of experience?," said Catherine Clinger, chair of Alexandria's Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission. "We join our teachers and staff as it is our belief that their compensation should reflect the uniquely vital role that all school staff play in our children's wellbeing."

Another member of the youth commission, Julie Murphy, shared her satisfaction with McPike's appeal to provide stipends to juvenile members of city commissions.

"Participating in the civic life of our city can be challenging for many of our youth," she said. "Offering stipends allows youth from low-income families the opportunity to help support their families while continuing to learn and develop in an environment that is dedicated to their educational and socio-emotional needs."

An additional piece of funding focused on adolescents is \$165,000 that would go to the Alexandria Youth Ambassadors, a program where high school students lead engagement work relating to trauma healing, anti-violence, and social-emotional learning.

On the marketing side of the budget,

Mayor Justin Wilson is seeking to spend \$500,000 (in addition to \$200,000 already allocated by Parajon) on promoting Alexandria as a tourism hub across the country. According to Visit Alexandria, the city tourism agency, this investment would result in at least \$1.5 million of extra revenue in next year's budget.

A community outreach position for city libraries is also on the table thanks to a request from Councilman Canek Aguirre.

"An outreach librarian will not only provide books and services to people throughout Alexandria, but it will introduce Alexandrians to our incredible libraries for the first time," said Dan Roth, a member of the Friends of Duncan Library. "Outreach will mean more people entering the library, more people reading books, and more people being introduced to our outstanding staff."

The city could see two more community engagement positions, since Gaskins proposed the restoration of Senior Services outreach coordinators who would work with elderly Alexandrians who speak minimal or no English. And although it's no sports arena, a request from Vice Mayor Amy Jackson would help fund a new performing arts center in Old Town for MetroStage.

"The limitations of venues ... and the lack of artistic spaces in the city have underscored the urgent need for a dedicated state-of-the-art theater facility," said Ricardo Alfara, President of the MetroStage board. "Investing now in MetroStage's new theater facility is an investment in the future of our city."

To give feedback to the Council, alex311.alexandriava.gov/customer/request/CTYCNCNCL/details



Saturday, April 20, the Garden Club of Virginia hosts its Historic Old Town Home and Garden Tour.

Historic Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour

Tour kicks off Garden Club of Virginia statewide tour.

most up-to-date technology. Featuring a total of 24 heating and air conditioning zones, most of the home's flooring is heated. Touch panels provide state of the art technology access, including settings for privacy, security, television and streaming apps, whole house audio, whole house video intercom, heating, and cooling.

By KIM DAVIS

A 91-year-old treasured Spring tradition returns this Saturday, April 20, when the Garden Club of Virginia hosts its Historic Old Town Home and Garden Tour. This year's tour is a must see, showcasing five of the city's most spectacular homes and gardens and one public property, Lee-Fendall House.

The walking tour features a behind-the-scenes glimpse into centuries-old homes including four properties clustered in North Old Town on Queen, North Fairfax and Oronoco Streets as well as two a few blocks away on South Fairfax Street.

The North Old Town section features a home first owned by an Irish whiskey distiller in 1815 on 213 North Fairfax Street. Current owners purchased the property in 2016, and embarked on a significant renovation and addition, resulting in 6,000 square feet of meticulously restored living space. A stunning new kitchen addition includes classic walnut cabinetry with a sophisticated backsplash of striking Persian green and white marble. Discrete built in cooler drawers provide easy access to beverage and snack options in numerous rooms. And a sitting room between the kitchen and living room features beautifully lacquered custom cabinetry in teal blue with gold handles. The kitchen addition overlooks a walled patio featuring a black half-moon fountain and tasteful but simple garden plantings.

The home is fully automated with the

Another home located around the corner at 611 Queen Street was purchased in 1803 and sold twice before it was acquired in 1807 for \$250. In 1815, the property sold for \$4,000 to the president of the Common Council of Alexandria who along with then Alexandria Mayor John Roberts met the Marquis de Lafayette during a visit to Alexandria in 1824. Current owners Dominique and Dorn Wenninger purchased the home in 2021 and undertook significant renovations. This charming home has an eclectic vibe and a significant collection of artwork and furnishings from the Wenningers' travels in Asia, South America, and Africa. The beautiful garden has been replanted and the patio expanded to create "a whimsical secret garden with cozy spaces and quirky corners of interest, complete with Mexican stone carvings and an antique bench from Mexico," Dominique said.

A block away sits 513 Queen Street, dating back 234 years. Records from 1789 describe a one-room, one-story log and frame structure. The property is a garden-only tour featuring a mature Kwanzan cherry and a majestic Natchez crepe myrtle which creates an intimate patio retreat in the heart of the city.

Owners describe an interesting anecdote about the home. "Apparently, as the story goes, in 1946 the homeowner permitted chickens inside the house in defiance of a

SEE HOME AND GARDEN TOUR, PAGE 13

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Retired Alexandria General District Court judge Robert T.S. Colby died April 16 at the age of 95.



Robert Colby, left, with fellow retired judge Daniel O'Flaherty and Resa O'Flaherty in 2013.

Robert T.S. Colby Retired District Court judge dies at 95.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Robert T.S. Colby, a retired Alexandria General District Court judge known for what became known as the “Colby Deal” for first time offenders who appeared before him, died April 16 at Inova Alexandria Hospital after a brief illness. He was 95.

“I would have to say that Judge Colby had the most unusual approach to being a judge that I think I’ve ever seen,” said retired Alexandria Circuit Court judge Alfred Swersky, whose friendship with Colby spanned more than 50 years. “I would describe it as a very humanistic approach. He cared a lot about the people that were appearing in front of him and tried his best to help and do what was right.”

Born May 13, 1928, in New York, Colby attended Jamaica High School and came to the DC area to

“Judge Colby had the most unusual approach to being a judge that I think I’ve ever seen.”

— Retired Circuit Court Judge Alfred Swersky

study law. He earned his undergraduate and law degrees from Georgetown University, completing his studies in 1951.

Colby served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, attaining the rank of Brigadier General in the Army Reserves. He embarked on a career that included jobs with the federal mediation service in Chicago, the Washington local of the Newspaper Guild, the U.S. attorney’s office in Norfolk and his father’s law firm. He hung out his shingle in Alexandria in the early 1960s.

He was named to the bench in 1967, retiring in 1992 after serving 24 years. During that time Colby

probably became best known for what was described as the “Colby Deal.”

“Judge Colby was unique,” said retired Circuit Court judge James Clark. “He was the first judge I ever appeared before when I started practicing law in 1976. He was very into educating young lawyers. He was eager to have people learn from him and learn from his experiences.”

Clark recalled the origins of the Colby Deal.

“Judge Colby and Judge [Daniel] O’Flaherty were colleagues for decades in the General District Court,” Clark said. “Judge O’Flaherty had a thing that if you were

convicted of shoplifting you go to jail for two days. Judge Colby would have you pay a fine. The compromise was that Judge Colby would let you plead guilty, take it under advisement for those two days in jail and then bring the case back up on the docket and dismiss it. That was the goal of the deal — you did your time but didn’t end up with a record that followed you the rest of your life.”

Added Swersky, “The Colby Deal was probably the predecessor to what they now call diversion programs.”

Upon his retirement, Colby himself said of his unusual approach, “It’s my bat, it’s my ball, it’s my glove, it’s my game. You do what I say.”

Colby maintained a law office on Eisenhower Avenue and served on several boards up until the time of his death. He was a private pilot and passionate aviation educator.

Colby is survived by his wife

Lynn Julia (LJ) Pendlebury Colby; daughters Susan Colby Hedrick of Springfield, Wendy Colby of Airville, Penn., Alyce Austin Horwat of Lewis Center, Ohio, Angela Scudder Colby of Westbrook, Conn., and Ellen Pruschowski of Sterling; 11 grandchildren, and many great-grandchildren. A memorial gathering will be held at a future date.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to The Salvation Army, Alexandria VA Citadel, 1804 Mt. Vernon Ave. Alexandria VA 22301, where he was a longtime Advisory Council Board member, or to World Central Kitchen.

“Judge Colby was an excellent jurist,” Clark said. “He would work with you to help you be better at your craft and was very generous with his time in terms of those sorts of things. He will be missed by everybody that appeared in front of him and there were literally thousands of lawyers who did that.”

BULLETIN BOARD

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

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be

the ideal candidate. www.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.

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

APD Chief Hayes Celebrated

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Former chief takes helm at Federal Reserve Board.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Former Chief of Police Don Hayes, who served for more than four decades with the Alexandria Police Department, was honored Feb. 29 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria as well wishers gathered to celebrate his retirement from the APD to take a position as chief of the law enforcement unit at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington.

"It's been an honor to dedicate my life to this community," Hayes said when his retirement was announced in early February. "I truly believe there is no greater calling than to serve on behalf of the people. Doing so alongside the men and women of this department for the past four decades has been my greatest accomplishment."

Former APD chiefs David Baker and Earl Cook were among those attend-



Don Hayes, his wife Gloria and a granddaughter enjoy a celebration of Hayes' retirement as Alexandria Chief of Police Feb. 29 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria. Hayes left the APD after more than 40 years to take a position with the Federal Reserve.



Mayor Justin Wilson, right, presents former Chief of Police Don Hayes with a proclamation celebrating Hayes' more than four decades of service to the city.



Former police chiefs David Baker, left, and Earl Cook, right congratulate Don Hayes on his retirement from the Alexandria Police Department Feb. 29 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria.

ing the event, as was former Deputy City Manager Debra Collins. Sheriff Sean Casey and retired Sheriff Dana Lawhorn were also in attendance.

Hayes joined the Alexandria Police Department in March of 1981 and achieved the rank of sergeant in 1996, overseeing the communi-

ty-oriented policing and internal investigations sections.

In 1999, Hayes was promoted to lieutenant and led the special operations, information services, and public services divisions. He was promoted to captain in 2013 and served as patrol commander, in addition to heading the parking enforcement, traffic, special events, and community relations divisions.

Hayes was promoted to assistant chief in 2019, named acting chief in December of 2021, and made Chief in April 2022.

In addition to his new position, Hayes also preaches at Mount Zion Baptist Church in Arlington.

Assistant Chief Raul Pedroso is currently serving as Interim Chief.



Gloria Hayes with Mistress of Ceremonies Pastor Thabiti Anyawabile.

"It's been an honor to dedicate my life to this community."

— Former Chief of Police Don Hayes



A photo montage of retiring Chief Don Hayes and his more than four decades of service to the Alexandria police department.



Former Deputy City Manager Debra Collins, seated, congratulates Don Hayes on his retirement as Alexandria Chief of Police Feb. 29 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria.



Don Hayes is greeted by a well-wisher at a retirement celebration in his honor Feb. 29 at First Baptist Church of Alexandria.

PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



How Sweet It Is

Interim Chief of Police Raul Pedrosa, fourth from right, enjoys a night out at Sweet Fire Donna's Restaurant in Carlyle April 16 as part of a fundraiser for the Alexandria Police Foundation. Shown are (from left): APF supporters John Bray, Susan Bray, Alejandro Pedrosa, Adriana Uy, Chief Pedrosa, APF past board chair William Polak, APF board chair Charlotte Hall and APF supporter Jon Miller.



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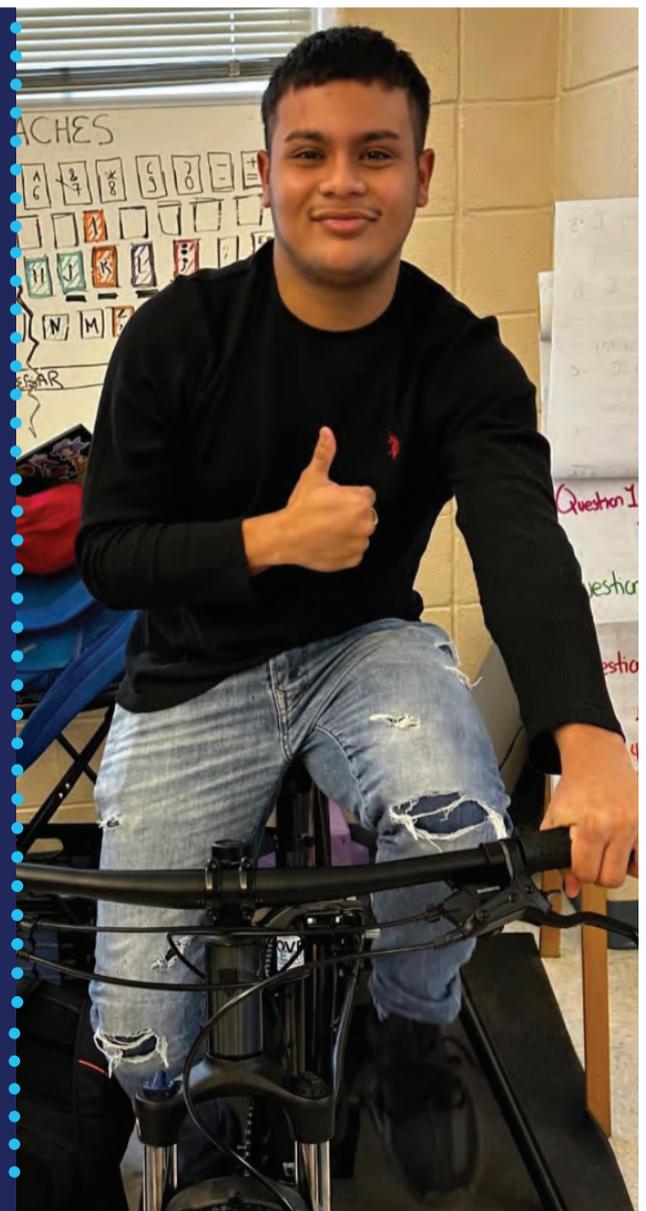


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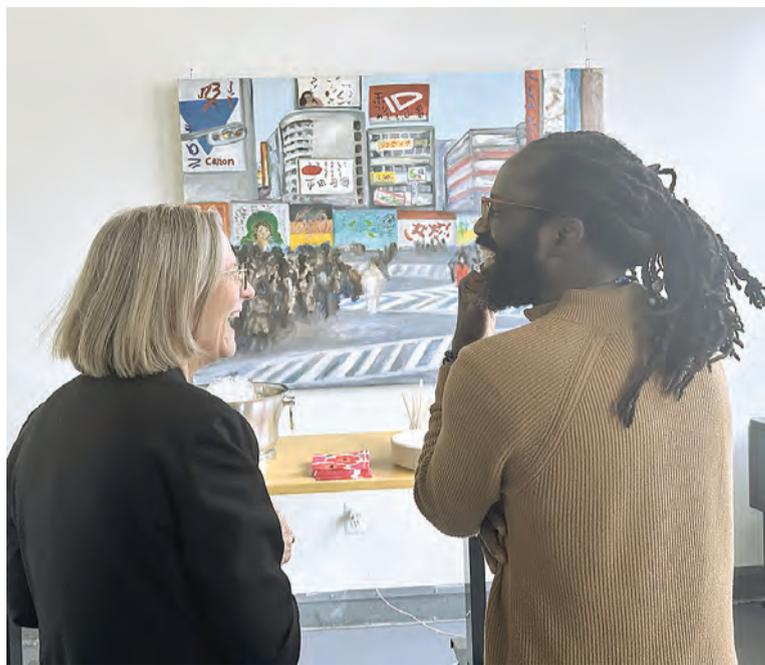
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PEOPLE



Alexandria artist Kristina Hagman, left, talks with a guest at a showing of her work April 4 at the Torpedo Factory.



Kristina Hagman with one of her works depicting a scene in Tokyo.



Kristina Hagman with the original sketch used to create one of her works on display April 4 at the Torpedo Factory.

Creative DNA Kristina Hagman brings exhibit to Torpedo Factory.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Creativity is in her DNA. Kristina Hagman grew up in a family of performing artists and was encouraged at a young age to pursue her own talent as a painter as a way to overcome her challenges with dyslexia.

“Academia was hard for me,” said Hagman, who recently had an exhibit of her work at the Torpedo Factory. “But my mother and grandmother encouraged and supported me and I was able to have my first professional show when I was 23.”

Hagman grew up in California, the daughter of television actor Larry Hagman and granddaughter of Broadway icon Mary Mar-

tin. A resident of Alexandria since 2017, she continues to pursue her work as a life-long oil painter and printmaker.

“My work is about finding joy in the urban environment,” said Hagman, whose exhibit included images from locations across the globe including Japan and Alexandria.

Hagman’s exhibit celebrated her 40 years as an artist. She has lived and traveled around the world, including spending time

“My work is about finding joy in the urban environment.”

— Alexandria artist Kristina Hagman

in Japan, the Pacific Northwest and Santa Fe, New Mexico, before making Alexandria her home.

“As a child I sat painting next to my mother and grandmother who were all about making art,” Hagman notes in her biography. “They helped me get my first exhibitions in Salon style settings that were very successful. But it was in Santa Fe, New Mexico where my professional life truly began. It was an amazing environment in which to be an artist.”

New Mexico was also where Hagman learned the art of printmaking, a skill she honed when she moved to Seattle. Additionally, she has expertise in creating woodblock prints, something she discovered in Japan in the early 80s.

Despite her dyslexia, Hagman took on the

challenge of writing a book about her unconventional upbringing. “The Eternal Party: Understanding My Dad, Larry Hagman, the TV Star America Loved to Hate” was published in 2016.

In addition to her own artwork, Hagman helps encourage other artists, particularly those with disabilities.

“A dear friend of mine has a daughter who has severe disabilities,” Hagman said. “I helped her have her first show. I then met other people in the disability community, and through the state of Maryland.”

Hagman and her husband Kevin Murphy live in Old Town and together share four adult children. Her current work is dominated by landscapes and commissioned portraits.

www.kristinahagman.com



Kristina Hagman explains her creative process to a guest April 4 at the Torpedo Factory.



Artist Kristina Hagman with her painting of Alexandria’s Founders Park.



April Showers

Drivers traverse the flooded intersection of King and Union streets April 12 in Old Town. Coastal flooding advisories are common for the area along the Potomac River.



Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

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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.

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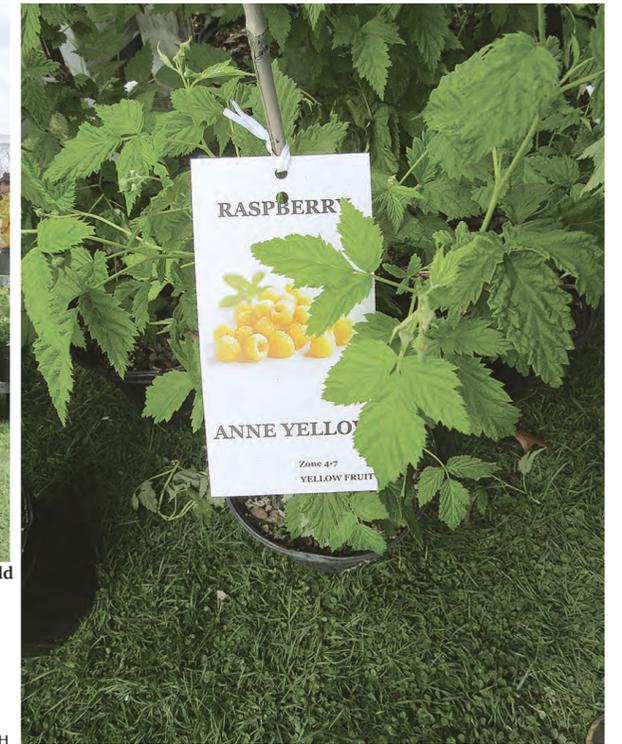
Around 2,300 people shopped at the American Horticultural Society's annual garden market on April 12 and 13.



Vegetable plants, especially tomatoes, were popular.



Matt Goldman from Plants with Purpose Farm sold raspberry plants that produce yellow berries.



Plants, Art, Alpacas and a Big Hotdog

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Pumped-up gardeners were ready to prowl, peruse and purchase.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
GAZETTE PACKET

By 11 a.m. on April 12, the rainy drizzle ended and River Farm's front lawn was jam packed with vehicles. Pumped-up gardeners and plant lovers poured out, more than ready to prowl, peruse and purchase at the American Horticultural Society's annual spring garden market on West Boulevard Drive in Mount Vernon.

From peonies to peppers, milkweed to marigolds, bluebells to borage, the 47 vendors' tables were bulging with greenery, crafts, treats and gardening know-how. By noon, wind gusts were dismantling tents, sending hats aloft and blowing down banners, but the "plantophiles" were undeterred. By Sunday's close, 2,300 people had visited, browsed and shopped.

Mount Vernonite Dorothy Keough goes every year to buy tomato plants and pineapple sage that lures hummingbirds to her Hollin Hall garden. It was a first time for Alexandria's Emily Seaton, a gardener, and a fun outing for her daughter, Aelin, age three, who slurped up a gelato from the Moo Thru Ice Cream Truck.

"I'm a berry guy," said Matt Goldman, from Ashland, Virginia's Plants with Purpose Farm. He promotes using yards to grow food and was selling blueberries, raspberries and blackberries. Two of his specialties are yellow raspberries and white blackberries which he says birds don't eat because the birds are attracted to bright colors.



Two Huacaya alpacas owned by Judy Howe charmed many visitors.

Shoppers were picking up Virginia-grown Japanese maples at the Acer Acres stop, trees native to Japan. Radical Roots Community Farm had organic vegetables, herbs, heirloom tomatoes and many pepper varieties shimmering in the breeze. Peony's Envy (get the pun?) offered bare root peony plants. Nature by Design, Hillhouse Farm and Bee American sold plants native to Northern Virginia.

Alexor and Meaghan Moore from Rio, West Virginia, offered medicinal herbs and flowers. Tobacco plants for sale can get up to five feet tall, Alexor explained, and their white flowers bloom all summer and attract pollinators. He also offered hops, a perennial herb, which among other purposes is used to make beer. "It has relaxing qualities," he maintained.

Shoppers enjoyed more than botanicals, like fungi, ungulates, arts, crafts, gardening accessories and a large hotdog on wheels.

Lisa Marie Meginnis came from her farm, Peasant's Parcel in Pawpaw, West Virginia, to sell shiitakes. She explained how they grow mushrooms on oak logs and displayed a waist-high, box-shaped stack of logs. They drill holes into the logs and inject mycelium (mushroom spores), a process that propagates mushrooms in six months.

Clyde Lake from Springfield's Virginia Spores and More sold mushroom-growing supplies which include three pounds of a wood-based product like sawdust and mycelium packed into a plastic bucket. "Anyone can grow an oyster mushroom," he touted.



Alexandrian Ashley Smith makes oyster crafts and promotes oyster recovery.

Nature Art

Oyster shells were attention grabbers at the Gryffin Conservatory and Conservancy's stand, where Ashley Smith sold handmade oyster shell wreaths and garlands. She gets the shells from the Alexandria restaurant Whiskey and Oysters and advocates for oyster restoration in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

Mount Vernon-area resident and potter Bruce Ciske was selling his Kurinuki-inspired vases. He explained that for the squarish vases he starts with a clay block and carves the texture and inside opening.

Alluring Alpacas and a Hotdog

Two big-eyed, female Huacaya alpacas enchanted all. Judy Howe from Fredericksburg, www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

assisted by local Joyce Diedrich, sold alpaca yarn, dryer balls, hats and other products, as their two patient alpacas sniffed visitors. On Wednesday, the alpacas will "get naked," quipped Howe. Now sporting four-inch-thick fleeces, they'll be sheared for summer comfort — and more products.

The bright red and yellow Oscar Mayer Wienermobile was hard to miss. Chloe Van Caesele said that the vehicle "is 27 feet long or the length of 60 hotdogs," and versions have been around since 1936. Visitors examined the interior's "six ketchup and mustard seats for 12 buns." There are six wienermobiles total that travel all over the country. "Our mission is to spark smiles," Van Caesele said. "It makes people's day."

Rocklands Real Barbeque food truck offered

ings satiated many appetites with tasty barbeque, baked beans, macaroni and cheese and coleslaw.

The 25-acre River Farm was the northernmost of George Washington's five farms and once home to Tobias Lear, Washington's secretary. It's been AHS's national headquarters since 1973.

This year's market sponsors were Bartlett Tree Experts, Wegmans, the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, Lauren Bishop, Thomas Fannon and Sons, Alexandria Living Magazine, Linemark Communications and the Zebra Newspaper.

For a list of the vendors and links, visit <https://ahsgardening.org/about-river-farm/events-programs/springgardenmarket2024/>



Youngsters like Aelin Seaton got a hotdog-shaped whistle at the wienermobile.



The Oscar Meyer wienermobile was an attention-getter.



The wienermobile's glove compartment inside the vehicle.

THE CHAMBER ALX

THE CHAMBER ALX'S chair's reception

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APRIL 18, 2024 | 6-9PM
HOTEL AKA ALEXANDRIA

TICKETS AT THECHAMBERALX.COM

SPRING GARDEN MARKET

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Clyde Lake from Virginia Spores and More grows mushrooms, sells growing products and teaches home mushroom growing.



Oyster mushrooms are easy to grow, Clyde Lake maintains.

American Horticultural Society



Flowering plants were popular with many shoppers.



Mount Vernonite Bruce Ciske, a potter, makes Japanese-style vases.



Radical Roots Farm sold herbs and vegetables.

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2nd Annual Party For the Arts

The City of Alexandria is gearing up for the 2nd Annual Party for the Arts, a free community celebration of Alexandria's rich artistic talent and cultural diversity. Scheduled to take place on April 27, 2024, the day will be full of fun activities, live performances, and interactive experiences for all ages.

Presented by The Alexandria Arts Alliance, the Party for the Arts will feature a dynamic lineup of live music, dance performances, and a gallery show highlighting the works of talented artists from local galleries including Kyo Gallery, Galactic Panther, Principal Gallery, Del Ray Artisans, the Athenaeum and the Torpedo Factory. With over 40 artists and vendors displaying and selling their creations, attendees will have the opportunity to explore a diverse array of artistic expressions and styles.

In addition to the gallery show

and live performances, the Party for the Arts will feature activities for children, including painting, chalk art, and hands-on art projects. Food trucks will also be on-site.

One of the highlights of the event will be the opportunity to witness local artists in action as they create an interactive painting entitled "What Alexandria Means to Me," in honor of Alexandria's 275th Anniversary. This art installation will invite attendees to connect by sharing their own reflections on the city's history, culture, and community spirit.

The 2nd Annual Party for the Arts will take place on Saturday, April 27 from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Canal Center Plaza. Admission is free, and all members of the community are encouraged to attend and participate.

<http://www.alexandriaartsalliance.org/party4thearts.html> or contact info@alxarts.org

ALEXANDRIA ARTS ALLIANCE

Party for the Arts

A free community celebration featuring dancing, singing, music and ART!

- Over 40 Artists and Vendors
- Juried Gallery Show
- Live music & dance performances



- Food Trucks
- Kids activities including painting, chalk and creating art!
- Watch artists create "What Alexandria Means to Me" 275th Anniversary works



SATURDAY, APRIL 27

11am to 7pm

📍 11 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria





Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Jurisdiction	Fed. Route #	State Route #	Structure Name	Structure	Effective Date
BLAND	3099	617	WADDLETOWN ROAD	BIG WALKER CREEK #3	4/4/2024
GLIES	8514	772	SINKINGCREEK ROAD 772	SINKING CREEK	4/2/2024
SCOTT	16685	619	BIG STONY CREEK ROAD	BRANCH	3/21/2024
RICHMOND (M)	21531	161	NORTH BOULEVARD	CSX RAILWAY	3/19/2024
DINWIDDIE	6046	622	BALTIMORE ROAD	GEORGE'S BRANCH	3/19/2024
WAYNESBORO	22301	0	HOPEMAN PARKWAY	CSX RAILWAY	3/14/2024
BEDFORD	2834	699	BORE AUGER ROAD 699	BORE AUGER CREEK	3/13/2024
SMYTH	17395	16	B F BUCHANAN HWY	WHITE OAK BRANCH	3/6/2024
TAZEWELL	18583	631	INDIAN CREEK ROAD	INDIAN CREEK #2	3/6/2024
BEDFORD	2879	746	DICKERSON MILL ROAD 746	WOLF CREEK	3/4/2024

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

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ENTERTAINMENT

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 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.

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 9 - MAY 19

There and Back Exhibit of Photographic Art by Maureen Minehan. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union Street, Studio 312, in Alexandria. There and Back reflects Maureen's ceaseless desire to explore the beauty inherent in solitude. Through her artistic vision, she portrays isolated landscapes not as desolate or forsaken, but as sanctuaries where quietude reigns supreme, and narratives yet untold



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

await discovery. Maureen will be at the gallery on Sunday, April 21st from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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

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 world. This exhibit showcases the interconnectedness of humanity and the uniqueness of things that may appear to be the same. Opening Reception: Friday, April

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 17

Poem in Your Pocket Celebration. 6:30 p.m. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Featuring Zeina Azzam, Poet Laureate, City of Alexandria, who will lead the Poem in Your Pocket Celebration. The formal program begins at 7 p.m. She will be joined by winning poets of the 2024 DASHing Words in Motion poetry contest, who will have their poems displayed inside the DASH buses and trolleys in April through August. Limited seating will be available, so reservations are encouraged. If you wish to read a poem, or to make a reservation email poet@alexandriava.gov.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

Jive After Five Networking Reception. 6:00 - 9:00 p.m. At Belle Haven Country Club in Alexandria. Join in an 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. Elevating the ambiance of the evening, indulge in a curated selection of fine wines or beers and live music by guitarist Tito Dorante as you engage in dynamic conversations with fellow professionals from diverse industries.

APRIL 20-21

Family Animal Day. At George Washington's Mount Vernon. Discover Mount Vernon's adorable animals during Family Animal Day on April 20th and 21st. This is a rare opportunity to see sheep, oxen, and horses and learn about their jobs in



The Metropolitan School of the Arts will present its Spring Ballet: Coppelia on April 27-28, 2024 at George Washington National Masonic Memorial in Alexandria.

the 18th century.

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.alxdogwalk.com/register

APRIL 20-21

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra - Bernstein/Shostakovich. Saturday/April 20 at 7:30 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center; Sunday, April 21 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Featuring the Alexandria Symphony with James Ross, conductor; Aldo Lopez-Gavilan, piano; Jorge Amado: Alexandria Shuffle; Leonard Bernstein: Three Dance Episodes from On the Town.

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.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 13

Historic Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour

FROM PAGE 2

new law banning farm animals within yards. As would be expected, this resulted in deplorable conditions at the time within the house," he said.

The current owners fell in love with the gardens, so they "bought the garden and took the house," he said. The couple unearthed an old milk bottle in the garden, likely a gift from the former neighboring dairy bottling company.

A featured property on the tour in North Old Town is Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden. This year marks the 50th anniversary of its opening as a museum and garden, providing insight into American history through the experiences of those who lived and worked on the property for two centuries. A newly designed garden incorporates the bones of a pleasure garden created in the 1850s, a Bicentennial Project of the Garden Clubs of Northern Virginia.

The properties situated on South Fairfax Street are both lovely and add historic interest. 410 South Fairfax Street was purchased in 1795 and the home was built in 1870 or earlier. Current owners Lauren and Christopher Bishop bought the property in 2016, also undertaking a renovation in 2019 that included a mudroom, kitchen, and family room in keeping with the character of the home. The living room features its original 12-foot ceilings and plaster moldings. In 2021, the couple excavated the basement and converted it into a finished space. The home features elegant furnishings, beautiful abstract art and a charming garden filled with spring flowers.

Across the street is 417 Fairfax, purchased in 1796 by a cooper, a crafter of wooden containers. The back portion of the parcel possessed two dwellings that were homes to free black tenants as early as 1823. Current owners purchased the property in 2022 from the estate of Richard Simmons, former president of The Washington

Post. Throughout the years, owners added a kitchen, baths, flooring, lighting, slate, stone, and brick patios as well as a stone wall. An early 19th-century carriage house is now a pool house. During renovations, beautiful interior brick work and exposed beams were revealed. In the garden, a beautiful, large magnolia and a crepe myrtle anchor the patios, where extensive new landscaping provides space for entertaining.

Tickets also include admission to 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 beloved statewide tour is the only one of its kind in the nation. It includes an eight-day statewide tour from April 20 to 27 including 170 private properties throughout Virginia, including stately manors, renovated farmhouses, private homes, and waterfront villas. Proceeds fund restoration and preservation of nearly 50 Virginia historic public gardens. The annual event also funds a historic landscape research fellowship program that is building a comprehensive library documenting the Commonwealth's important gardens and landscapes. The tour draws approximately 25,000 tourists annually and dates to 1929.

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, online, @historicgardenweekoldtownalexandria on Facebook

and @historicgardenweekoldtown on Instagram.

The event also features a special pop-up Marketplace Boutique located in the Atheneum at 201 Prince Street. The boutique features a curated collection of beau-

tiful clothing, gifts, and jewelry. Offerings include soft cashmere scarves, linen dresses, and Scottish woven sweaters by Heidi Wynne; elegant personalized stationery, invitations and gifts from Georgetown Paperie; exquisitely handmade, timeless designs by Deo duPont Jewelry; hand painted art featuring flowers and animals by the talented and gifted artist Vir-

ginia Donelson; a beautiful selection of children's clothing, toys and personalized gifts from Old Town's Monday's Child boutique; Indo-Chic women's classic silk blouses, jackets, and skirts; Sarah Bray Bermuda Hats made of sea grass and palm leaf, adorned with beautiful vintage floral and grosgrain ribbon; A Shirt Story offering pre-loved 100% cotton men's oxford

shirts reworked for women; and, an extensive inventory of stunning peony bulbs from Peony's Envy. The Marketplace is open from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Refreshments will be available for tourgoers throughout the day at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 228 South Pitt Street from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the historic church will be open for touring.




Public Hearings



Funding the Right Transportation Projects

You are invited to share comments on transportation projects that have been recommended for funding in the FY2025-2030 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). Additionally, pursuant to §33.2-202, comments will be accepted for new projects valued in excess of \$25 million. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will take your comments into consideration as it develops the FY2025-2030 SYIP. The program allocates public funds to highway, road, bridge, rail, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation projects. All federally eligible projects in the SYIP will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program to document how Virginia will obligate its federal funds.

Meeting materials will be available <https://www.ctb.virginia.gov/planning/springmeetings2024/default.asp>.

Public meetings begin at 4 p.m. in each of the locations except as noted below:
A formal comment period will be held at these meetings.

Thursday, April 18 Richmond District Hawthorne Room 2430 Pine Forest Drive Colonial Heights, VA 23834	Wednesday, April 24 Staunton District Laurel Ridge Community College 173 Skimisher Lane Middletown, VA 22645	Thursday, April 25, 5 p.m. Northern Virginia District Loudoun County Government Center, 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 1st Floor, Leesburg, VA 20175
Wednesday, May 1 Lynchburg District Lynchburg District Ramey Auditorium 4303 Campbell Avenue Lynchburg, VA 24501	Thursday, May 2, 5 p.m. Hampton Roads District James River Auditorium 7511 Burbage Drive Suffolk, VA 23435	Monday, May 6 Bristol District Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center One Partnership Circle Abingdon, VA 24210
Tuesday, May 7 Salem District Salem Civic Center Community Room 1001 Roanoke Boulevard Salem, VA 24153	Wednesday, May 8 Culpeper District Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission Water Street Center 401 East Water Street Charlottesville, VA 22902	Thursday, May 9 Fredericksburg District Fredericksburg District Auditorium 86 Deacon Road Fredericksburg, VA 22405

Additionally, DRPT will host its own public meeting on Thursday, May 16 at 4 p.m. Individuals may participate and provide comment either virtually (register here: <https://bit.ly/3Q7UqM7>) or at the following locations: 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond, VA 23219 or 1725 Duke Street, Suite 675, Alexandria, VA 22314.

You can submit comments online at <https://bit.ly/SYIP2024>, or by email or mail by May 20, 2024.

For roads and highways: Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov, or Infrastructure Investment Director, Virginia Department of Transportation, 1401 East Broad St., Richmond, VA 23219.

For rail and public transportation: DRPTPR@drpt.virginia.gov, Public Information Office, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, 600 East Main Street, Suite 2102, Richmond VA, 23219.

The Commonwealth is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on these policies or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-2730 or the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation's Title VI Compliance Officer at 804-786-4440 (TTY users call 711).

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 12

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Shopping at George Washington's Mount Vernon. Shop for heirloom vegetables, herbs, annual flowers, native perennials, trees, and shrubs grown in Mount Vernon's greenhouses. Members can shop one day early, on April 26, with a reservation. Advance tickets are not required on April 27 for the general public sale. Members receive a 10 percent discount on plants.

FRIDAY/APRIL 26

Homeschool Day. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Hwy., Alexandria. Discover the architecture and history behind two American houses from different centuries. Special guided tours of the houses will be available on the hour starting at 10 AM, 11 AM, 12 PM, and 1 PM. Hands-on activities will explore different aspects of the homes' histories. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawn-popeleighey.org/nwshow24>

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Legals

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING is hereby given that AlexRenew will hold a PUBLIC HEARING on its PROPOSED OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET for the FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025, on Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. The meeting will be held at AlexRenew's Environmental Center Building located at 1800 Limerick Street, Alexandria, VA. The meeting will be held in person and broadcast on Microsoft Teams. The proposed FY2025 budget and AlexRenew's audited financial statements are available for examination by the public online at www.alexrenew.com. Copies will be made available upon request - phone (703) 721-3500 ext. 2260.

AlexRenew
BY: Adriana Caldarelli
Secretary - Treasurer

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Alexandria Gazette Packet

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OPINION

Vetoed Devastate Environmental Progress

Governor vetoed 153 bills, amended 117, including dozens of priority conservation and environmental bills.

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

This week, the General Assembly reconvenes in Richmond to consider Governor Youngkin's unprecedented number of amendments and vetoes to legislation we passed during the regular session. All told, the Governor vetoed 153 bills and amended 117 others, including the biennial budget bill. This veto count may creep even higher, because if the General Assembly rejects the Governor's recommendations on a bill during the Reconvene, the Governor may then veto that legislation when it returns to him.

Hanging in the balance among those vetoed and amended bills are dozens of priority conservation and environmental bills. With Earth Day coming up next Monday, I wanted to highlight the environmental policy and funding that our Democratic leadership in the General Assembly will be fighting to preserve and restore during the Reconvene session.

The Governor gutted critical environmental provisions from the state budget, including stripping out language requiring the administration to rejoin the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). Virginia's participation in RGGI helps low-income households lower their energy bills and localities combat flooding. Also removed were grant

programs and incentives to adopt parking lot solar canopies and rooftop solar, and proposed funding to establish the Office of Commonwealth Resilience which the Governor included in his own introduced budget. Funding to support meeting Virginia's clean water goals and Chesapeake Bay restoration were reduced, including staff positions for Soil & Water Conservation and wastewater projects.

For those of us in Northern Virginia, the Governor saw fit to slash the funding allocated to WMATA by 76%. Delegate Sickles and I carried the original House budget amendments to close WMATA's operating funding gap and meet matching formula commitments by DC and Maryland.

Perhaps most egregious is the elimination of all funding and staff positions added into the budget to mitigate the impact of invasive species in support of the goals outlined by the Virginia Invasive Species Management Plan. As you may remember, the Governor handed down my first-ever veto this session of HB 1167, which would have authorized any locality to adopt an ordinance to prohibit the sale of English Ivy (*Hedera helix*) within its jurisdiction. The Governor doubled down on this action by vetoing two more bills that would have required signage posted at retailers that sell invasive plants to educate consumers about invasive plant species and encourage consumers to ask about alternatives. Without adequate public education, funding and local options and support, Virginians and our natural areas are left at the mercy of the unmitigated spread of invasive plants, which will continue to cost millions of dollars to remove.

While your elected legislators are fighting for Virginia's environment here in Richmond, there's so much you can participate in locally to volunteer or learn more about how to care for our planet. The efforts we have

made as a community have reduced Fairfax County's greenhouse gas emissions by 30 percent between 2005 and 2020.

The easiest ways to make an impact are to properly recycle and compost your household waste to reduce the items that end up in landfills, decrease air and water pollution, reduce greenhouse gasses and maintain our precious natural resources. Fairfax County has several helpful guides and resources available online to help you learn the process: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/recycling-trash>.

If you are interested in installing solar panels on your home, there are three programs available to Fairfax County residents to install a quality rooftop solar system at lower costs. Using solar power can reduce your monthly energy bills, increase your home's value, and benefit the environment. Visit solarizeva.org to learn more. Outdoors, you can incorporate native Virginia plants and pollinator-friendly elements into your landscaping.

This Saturday, you can join me and Sen. Scott Surovell for our annual cleanup of Little Hunting Creek from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Supplies such as trash pickers and bags will be provided. During this popular event, volunteers collect dozens of bags of trash out of the creek every year, including odd items such as tires, mattresses, and even shopping carts. Visit <https://friendsoflittlehuntingcreek.org> to choose a site to participate.

I also encourage you to attend Supervisor Dan Storck's annual Mount Vernon Environment Expo on April 27 at Fort Hunt Park. This free, family-friendly event is designed to educate and inform attendees about the environmental challenges that we face daily and how we can all act to save our planet. Bring your family and enjoy live music, food, live reptile and raptor programs, electric vehicle showcases, electric bikes, and more.

Groups Urge the General Assembly To Reject Youngkin's Metro Budget Amendment

Gov. Glenn Youngkin slashed the General Assembly's additional funding for Metro by 76%, allocating no money in FY25 and just \$35 million in FY26 (Amendment 179 of Item 433).

The General Assembly had committed \$65 million in FY25 to match \$65 million from Northern Virginia localities, and \$84.5 million from the state in FY26, which would also be matched by Northern Virginia. These additional funds were the minimum additional funding needed to help close WMATA's operating funding gap and were necessary to match formula commitments by DC and Maryland.

Failure to provide additional state funding will have dire consequences for the workforce and economy of Northern Virginia and the DC region. It would mean massive service cuts and fare hikes

at Metro, higher transportation costs for workers, and more congestion on the roads, and discourage next generation companies and workers from locating in the DC region.

The groups signing onto this press statement urge the General Assembly to reject Youngkin's budget amendment and restore the funding the General Assembly agreed to. They should also reject the Governor's budget language requiring a redundant set of studies of WMATA. The General Assembly has already passed SJ28, which establishes a comprehensive study of transit in Northern Virginia including WMATA.

The General Assembly recognized the critical value of Metro to the economy, workforce, and transportation system of Northern Virginia and the over \$1 billion per year in tax revenue that Metro-generated economic activity provides to the state (NVTC analysis). We thank the legislators for their

support for Metro and urge them to reject the Governor's amendments regarding Metro.

Coalition for Smarter Growth; Sustainable Mobility for Arlington County; Washington Area Bicyclist Association; Greater Greater Washington; Sierra Club - Virginia Chapter; Active Prince William; Grassroots Alexandria; CASA; Clean Fairfax; Piedmont Environmental Council; Unitarian Universalist Church of Roanoke; Southern Environmental Law Center; RVA Rapid Transit; Nature Forward; Virginia League of Conservation Voters; Friends of Dyke Marsh; Virginia Bicycling Federation; Chesapeake Climate Action Network Fund; Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets; Fairfax Families for Safe Streets; Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions.

Diagnosis to Date



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I have been lucky – and/or terribly diagnosed, so that my story/diagnosis has been all wrong. Originally diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer stage IV, I was given a “13 month to two-years” prognosis in late Feb. 2009. I was treated with all manner of conventional – and mostly unpronounceable chemotherapy infused every three weeks for years. Occasionally, depending on the chemotherapy I was getting, and on what my monthly lab work was indicating, my medicine was changed, and the infusion schedule was even extended as well. Despite the mortality statistics, I continued to survive this “terminal” diagnosis leading my oncologist to boast that I was his “third miracle:” a lung cancer patient who didn't die within the expected – according to the hypothetical book I often refer to, time frame.

As the years passed, my continued survival became even more incredible/rare. Why? Because lung cancer is a killer. Based on easily found statistics, lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer deaths annually. In fact, more people die from lung cancer than the combined totals of the next three cancers. Yet, I lived, and the longer I lived, the more invested I became in my survival and prouder of it too. It was a “Star Trek” kind of adventure: I had gone where few men had gone before.

For nearly 10-plus years I was able to live my life reasonably well until I noticed a jaw-breaker-sized growth above my Adam's apple. Certainly, I pointed it out to my oncologist (those days appointments were in office – not on zoom). He took note of it, even measured it, but said it was a clone of the lung cancer and because of some skin fact, was basically inoperable. This non-action continued for almost a year. Eventually, he felt compelled to refer me to an endocrinologist, across the hall no less. When she saw me, she immediately asked what that was on my throat. I gave her the short story which ended with a “No. Dr. (name withheld) never recommended it.” She said, “we're doing a biopsy right now.” I asked if I needed to make an appointment. She said “No.” After the needle biopsy, she said she'd have the results in a few days and would call me. The next day she called and told me. I had “papillary thyroid cancer, stage IV,” she said, not the lung cancer with which I had been unexpectedly living. Not sure if it was a relief, given this new unknown diagnosis, but I was grateful nonetheless that there seemed to be an updated diagnosis (and from I had learned over the years as a cancer patient, almost any cancer other than lung offered a better life expectancy).

In communicating the results to Team Lourie, the endocrinologist felt that papillary thyroid cancer is what I'd had all along, not lung cancer. Moreover, we learned that thyroid cancer is often curable and has earned the nickname “the friendly cancer” because often when treated properly, lives are saved. And “treating properly” is not what I had experienced for the past 11-plus years. I had been treated for non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV. I was told, unfortunately, that receiving the wrong kind of chemotherapy/targeted and/or immunotherapy as I had for lung cancer would have minimal effect on my actual thyroid cancer. Apparently, what I had for 11-plus years was a very slow-moving type of thyroid cancer which had been basically untreated since 2009. Finally, it manifested as a lump on my throat.

Here I thought I was superman, having survived lung cancer well beyond my doctor's original prognosis/expectation, but it turns out I was more like mistake man. I didn't have a terminal form of cancer after all. I had a curable form that had been untreated. My entire narrative changed that day. I went from beating the odds to what were the odds of misidentifying a tissue sample as lung cancer when it was actually thyroid cancer?

From here my care changed. Within the next few months, I had a thyroidectomy to remove my thyroid and the para thyroid. Going in for the operation, I was hopeful that this recent biopsy had discovered the answer to my prayers: normal life, free of cancer. “But alas, poor Yurick,” it was not to be. When I woke up from my two-hour outpatient surgery, it had actually been a seven-hour surgery as the cancer had spread and embedded itself under my collarbone. The surgeon spent the extra five hours attempting to “get” all the cancer. As much as he tried, ultimately, he was unsuccessful, and I've been treated for papillary thyroid cancer ever since – until three or four months ago. That's when it was determined that the side effects of the thyroid cancer medicine were damaging my kidneys. So much so in fact that I stopped that medicine and have been unmedicated ever since. Here I am, 15-plus years into thyroid cancer during which I've been on medicine for only three years and now I'm forced to stop. Comparatively speaking, I had only recently started. Now what? Apparently there is no “what.”

It was slow moving to begin with; I must hope it will be slow-moving to end with (prepositions notwithstanding).

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

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