



## Gaskins Wins Democratic Primary

Elnoubi, Greene join incumbents on November council ballot.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**A**lyia Gaskins, a first-term member of Alexandria City Council, defeated two opponents to win the Democratic nomination for mayor, virtually assuring her of victory in the November general election.

Running unopposed at this time, Gaskins would become the first Black female mayor of Alexandria.

"This has been an exciting night for our city," Gaskins said at a victory party at Pork Barrel BBQ restaurant in Del Ray. "One of the great things about our community is that we have so many amazing people who are willing to put themselves out there and sacrifice to serve our community. Thank you to every candidate who put their name on the ballot. This is hard work but we do it because we love it."

Gaskins defeated current vice Mayor Amy Jackson and retired real estate developer Steven Peterson, garnering 60 percent of the vote, or 9,160 votes, in the low-turnout election that saw just over 16 percent of registered voters casting a ballot. Jackson came in at 29 percent, or 4,483 votes, and Peterson 11 percent, with 1,710 votes.

"My vision is an Alexandria that is safe, affordable and accessible to all," said Gaskins, who watched the returns come in at La Casa Restaurant in the West End. "I am committed to making the mayor's office one that works for all of us and that amplifies resident voices to ensure all services are delivered equitably and urgently."

Gaskins, 35, is a senior program officer at Melville Charitable Trust, an anti-homelessness foundation.

### Alexandria Mayor (D)

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FROM VPAP.ORG

Top vote-getter will appear on the ballot in November

Candidate	Votes	Percent
Alyia Smith Parker Gaskins	10,931	59.36%
Amy B. Jackson	5,512	29.93%
Steven B. Peterson	1,971	10.70%

32 of 32 precincts

### Alexandria City Council (D)

UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FROM VPAP.ORG

Top 6 finishers will appear on November ballot

Candidate	Votes	Percent
John Taylor Chapman	10,582	11.83%
Sarah R. Bagley	10,344	11.57%
R. Kirk McPike	9,371	10.48%
Abdel S. Elnoubi	8,948	10.01%
Canek Aguirre	8,514	9.52%
Jacinta E. Greene	8,144	9.11%
Charlotte A. Scherer	7,825	8.75%
Jesse D. O'Connell	7,192	8.04%
Kevin J. Harris	6,845	7.65%
James C. "Jimmy" Lewis Jr.	6,706	7.50%
Jonathan P. Huskey	4,962	5.55%

32 of 32 precincts

She is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and has a Master of Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh School of Public Health and a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from Georgetown University.

Also on Tuesday's ballot were 11 candidates vying for six spots on the Democratic slate for city council. With provisional ballots still outstanding, incumbents John Taylor Chapman, Sarah Bagley, Kirk McPike and Canek Aguirre will be joined by newcomers Abdel Elnoubi and Jacinta Greene on the November ballot. Elnoubi and Greene are currently members of the ACPS school board.

The Democrat nominees will face three other candidates — Republican Celianna Gunderson and

independents Mason Butler and Roy Byrd — in the Nov. 5 general election. Democrats have held every seat on City Council since 2012.

Gaskins would succeed current Mayor Justin Wilson, who announced last year that he will not seek a third term.

"What tonight confirms is that so many people are excited about the progress this council has made, the progress the current mayor has led us through but that you are looking to us to do even more," said Gaskins, whose father Wayne traveled from Florida to attend the election night celebration. "I am grateful to bring a new energy, a new leadership, a new way of working and a new team to get things done for you."



Storyteller Hassanah Thomas performs as Oumie at the Juneteenth celebration June 19 at Market Square.

## City Hosts Freedom Day Celebration

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

as Emancipation Day or Freedom Day, with entertainment and storytelling to commemorate the annual holiday.

**C**rowds gathered in Market Square to celebrate Juneteenth, also known

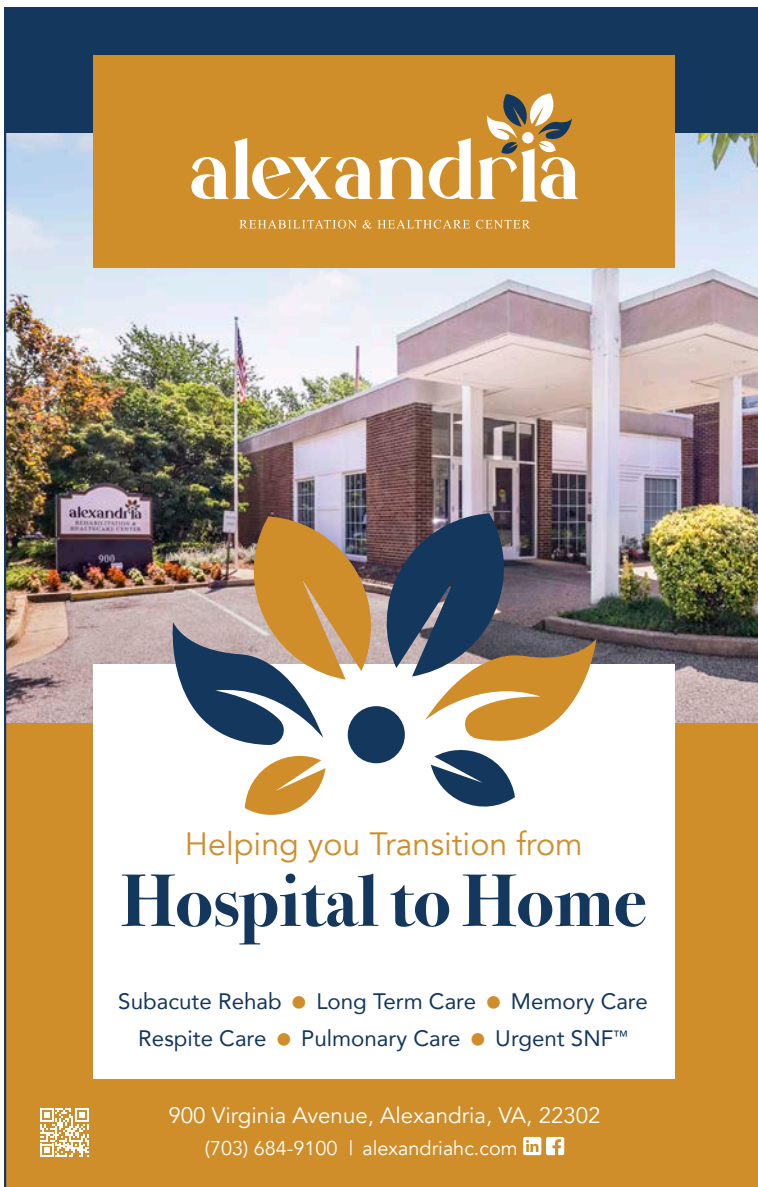
as **JUNETEENTH**. Celebrated each year on June 19, the annual SEE CITY HOST, PAGE 3



A young boy enjoys the Juneteenth ceremony June 19 at Market Square.

PHOTOS BY  
JANET BARNETT  
GAZETTE PACKET





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## NEWS

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Sheriff Sean Casey, left, with Deputy Ismael Yacouba Garba, Deputy Emeka Eze, Deputy Malik McCoy, Deputy Solomon Wodajo, Deputy Yassoukaye Reynolds, Deputy Kevon Adams, Deputy Sarah Born, Deputy Elliangel Vega, Deputy Portia Green, Deputy Ashley Chavez, Undersheriff Robyn Nichols, and academy instructor Master Deputy William Summers at the June 17 graduation from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy.

# Head of the Class

## Deputies graduate from criminal justice academy.

**S**heriff Sean Casey was on hand as 10 Alexandria deputy sheriffs graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy on June 17.

Casey and members of his command and training staff attended Session 150's graduation ceremony at Cornerstone Church in Leesburg.

The graduates from the Sheriff's Office are Deputy Kevon Adams, Deputy Sarah Born, Deputy Ashley Chavez, Deputy Emeka Eze, Deputy Portia Green, Deputy Malik McCoy, Deputy Yassoukaye Reynolds, Deputy Elliangel Vega, Deputy Solomon Wodajo, and

Deputy Ismael Yacouba Garba.

Deputy Born was selected by her classmates as a vice president for Session 150 and Deputy Reynolds finished second in the physical fitness category among female recruits.

The new law enforcement officers successfully completed 20 weeks of training, including emergency vehicle operations, firearms training, defensive and control tactics, crash investigation, de-escalation techniques, active bystandership, basic legal training, jail operations, courthouse security, civil process, and serving diverse communities.

The graduates will continue their training at the Sheriff's Office before beginning their regular assignments.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



**THE CHAMBER ALX**

Looking for networking events, business updates, and advocacy support in 2024? Join The Chamber ALX now at [thechamberalx.com](http://thechamberalx.com)

## Virtual Meeting on Airport Noise Project

City of Alexandria invites residents to learn about the South of Airport Noise Mitigation Project at a virtual community open house on June 27, 2024, beginning at 6 p.m.

During the virtual community open house, Vianair Consulting staff will provide an overview of the project and its various components. Staff will also be in attendance to answer questions community members may have about the project.

In addition to the open house, Vianair Consulting has launched a public survey to receive community feedback on current conditions and concerns related to airport noise. This survey will remain open for community input until after all participating jurisdictions host their respective community open house meetings.

Details on the community open house can be found on the City noise website.

The South of Airport Noise Mitigation Project began in May 2023 when the City of Alexandria, in coordination with Fairfax County and Prince George's County, entered a two-year airport noise study with Vianair Consulting. The goal of the study is to work together to develop recommendations to modify flight procedures in an effort to reduce aircraft noise impacts in communities south of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA).

The airport noise study includes collaborations and engagement with residents, staff representatives from the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the MWAA-sponsored DCA community Working Group (CWG).

More information on the study can be found on the Vianair website <https://www.vianair.com/soa/>



# JUNETEENTH

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Members of the Washington Revels Jubilee Singers perform at the Juneteenth Celebration June 19 in Market Square.

## City Hosts Freedom Day Celebration

FROM PAGE 1

holiday observes the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States. It marks the day in 1865 when Union General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas, and issued General Order No. 3, officially proclaiming freedom for the remaining enslaved individuals in the state, although resistance to the order was strong.

**“There is such a historical significance that not many fully understand.”**

— Veronica Robin

“It is very special to be here today,” said Veronica Robin, who attended with 95-year-old Bernice Alston. “Bernice’s father was enslaved so that history is really not that far behind us.”

Market Square activities included storytelling with Oumie



Attendees watch a performance at the Juneteenth ceremony June 19 at Market Square.

(Hassanah Thomas) and Vann Di Galloway and music to celebrate Juneteenth and African American heritage.

The Washington Revels Jubilee Voices performed a lively, interac-



Veronica Robin and Bernice Alston at the Juneteenth celebration June 19 in Market Square.

tive concert featuring traditional music, dance, and spoken word that celebrated Juneteenth, local stories, history, and the legacy of the African American quest for freedom and equality.

The presentation was co-sponsored by Washington Revels and the Office of Historic Alexandria.

Said Robin, “There is such a historical significance that not many fully understand.”

### BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at [Connection-Newspapers.com/Calendar](http://Connection-Newspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

#### LEADERSHIP ALEXANDRIA

The Chamber ALX is excited to bring Leadership Alexandria, a dynamic nine month civic-based leadership development program to new and established leaders in Alexandria. This program features three components that provide participants with an extraordinary experience:

**Alexandria Up Close and Personal:** Participants will have the opportunity to hear from and speak candidly with the elected officials, public and private sector heads, change makers and innovators who make Alexandria run.

**Leadership Development Training:** Leadership Alexandria utilizes the Work of Leaders framework to give cohesion and continuity to the developmental component of the Leadership Alexandria experience. The culmination of six years of research and development, The Work of Leaders presents a unified model of leadership—Vision, Alignment, and Execution—that neatly captures the complexity of contemporary leadership.

**Connections to last a lifetime:** Due to the small class size, participants build strong and lasting bonds with their classmates.

The class will meet once a month on a Friday for a full day of programming from September 2024-May 2025. The application deadline is Sunday, June 30th. Visit: <https://thechamberalx.com/program/leadership-alexandria>

#### WANT TO BE A CHANGE-MAKER?

A shout-out to young people who are aspirational change-makers is wanted in a new youth-led initiative to help address high rates of illiteracy within the community. The Youth Ambassador role in Alexandria provides a young person with a platform to advocate and talk about the falling rates of reading skills and create increased community education and awareness about the vital importance of foundational literacy skills for lifelong benefits. Registration for the Youth Ambassador Program is now available. The 4-month youth leadership development initiative will provide training and support, plus connection to 600 other young people around the

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## DESCENDANTS

# Douglass Cemetery Remembrance

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

**Descendants gather to celebrate Juneteenth.**

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**G**enerations of descendants of those buried at Douglass Memorial Cemetery gathered for a Juneteenth celebration and remembrance ceremony June 15 at the historic site on Wilkes Street.

Named in memory of abolitionist Frederick Douglass, the cemetery was established in 1895 as a segregated, nondenominational African American cemetery. Douglass died that same year.

“This is a significant historic site,” said city archeologist Eleanor Breen. “Historic cemeteries are a creation and a reflection of the individuals, families and communities that once comprised Alexandria.”

Douglass Memorial Cemetery is the final resting place for over 2,200 African Americans, making it the largest African American cemetery in Alexandria.

“I did not even know my grandfather was buried here,” said Myron Contee, a minister at St. John’s Church. “The older generations didn’t really tell history. I got to meet my grandmother but it wasn’t until the city did the research that I learned where my grandfather’s body was buried.”

Elizabeth Lewis-Clark, a history professor at Howard University, was a guest speaker at the event.

“Frederick Douglass was a towering figure in US history,” Lewis-Clark said. “He was born in enslavement but more importantly he was a gifted writer and speaker. Like those who are buried right here, he knew from the start what it was like to



Guests and descendants of those buried in Douglass Memorial Cemetery gather for a photo at the Douglass Cemetery Juneteenth Remembrance ceremony June 15.



Myron Contee at his grandfather’s gravesite June 15 at Douglass Memorial Cemetery.



Michael Johnson with his grandsons at the Douglass Memorial Cemetery Juneteenth Remembrance ceremony June 15.



Michael Johnson, with grandson Warner at the headstone of his great-grandfather Warner Johnson June 15 at Douglass Memorial Cemetery.

**“This cemetery is named after a leader who in his speeches encouraged people to celebrate freedom all year long.”**

— Howard history professor  
Elizabeth Lewis-Clark

move up from the bottom. He knew terror. But he knew perseverance and never stopped working.”

Michael Johnson, who has been instru-

mental in the preservation of the cemetery, was in attendance with his five grandsons.

“My great grandfather Warner Johnson was the first of 33 kids that Peyton Johnson had,” Johnson said, noting that he was married three times. “It’s important for my family to learn the history here.”

Lewis-Clarke recalled one of Douglass’ last speeches, that took place in Alexandria.

“It was in September of 1894 that Douglass was speaking right here in Alexandria,” Lewis-Clark said. “He reminded everyone that day that although it was a place that once fought for enslavement, Alexandria was a city that he looked upon from his home with great love and respect. This cemetery is named after a leader who in his speeches encouraged people to celebrate freedom all year long.”



City archeologist Eleanor Breen at the Douglass Memorial Cemetery Juneteenth Remembrance ceremony June 15.



# NEWS

## Build Your Own Rain Barrel

The City of Alexandria invites residents to build their own rain barrel at a workshop event at the Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library (5005 Duke Street) on Saturday, Aug. 3, 2024, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The workshop provides residents with an opportunity to reduce upfront costs of a rain barrel and create a custom-made product unique to their property. Participants are required to register in advance through the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District website. Space is limited.

The event is coordinated by the Northern Virginia Rain Barrel Partnership Program, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) Stormwater Management Division, and Alexandria Library. Participants may attend any of the build-your-own rain barrel workshops hosted by the partnership throughout the Northern Virginia area.

The City recommends using rain barrels to collect and store runoff from roofs that would otherwise flow into the storm sewer

network. The use of residential rain barrels provides several benefits, including:

Storing rainwater that is naturally soft and better for watering plants compared to municipal water treated with dissolved minerals.

Reducing your municipal water bill and saving money by using saved water from rain barrels instead of tap water for home landscaping.

Protecting the Chesapeake Bay. Water stored in a rain barrel won't rush off into streams carrying pollutants. Instead, using the stored rainwater around the home and garden will absorb slowly into the ground, replenishing groundwater supplies.

Qualifying your residence for credits towards your Stormwater Utility Fee (SWU) if rain barrels are installed and properly used. Click on the link for more information on how to apply for the SWU Credit Program.

To register and attend the workshop, residents must first register on the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation website.

## Tree Planting Program Update

The City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities is successfully wrapping up the spring tree planting season.

RPCA planted over 325 trees throughout the City this spring. Including the trees planted last fall, we are on track to plant over 1,000 trees within a 12-month period. This remarkable achievement is a community effort, made possible through the dedication of volunteers, City leadership, and generous donations.

During the next 6-12 months, the community might observe some common signs of transplant shock in these newly planted trees. Transplant shock is a natural response as trees adapt to their new environment, and symptoms can vary based on species and location. Transplant shock symptoms are typically worse within the first year but can extend up to two to four years.

A few symptoms of transplant shock include wilting leaves, leaves that may appear wilted or droopy, even if the tree is properly watered; some leaves might turn yellow or brown and drop

prematurely; newly planted trees may exhibit slower growth as they establish their root systems.

These symptoms are typically temporary. To support the health and recovery of these new trees, RPCA's Urban Forestry team takes proactive measures, including watering, mulching and selecting the right tree for the right place. City staff selects an appropriate species for the location and hand selects the tree from our wholesale supplier to ensure longevity and plant vigor.

Approximately 5% of trees typically do not adapt to the new soils and may die within the first year. In densely urban areas with more limited soils, this number can be as high as 10%, especially in tree wells in Old Town. Urban Forestry budgets for tree loss with our young trees and our team is closely monitoring the health of all newly planted trees and taking routine steps to ensure their successful establishment.

If you have any questions or concerns, visit the City's Urban Forestry Management website at [www.alexandriava.gov/Trees](http://www.alexandriava.gov/Trees) or submit a Tree Inspection Request through 311.

Let us know about an upcoming event  
www.connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

### ALEXANDRIA YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2024

The Alexandria Youth Leadership Conference empowers emerging young leaders by providing training opportunities and connecting them to resources in their community.

## the Power of YOU

**DATES**

- AUGUST 6 10 A.M.-4 P.M.
- AUGUST 7 10 A.M.-4 P.M.
- AUGUST 8 11 A.M.-5 P.M.

**REGISTER BELOW!**

**LOCATION**

DEL PEPPER COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER  
4850 Mark Center Dr.  
Cafeteria / 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

**REGISTRATION**

REGISTER BY **AUGUST 2**

Click or scan the QR Code to register for this event!

Questions? Contact [felicia.parks@alexandriava.gov](mailto:felicia.parks@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.851.6163.

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact [maurice.tomdio@alexandriava.gov](mailto:maurice.tomdio@alexandriava.gov), or call 571.384.5244, Virginia Relay 711.

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## 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 Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
ROANOKE	15085	699	BENDEMEER ROAD-RTE 699	MASON CREEK	5/29/2024
FRANKLIN	7916	705	CHESTNUT HILL RTE 705	PIGG RIVER	5/21/2024
GRAYSON	8730	58	HIGHLANDS PKWY	CABIN CREEK	5/14/2024
SCOTT	16799	665	MANVILLE ROAD	BLACK OAK BRANCH	5/9/2024
ALBEMARLE	839	745	ARROWHEAD VALLEY ROAD-RTE 745	BRANCH MOORES CREEK	5/8/2024
ALBEMARLE	880	810	SIMMONS GAP ROAD	LYNCH RIVER	5/1/2024

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 [vdot.virginia.gov](http://vdot.virginia.gov) and navigate to Traffic and Travel/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. 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](mailto: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.



## VDOT Makes Roadsides A Refuge for Pollinators

Pollinator conservation provides bird and insect habitats and improves agency efficiencies.

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will install 135 new acres of pollinator habitats this year to support pollinators such as bees, birds, butterflies, bats, beetles, flies, and more.

Since 2014, VDOT's Pollinator Habitat Program has created naturalized areas of native plants along state-maintained roads and properties that provide habitats to threatened and dwindling pollinator species. The program began with four plots in Northern Virginia.

This year marks five years since VDOT joined the nationwide Monarch Butterfly Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances, a voluntary agreement between energy and transportation partners and the programs' administrator, the University of Illinois-Chicago. VDOT's initial five-year goal was to proactively implement conservation measures on roughly 3,100 acres of interstate roadsides to support the monarch butterfly. Five years into the program, VDOT estimates contributing around 8,000 acres of pollinator habitats along VDOT roadways, well above the initial goal. VDOT performs monitoring each spring season to document milkweed and nectar flowering species.

"Supporting pollinator conservation is a win-win for VDOT, because the agency can save money and improve efficiencies, and pollinators gain thousands of acres of habitat," said Chris Swanson, director

of VDOT's Environmental Division. "We value being good stewards of the environment, which is why, throughout the Commonwealth, we're working to provide safe habitats for pollinators to ensure a healthy and sustainable future."

This year, VDOT and partners will add 107 acres of pollinator habitat plantings in Hampton Roads, 22 acres in the Greater Richmond region and about six acres in Southern Virginia. Last year, VDOT planted 82 new acres across the Commonwealth.

Pollinator corridors assist VDOT in efficiently delivering a safe transportation system. Roadside vegetation reduces erosion and stormwater runoff while providing sediment control. With more flowers and vegetation, VDOT beautifies the roadsides and saves time and money by reducing how often it needs to mow areas along the roadways. Additionally, roadsides with healthy plant communities can better resist invasive plants that can require the use of herbicides.

Governor Glenn Youngkin proclaimed June 17-23 as Virginia Pollinator Week in recognition of the important role of pollinators to the Commonwealth's environment and agricultural economy.

Wildflower and Protect Pollinators license plates help fund the Pollinator Habitat Program. VDOT has partnered with the Department of Motor Vehicles to offer special license plates to support the program.

## Volunteer Alexandria Opportunities:

**Help with Children's Activities at the Portside Festival** -- The annual Portside Festival is looking for volunteers to assist nonprofits, like Safe Space and Girls on the Run, manage activities and crafts tables for children.

**Volunteer for the Portside Festival** -- The Portside Festival in Old Town is looking for

volunteers to track attendance, staff the information tent, and administer surveys to visitors.

**Wednesday, June 26, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tutor and Mentor Students** -- Wright to Read connects an adult tutor with an elementary school student for one hour a week. They will host an information night on

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 11



Officials cut the ribbon unveiling the new signs. From left: Chris Paolino, Tenisha Lewis, Dr. Tom Foster, Henry Ward and Emily McGee.

## National Airport Recognizes Enslaved People of Abingdon Plantation

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE GAZETTE

For at least 7,000 years, people have used the land that is today's sprawling 860-acre Reagan Washington National Airport, a complex of runways, roads, terminals, parking garages, vehicles, subway tracks and trains, airplane takeoffs and landings, and over 50 million passengers a year.

On June 17, airport officials spotlighted a group associated with the land but largely overlooked over time, the dozens of enslaved African and African-American people who toiled there when it was Abingdon Plantation. On a grassy knoll between garages 1 and 2, a triangular brick wall stretches to the sky, one remnant of this 18th and 19th century plantation and rarely noticed by harried travelers.

As airplanes roared up and down and Metro trains rumbled by incessantly, officials cut a ribbon to unveil three new interpretive signs to honor people "previously unrecognized and highlight the enslaved population, a living part of Abingdon's history," said airport Acting Manager Chris Paolino. Many historic homes, especially plantations, have traditionally recognized only the white owners.

Paolino credited Dr. Thomas Foster, a Howard University history professor, with advocating for the new signage and conducting much of the research behind them. "The signs are an important step to a

SEE NATIONAL AIRPORT, PAGE 7



Chris Paolino, Acting Airport Manager, welcomed and backgrounded visitors.



Henry Ward led archaeological research at the site.



# National Airport Recognizes Enslaved People of Abingdon Plantation

FROM PAGE 6

fuller history,” Foster stressed.

Paolino also highlighted Henry Ward, Assistant Vice President of Archaeology at WSP USA, for documenting the land’s history. Ward told visitors, “Indigenous people were here thousands of years and they still exist today. It is their land as well.” He described finding pottery sherds, an adze and shells likely from a nearby midden and used to make mortar. On Abingdon’s enslaved people, he noted, “The Black population always outnumbered the White population,” citing as examples, the Lee and Custis families.

## The New Signs

A new sign at the entrance lists the known enslaved men and women of Abingdon by their first name only. “That’s all we had,” explained Ward, because few records were kept or survived. “They were considered like cattle,” he said, “listed in records with the livestock. An [enslaved] adult Black man was valued the same as a roan mare.”

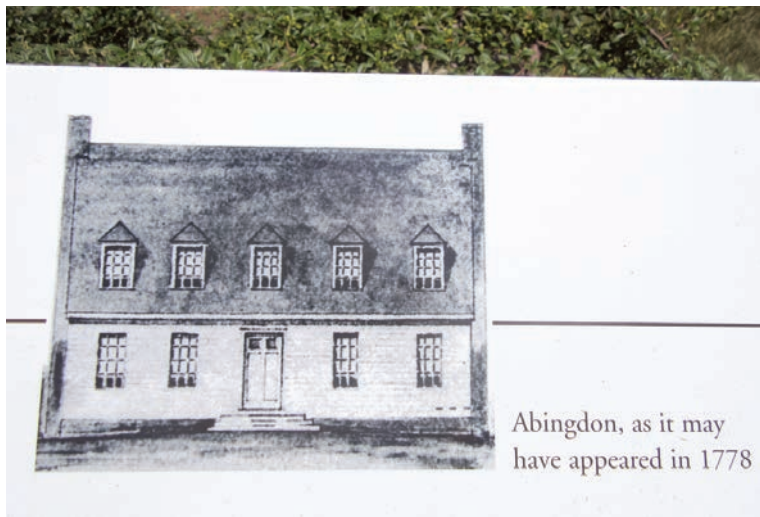
A second sign tells the story of Charlotte, a seamstress, who in 1786 was accused and found innocent of stealing a white woman’s chintz dress. Charlotte had actually bought it from an enslaved man at Abingdon and altered it to her liking.

A third sign describes Peter Hardman, an enslaved stable manager and groom for the plantation’s 29 horses. Hardman helped George Washington cross two donkey breeds and bred male donkeys and female horses to produce the American mule, Ward reported.

## Multiple Owners

In the 1600s, ship Captain Robert Hawson was granted a land patent on 8,000 acres for bringing 120 colonists to Virginia, land that extended from today’s Arlington Cemetery to the Wilson Bridge. He sold it to John Alexander, whose grandson, Gerard Alexander, inherited the land and built a Georgian-style house in 1746. Terraces sloped down to the Potomac River, now home to airport terminals, runways and other infrastructure built on fill pumped from the river.

Owners changed over the years, including Martha Washington’s son by her first marriage, John Parke (“Jacky”) and his wife, Eleanor Calvert Custis. Eleanor and Jacky Custis had two children there, Eleanor, known as “Nelly,” and George Washington Parke Custis.



Abingdon, as it may have appeared in 1778

The house at Abingdon Plantation in 1778.



A juxtaposition, remains of the kitchen and laundry in the shadow of the airport’s control tower and terminals.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Few Metro subway passengers passing by notice the remaining foundation of the house on a grassy knoll.



Today’s remains of the plantation’s kitchen and laundry.



The remaining foundation of the house in the shadow of the airport terminals.



The ceremonial ribbon and two new interpretive signs at the site of Abingdon Plantation.

During the Civil War, the federal government confiscated the property and turned it into a Union Army base. After the war, the owners, the Hunters, wanted it back and hired future U.S. president

James Garfield who won their case in the U.S. Supreme Court. In the 1900s, the property had some brick manufacturing, highway materials testing and military structures.

In the 1930s, the two-story

house mysteriously burned down. Some boxwoods from that era survived.

National Airport opened in 1941. In the early 1990s, preservationists convinced airport manag-

ers to abandon plans for a parking garage and to create an interpretive park on the site.

“Our history has bright sides and dark sides,” Ward summarized. “We must embrace it all.”



# ENTERTAINMENT

## POTOMAC HARMONY OFFERS HARMONY & LEARNING!

School may be out in June, but the learning gets started on Wednesday nights at Potomac Harmony chorus rehearsals! Learn the art of 4-part harmony treble singing while experiencing the joy of ringing chords! Together, guests and members will rehearse new music and create harmonies led by the expertise of our talented director Allison Lynskey. Potomac Harmony members are women and nonbinary individuals from all walks of life, live around the DMV, and have various levels of musical and singing experience. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings, 7-9 p.m., at The View Alexandria, 5000 Fairbanks Avenue, Alexandria. Questions? Contact Jackie Bottash, backrowlead@aol.com.

## 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/>

## 34TH SEASON OF THE LYCEUM CHAMBER SERIES

The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association (WMPA) announces the 34th season of its Lyceum Chamber Series, under the guidance of Music Director Laureate Ulysses James. Hosted at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, located at 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria, this series promises to offer an array of exceptional weekly performances throughout the summer. All concerts are at 3 p.m.; no tickets required. Suggested donation \$25.

## LIVING. BREATHING. MUSIC.

Featuring Anna Binneweg, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic  
Ulysses James, Music Director Laureate, Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic  
Alberto Rodriguez, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Youth Orchestra  
Martin Garfield-Levine, Music Director, Washington Metropolitan Concert Orchestra  
Caroline Mousset, Executive and Artistic Planning Director

**MUSIC SCHEDULE**  
August 4: Alexandria Baroque  
Michael De Sapio, Baroque Violin  
John Armato, Lute, Baroque Guitar  
August 11: Tapestry Cello Ensemble  
August 18: Quodlibet, Flute/Clarinet/Bassoon  
August 25: Samuel Runolfson, Cello  
September 1: Michael De Sapio, Violin  
September 8: Hai Jin, Piano  
September 15: John Sutherland Earle: Piano & Friends

**LYCEUM CHAMBER SERIES SUMMER 2024 CONCERT SCHEDULE**  
June 23: TBD



Del Ray Artisans Gallery presents "All About Love" for the month of June in Alexandria.

June 30: Luke Ratcliffe, piano  
July 14: Crystal Lee, Flute | Brittany Pemberton, Clarinet | Eunae Han, Piano  
Works by Emanuel, Debussy, Saint-Saëns, and Coleman  
July 21: Sasha Beresovsky, Piano  
July 28: Maxim Pakhomov, Piano  
Works by Schubert, Dvorák, Poulenc, and Rachmaninoff

## JUNE 1 TO AUG. 31

**Creative Summer Programs is a series of workshops exploring the arts.** Learn techniques in drawing, stone carving, jewelry, resin, mosaics, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. Free and paid programs are offered. Sign up for what inspires you! Held at Del Ray Artisans (2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria) unless noted. Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer](http://DelRayArtisans.org/creative-summer)

## MOUNT VERNON NIGHTS Friday and Saturday evenings at 7:30 p.m.

At Grist Mill Park  
4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria  
Fridays at 7:30 p.m.

## JUNE

21 Munit Meslin with Qlatse Band (Ethiopian Music)  
28 The Artimus Plye Band - Honoring Ronnie Van Zant's Lynyrd Skynyrd (Lynyrd Skynyrd Tribute Band)

## JULY

5 Cecily (Soul, Jazz)  
12 Strutman Lane (Funk/Pop)  
19 Doc Robinson (Rock and Roll)  
26 Bio Ritmo (Salsa)

## AUGUST

2 Eastern Standard Time (Ska and Reggae)  
9 Project Locrea (World Music)  
16 Burn the Ballroom (Alternate Rock)  
23 Deanna Bogart (Blues, R&B)  
30 Melissa Qinn Fox (Country/American)

**AT WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER**  
9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton  
Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

## JUNE

22 Wicked Sycamore (Contemporary Folk)  
29 Workhouse Fireworks Festival (Ticketed event. Visit [www.workhousearts.org](http://www.workhousearts.org))

## JULY

6 EU Sugar Bear (Go Go/Funk)  
13 Robin and Linda Williams (Folk)  
20 Fast Eddie & The Slowpokes (Blues)  
27 Bela Dona Band (Funk/Jazz)

## AUGUST

3 The U.S. Air Force Strings (Alt-country/Roots rock)  
10 Ocho de Bastos (Latin/Pop)  
17 Alex Hamburger (Jazz)  
24 The U.S. Army Band Country Roads (Country)

## JUNE 6 TO AUG. 26

**"Nature's Spirit."** Nina Tisara's mosaics and Steven Halperson's photographs and etched copper will be exhibited in the Estate House at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. The public is invited to an Opening Reception on Sunday, June 23, 2-4 p.m. (RSVP: [ninat@ninatisara.com](mailto:ninat@ninatisara.com)). The Estate House is open to the public 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday - Friday and 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturdays. Since the Estate House will occasionally close for rental events the public is encouraged to call 703-768-5780, ext. 137, to be certain the exhibit is open for viewing.

## JUNE 7-30

**"All About Love" exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features art that explores love broadly: romantic love, love of family, love of pets, strong friendships, etc. Works by dozens of local artists will be on display and available for sale. Opening Reception: Friday, June 7, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

**WEDNESDAY/JUNE 19 Annual Juneteenth Celebration.** 6 to



PHOTO BY JACK-POWERS

Vaughn and Robyn Ambrose, Saturday's master of ceremony for Portside in Old Town Summer Festival, June 21-22. Vaughn and Robyn are Alexandria-based musicians and founders of the Yellow Door Concert Series. Vaughn is the Director of Jazz at St. Stephens St. Agnes Upper school and has toured the world performing and lecturing.

8 p.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria. Join in the annual Juneteenth celebration in collaboration with The Carlyle House, and poet, author, and Athenaeum Poet in Residence, KaNikki Jakarta. Discover the history of Juneteenth through hands-on activities, art, history, and poetry readings. Featuring hostess KaNikki Jakarta and three magnificent artists: Ayanna Gallant, 13 of Nazareth, and The Healer HipHop Momma Princess Best.

## FRIDAY/JUNE 21

**Mask-Making Workshop with Artist David Camero.** 1-3 p.m. At the Athenaeum Gallery, Alexandria. Join in an exciting and artistic adventure at our Mask Making Workshop where you can design and create unique masks that reflect your creativity! Led by a talented artist, David Camero, who is currently exhibiting Coroto: Masks of Power at the Athenaeum Gallery, this workshop is divided into two parts for mask making and drying, and decorating purposes. This free workshop promises a fun-filled experience for participants of all ages. Please note that space is limited and your RSVP is required. Email [admin@nvfaa.org](mailto:admin@nvfaa.org) to reserve your space!

## JUNE 21-22

**Portside in Old Town Summer Festival.** A free festival of live music featuring the ALX Jazz Fest at Portside. Friday 6-9 p.m.; Saturday 1-8 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1A Prince St., Alexandria. Kick off summer with the return of the Portside in Old Town Summer Festival. This free festival features an array of live music, local craft beer from Port City Brewing Company and fun for the whole family on the Alexandria waterfront. The event includes Friday evening jazz performances and readings by Alexandria poets as part of the ALX Jazz Fest @ Portside. Saturday, the festival continues with an eclectic

musical lineup, local food, hands-on art and history activities and more.

## FRIDAY/JUNE 21

**Wright at Twilight.** 6:30-9 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, at twilight! Sit back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, as you watch the changing light bring out the beautiful architectural details of the house. Play games in the yard, listen to period music, and tour the house at your leisure as the sun slowly sets. Tickets are \$25, with one drink included in the price of your ticket.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 22

**The Official Pride Bar Crawl in Alexandria.** 4 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. At The Alexandria Bier Garden, 710 King Street, Alexandria. Celebrate Diversity, Be Bold, Be Colorful: Dress in vibrant attire and express your true self in a safe, welcoming space. This event is more than just a pub crawl; it's a celebration of love, diversity, and inclusion. Meet new friends and be part of a community that celebrates you!

## JUNE 29 TO JULY 21

**"American Psycho."** At Ainslie Arts Center, 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. Monumental Theatre Company will stage Duncan Sheik and Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's "American Psycho." Based on Bret Easton Ellis's 1991 novel of the same name, the musical follows protagonist Patrick Bateman. A suave young Wall Street banker, Patrick enjoys the finer things by day with his elite friends, but as night falls, his taste for darker pleasures threatens to uproot his normal facade. Tickets are: \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door, and \$10 for students using code STUDENT (must show ID). Visit <http://www.monumentaltheatre.org>.



# ENTERTAINMENT



Historic Pohick Church in Lorton will host an Independence Day Program on Thursday, July 4, 2024. (Pictured): Rev. Tom Costa and his wife Susan of the Historic Pohick Church Docent Guild.

free docent tours of the Colonial church of George Washington, George Fairfax, and George Mason following the presentation. Visit the website at [www.pohick.org](http://www.pohick.org).

## SATURDAY/JULY 6

**Used Book Sale:** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

## SATURDAY/JULY 13

**Celebrate 275 years with Alexandria!** The City of Alexandria will celebrate its 275th and the USA's 248th birthday at Oronoco Bay Park (100 Madison St., Alexandria). The event includes live music by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra and ends with the grand finale -- a fireworks display at 9:30 p.m. Admission is free.

## SATURDAY/JULY 20

**Second Annual Best of the West.** 1-5 p.m. At Patrick Henry Recreation Center, 4653 Taney Ave., Alexandria. Best of the West is a community event showcasing West End Business Association members and restaurant tastings! This event is open to everyone. It is a great

opportunity to enjoy a day out in the community, get to know local business owners, and sample some of the best food that the West End has to offer.

## SATURDAY/JULY 20

**Mount Vernon Flea Market and Arts and Crafts Fair.** 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. At Mount Vernon Masonic Lodge #219, 8717 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Up to 45 vendors, inside and outside, great variety, refreshments on site and inside the lodge. Crafters, Artisans, Antique, Vintage, Collectibles, and neighbors downsizing with practical items/household, furniture, misc. This event takes place every third Saturday of the month from March to December. Next Dates: July 20, August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, December 21 (+ bonus holiday market Dec 7 or 14). Visit the website: <https://mountvernonfleamarket.wordpress.com/>

## SATURDAY/JUNE 29

**Fireworks at Workhouse.** 6-10 p.m. At Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton. Bring a chair or a blanket to relax on the lawn and enjoy a display of vibrant colors, brilliant lights and ground-breaking explosions, while also providing amazing and fun entertainment for all ages. The DJ leads the party on the Workhouse Quad with special performances from local music and dance groups. Food trucks and beverage options (food, soft drinks, craft beer and wine available). Price starts at \$40 per vehicle in advance; \$45 on-site.

<https://www.workhousearts.org/fireworks>

## SATURDAY/JUNE 29

**Fireworks, Food and Family Fun at Lake Fairfax Park**

1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston, VA 20190

Fun starts at noon, with fireworks starting at 9:15 p.m. Enjoy food trucks, live performances and fireworks at the annual celebration. The park will close to new arrivals at 8:45 p.m.

Admission is free. Parking: \$15 ahead of the event date; \$20 at the gate. The park is the location of the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole. Tickets for the Water Mine, which will be open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., are sold separately.

## SATURDAY/JULY 27

**Beats, Bites & Brews - Summer Extravaganza.** 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At John Carlyle Square, 300 John Carlyle St., Alexandria. Featuring Live Beats: Groove to the sounds of summer with live music performances that will set the perfect tone for your sun-soaked day; Delectable Bites: Indulge your taste buds with a variety of summer-inspired bites from local food vendors; Refreshing Brews: Quench your thirst with an array of cold beverages, including craft beers and refreshing summer cocktails in the Beer Garden; Summer Shopping: Explore local artisans and vendors offering a curated selection of summer goodies, from fashion finds to unique crafts.

## SUNDAY/JUNE 30

**Angels and Demons: Violin Masterworks performed by Michael DeSapio.** 2 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Angelic sweetness and demonic fury have both been part of the violin's personality for ages. Violinist Michael De Sapio takes you down some lesser-known byways of the repertoire for solo violin. Hear works by Pierre Rode, Benjamin Godard, Arthur Honegger, Richard Rudolf Klein, and Eugène Ysaÿe's spectacular and haunting Solo Sonata No. 2 to mark the centenary of its composition.

## THURSDAY/JULY 4

**Independence Day Program.** Noon to 1 p.m. At Historic Pohick Church, 9301 Richmond Highway, Lorton. Featuring a Special Reading of the Declaration of Independence. As part of the 250th Anniversary Celebration of Historic Pohick Church, the community is invited to a free public reading of the Declaration of Independence at Historic Pohick Church by historical re-enactor, the Rev. Dr. Thomas Costa, portraying the Rev. Mr. Massey, the Rector of Pohick Church in 1776. The reading will take place at 12 noon, with

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**PUBLIC NOTICE FOR VRP01106  
WRITTEN COMMENT PERIOD  
VIRGINIA VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION PROGRAM**

Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Program regulations, 9 Virginia Administrative Code 20-160-120, Four Mile Run Associates, L.C., c/o BM Smith & Associates, 2407 Columbia Pike, Ste. 200, Arlington, VA 22204 (Participant), has requested from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) a Certificate of Satisfactory Completion of Remediation (Certificate) for property located at:

1605-1801 Mount Vernon Ave.  
and 228 East Mason Ave.  
Alexandria, VA (Site)

Environmental investigations found low concentrations of petroleum and other contaminants in soil and groundwater in isolated portions of the Site. Only a small number of detections exceeded applicable screening levels. Based on the results of the investigation, DEQ has determined that the concentrations of contaminants at the Site do not present an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment provided the owner imposes a land use restriction on the Site prohibiting the use of groundwater for potable purposes. DEQ proposes to issue a Certificate for the Site with this restriction. Written comments on the proposed action will be received for 30 days following publication of this notice and should be sent to:  
Four Mile Run Associates, L.C.  
c/o Channing J. Martin  
P.O. Box 1320  
Richmond, VA 23218-1320  
Information regarding this notice may be obtained by contacting Channing Martin at (804) 420-6422.

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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@MaryKimm

**Jeanne Theismann**  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
@TheismannMedia

**Janet Barnett, John Bordner, Mark Mogle**  
Contributing Photographers  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Shirley Ruhe**  
Contributing Photographer and Writer  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Eden Brown, Bridgette Adu-Wadier, Glenda Booth**  
Contributing Writers  
[gazette@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:gazette@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Hope Nelson**  
Food Writer  
[hope@kitchenrecessionista.com](mailto:hope@kitchenrecessionista.com)  
@kitchenrecess

**Michael Pope**  
Senior Reporter  
[michaelleepope@gmail.com](mailto:michaelleepope@gmail.com)  
@michaelleepope

**ADVERTISING:**  
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**Debbie Funk**  
Disply Advertising/National Sales  
703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Classified & Employment Advertising**  
703-778-9431

**Publisher**  
Jerry Vernon  
703-549-0004  
[jverson@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jverson@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Art/Design:** Laurence Foong  
**Production Manager:** Geovani Flores

**Editor Emeritus:** Mary Anne Weber

**CIRCULATION**  
**Circulation Manager:** Ann Oliver  
[circulation@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:circulation@connectionnewspapers.com)

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# BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

world. Email: [Ambassador@worldliteracy-foundation.org](mailto:Ambassador@worldliteracy-foundation.org)

## 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.volunteer-alexandria.org](http://www.volunteer-alexandria.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.volunteer-alexandria.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](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://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](mailto:FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com).

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

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

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by

the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to [cancer.org/drive](http://cancer.org/drive).

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

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's pre-teens 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](http://www.spaceofherown.org) and [www.spaceofhisown.org](http://www.spaceofhisown.org). For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at [sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov](mailto: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](mailto:brianmorreale@gmail.com)

## SUPPORT GROUPS

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at [suzjdoyle@gmail.com](mailto:suzjdoyle@gmail.com) or 571-403-0673.

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

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to

register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email [DAAS@alexandriava.gov](mailto:DAAS@alexandriava.gov).

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

❖ Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

❖ Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or [krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us](mailto:krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us) for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassionate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit [www.novasecondsaturday.com](http://www.novasecondsaturday.com) for more.

## ONGOING

Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program.

The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of \$2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit [www.alexandriava.gov/tes](http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes).

Robust Walking. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact [jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com](mailto:jjkingconsulting@yahoo.com).

Seeking Donations. Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit [www.computercore.org/contribute](http://www.computercore.org/contribute).

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Toohey, [ktoohy@ccda.net](mailto:ktoohy@ccda.net).

Be Heard at the City's Monthly Public Hearings. A schedule of the meetings can be found at [www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov). Voice opinions, speak about something on the docket or just speak about something you are concerned about. Sign up in advance to speak through the city's website. Anyone is welcome at any of the public hearings.

## No More Diverting



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

After meeting with my new oncologist on Mon., I can say with tepid certainty that I am not at death's door. However, I may be a death's sidewalk. Meaning I'm hardly a casual observer and much too close for comfort. Specifically, what I am is more of what I've been for the past 15-plus years: a cancer patient being treated for a terminal form of cancer. Initially I was diagnosed with stage IV non-small cell lung cancer, a killer if there ever was one and more recently, perhaps correctly, I was re-diagnosed with stage IV papillary thyroid cancer. Terminal because an operation I had was unable to get "all" the cancer and the medicine I was prescribed post-surgery has a one to three-years window of effectiveness. As you regular readers know and recent columns have stated, I am eight months into year four and am now starting a new medicine with all sorts of side effects possible and a new medical problem/side effect resulting from the years of taking my papillary thyroid cancer medicine: chronic kidney disease stage IV. In summary, previously I was at a hard place. Now I'm between a rock and that hard place. Which is a bit more than I bargained for since late Feb. 2009 when Team Lourie first heard my-diagnosed-with-cancer news. Still, it's hardly a place anybody wants to be.

Nevertheless, what's left of Team Lourie (my wife, Dina, minus my brother Richard who died Dec. 3, 2022) met our new oncologist this past Mon. We switched oncologists because we had lost confidence in our original one (and to quote "Forest, Forest Gump: that's all I want to say about that"). We were a bit more prepared this time than we were at that first meeting in 2009. We had a frank exchange offering assessments, analysis, suggestions, and occasional scenarios, but most definitely, no guarantees. Pills, procedures, and schedules (lab work, scans, in person) were reviewed and tweaked a bit. New medications were ordered, and a few future appointments were made. As much as anything, you could say this was a strategy meeting. More than most, we understand you need a game plan and once again we have one.

From what I've been told, the chronic kidney disease (with dialysis to follow if I deteriorate further), may cause me to be, as the Brit's like to say: "In for a spot of bother." Having been there and done that, I'm just glad there's still something to be bothered about. And there's still something I can do about it. I must watch what I eat (not as I eat it) and be mindful of the consequences of sodium, potassium, phosphate and so forth. I'm now reading product labels. It's not for certain whether this food awareness/change will really help, but it gives me hope. And though 'hope' may be overrated by some, I'm happy and motivated to embrace it figuratively speaking to "make my day," notwithstanding Dirty Harry aka Clint Eastwood. And since the alternatives are grim, I'm willing to give a little to possibly get a lot.

The "little" I won't bore you with, but it involves some adjustments, shall we say as to how I consume my daily bread. These changes are, if I get lucky, made in the near/short term but will ultimately get me a longer term. However, since there are no guarantees in the cancer business (other than cancer untreated will grow), I need to stay positive about the negative. A doctor can't tell me with any certainty that because I survived the original non-small lung cancer diagnosis, later re-categorized to papillary thyroid cancer, it enables/provides me with the necessary tools/wherewithal to survive my current double whammy: thyroid cancer and chronic kidney disease. Unfortunately, there's not even a road map as my misdiagnosis/change to thyroid cancer, now complicated by chronic kidney disease offers little other than lots of twists and turns and bumps along the way. My experience tells me to try and take it all in stride, not to get too high or too low and not get bogged down by the potential medical complications. None of those complications happen until they do so overreacting to a possibility that isn't yet a reality is unhelpful. What is helpful is finding the humor and normalcy in life without looking through the cancer lens. When I divert into a non-cancer subject, it's the best possible thing I can do; not be cancer centric. So, when I meander into a non-sensical subject like "backparking" or resealable packaging, it's not only a literary pursuit, it's a sign that even though I have cancer, it doesn't have me, yet.

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

## Volunteer Alexandria Opportunities:

FROM PAGE 6

Wednesday, June 26 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. for interested volunteers.

**Starting July 10, Volunteer Opportunities for Students** -- Breaks With Impact (BWI) is a chance for students - grades 6 through 12 - to learn about the issues facing their community and then act. Half-day programs are available in July.

**Be A Food Drive Team Captain** -- Volunteer Alexandria is seeking team captains for its summer food drive to benefit the ALIVE Food Bank. Team Captains would coordinate with sites to pick-up food and

drop it off at the ALIVE Food Warehouse.

**Volunteer for a Girl's Summer Camp** -- The Spitfire Club is looking for volunteers to assist with activities, operations, lead small groups, and be counselors-in-training. Attending a training session is mandatory for volunteers.

**Teach English to Refugees this Summer!** -- Teach English and literacy training to adult immigrants virtually or in-person for 1 - 3 hours a week for 6 weeks. No teaching experience required. Training will be provided.

**Tutor Refugee Students this Summer** --

Help give Afghan refugees a fresh start by providing basic literacy instruction to middle and high school students this summer. NOVA Raft is looking for volunteers to assist with English, math, or history instruction on either Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays.

**Skills Connect Projects** (Use your professional skills to help an organization with a short-term project).

**Youth and Family Volunteer Opportunities** - for ages 6 to 18. Visit [www.volunteeralexandria.org/youthandfamily](http://www.volunteeralexandria.org/youthandfamily).

Register online: [www.VolunteerAlexandria.org](http://www.VolunteerAlexandria.org)



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