



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Happy Hollidays
Visitors to Old Town enjoy the illumination of holiday lights at Market Square during the evening of Dec. 12. A virtual tree lighting ceremony was held in November and can be viewed online at www.alexandriava.gov/recreation.



Concept drawing of the four-million-square-foot community that would include the relocated and expanded Inova Hospital along with residential and commercial properties, parks and multi-modal transportation.

Landmark Deal

Hospital to relocate to site of old shopping mall on West End.

BRIDGETTE ADU-WADIER
GAZETTE PACKET

In a landmark move that could have repercussions for generations to come, city leaders are striking a deal with Inova to relocate the Alexandria hospital to the site of the old mall on the West End. The proposal calls for mixed-use urban development, including residential development, with transportation and park networks. Construction of the site could be-

gin in 2023, with the first buildings completed in 2025. "This plan for the future of the Landmark site is exciting, long-awaited news for our community," said Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson in a release. "The project would be a catalyst for the West End, providing significant benefits for Alexandria and the region at a time when focus on our long-term future is critical." Before construction, applica-
SEE LANDMARK, PAGE 3



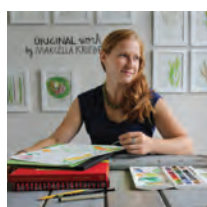
Sydney Worsham 9th Grade, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School

Children's & Teens' Gazette 2020



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ATLANTIC COAST MORTGAGE Brian Bonnet · Carey Meushaw · Amanda Wallingford



Illustrated by Marcella Kriebel | www.marcellakriebel.com

It's not a stretch to say that Marcella Kriebel has always been an artist and a lover of nature. As a local Washington, DC artist, Marcella's work has been featured in the Washington Post, NPR, Epicurious, and Williams Sonoma. Visit her at the downtown holiday market or see more of her work online at www.marcellakriebel.com.

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Volunteers sort gifts for distribution Dec. 15 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11 as part of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and Firefighters and Friends annual toy drive for families and children in need.

To the Rescue

Firefighters and Friends continue annual toy drive.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, in partnership with Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue, continued its annual toy drive with a scaled down distribution day Dec. 15 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11.

More than 50 schools, shelters and nonprofits were provided with holiday gifts for families and children in need.

"This is my third event since I became the Fire Chief here in Fairfax County and every year I am amazed at the support and generosity of our business community," said Fire Chief John Butler. "Not to mention the firefighters at Penn Daw Fire Station 11 stepping up several times a year to make this event and others a success. I am

grateful to be a part of this worthy cause."

Representatives from local organizations provided information to the firefighters and picked up bags full of gifts collected by the firefighters and provided by sponsors.

"Though we are in a pandemic our sponsors were not going to let that prevent them from supporting the event this year," said Deputy Battalion Chief Willie Bailey, who began the toy drive more than 20 years ago. "We received several calls from our sponsors hoping that we would find a way to pull off the distribution. Because of those calls we decided to put on the event this year. To be safe we used less volunteers and obviously no children were allowed to attend. But those children will still be receiving their holiday gifts."

Sponsors for the toy drive in-

clude: Jack Taylor Toyota; Ken & Kelly Savittiere Foundation; Apple Federal Credit Union; Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax; Local #2068; Fire & Rescue Retirement Assoc.; Nationwide Credit Corporation; Medocracy, Inc.; Marsh & McLennan Agency, LLC; Five Guys; Fransmart; Promax Realtors (Ron Riddell); FCAC Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Union Street Public House (Bruce Witucki); Democratic Women of Clifton & NoVa.; Walmart (Store #2258); Kelly's Irish Times; and The Movement Studio.

"I have been asked for so many years why I do this," Bailey said. "All I can say is that I learned to give not because I had much but because I know exactly how it feels to have nothing. This year especially, it is teamwork that makes the dream work."



Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Deputy Chief Willie Bailey, left, with John Taylor of Jack Taylor's Alexandria Toyota and Alexandria Toyota marketing manager Andrew Mitchell at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue and Firefighters and Friends annual toy drive distribution Dec. 15 at Penn Daw Fire Station 11. Jack Taylor's Toyota was a major sponsor of this year's toy drive.

Landmark Deal

FROM PAGE 1

tions for special use and zoning permits from developers will have to be sent to the city for review and approval, a process that could begin as early as February. The hospital is expected to be a part of the initial construction process, according to city spokesperson Craig Fifer.

"We are thrilled for the potential to build a new hospital and medical campus, one that would allow us to expand our seamless system of care, increase our

services, and elevate the facilities in Alexandria and throughout the region for decades to come," said Stephen Jones, president and CEO of Inova, in a statement.

The hospital relocation could also heavily impact the West End's perceived identity. The expanded hospital, along with the rest of the redeveloped site, could be a distinguishing factor for the Landmark Mall area.

"Landmark Mall really has the opportunity to be a gathering spot for the West End," said Brigg Bunker, chief operating officer of Foulger-Pratt, a real estate firm partnered with the city government and the hospital in the relocation. "The new design will be anchored by large outdoor gathering spaces and parks that will really engage the community — not

just those that live and work in Landmark Mall but the entire West End community.

This project is no small expense. Inova plans to invest about \$1 billion dollars to create, expand and relocate

"This plan for the future of the Landmark site is exciting, long-awaited news for our community."

— Alexandria Mayor
Justin Wilson

its campus to Landmark Mall. According to the proposal from Inova and DC Area-based real estate firm Foulger-Pratt, acquiring the land to lease to the hospital is estimated to cost about \$54 million. Preparing the site and infrastructure could cost an additional

\$76 million.

"We are investing a significant amount of time and we are investing significant amounts of equity," said Bunker. "There will be multiple billions of dollars of private investment in Landmark Mall."

The city will start its community information process with a virtual meeting involving real estate developers and Inova on January 4 at 7 pm.

Inova plans to sell its current Seminary Road location to residential developers before relocating to Landmark Mall, which means a separate process would begin to have the area rezoned for residential use. Inova's plans to work with the city to request zoning for residential use will be further discussed at a virtual meeting on January 6 at 6 pm.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

ALEXANDRIA RESTAURANT HOLIDAY MENUS

The holiday season is here and Alexandria Restaurant Partners (ARP) is serving up some Christmas cheer with their exclusive holiday menus at Mia's Italian Kitchen, Joe Theismann's, The Majestic, Palette 22, and Vola's Dockside Grill and Theismann's Restaurant. Always committed to providing a total guest experi-

ence, this year's ARP Christmas menus feature A la carte, Prix fixe, and packaged To-go menu options highlighting innovative twists on classic holiday dishes. All ARP Christmas To-Go menus can be placed directly through the desired restaurant's website or by phone through December 21st. Order pickups will be available on December 24 or December 25, 12-6 p.m. As a bonus gift, ARP is offering a special gift card promo of buy \$100 and receive a \$20 bonus gift card (valid through 12/31). Visit <https://www.alexandriarestaurantpartners.com/gift-cards>

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 8

Appealing Bad Rulings

Lawmakers to consider expanding appeals court, providing new oversight and scrutiny to judges.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Virginia is the only state in the country that does not guarantee a right to appeal, allowing circuit court judges to make decisions with little oversight or scrutiny. Critics have been calling for reform ever since the Court of Appeals was first created in 1985. The Supreme Court of Virginia recommended an appeal of right as a “long term goal” in 2018. Now, Gov. Ralph Northam says he wants lawmakers to add four judges and support staff “to ensure the court can hear more appeals cases in a timely manner under an increasing workload.”

“The Supreme Court barely takes any cases, so the circuit courts are effectively the court of last resort,” said Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36), who will be working in the Senate Judiciary Committee on the issue. “That gives circuit court judges a tremendous amount of power because their decisions are rarely reviewed.”

Soon after the governor announced his support for funding the proposal in a speech outlining his budget priorities for the upcoming General Assembly session, Republicans unleashed a buzzsaw of opposition. The chairman of the Republican Party of Virginia called the proposal to increase the appeals court from 11 judges to 15 judges a “court-packing plan.” The conservative Family Foundation said it was an effort “to protect the left’s radical new policies.” Senate Republicans said they would stand in opposition to the proposal.

“Governor Northam’s proposal to pack the Court of Appeals politicizes Virginia’s judiciary,” said Sen. Ryan McDougle (R-4), chairman of the Senate Republican Caucus. “I will adamantly oppose this effort by the governor.”

The fight over Virginia’s Court of Appeals comes after a blue-ribbon panel issued a 71-page report endorsing the idea of allowing appeal of right in all circuit court cases. A few months ago, a 24-member working group unanimously supported expanding jurisdiction. That was followed by an endorsement from the Judicial Council of Virginia, a group of judges, lawmakers and lawyers who voted unanimously in support of the proposal. A statement from the Virginia Bar Association explained that while some members were opposed, the consensus view was in favor of expanding the jurisdiction of the Court of Appeals to guarantee a right to ap-



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Lawmakers are about to consider a proposal that could dramatically remake criminal and civil procedure in Virginia.

peal court cases.

“Our members see this as an access-to-justice issue, and one implicating due process of law,” wrote Alison McKee, president of the Virginia Bar Association. “A circuit court’s rulings stand very little chance of reversal. That, our members posit, means that many erroneous circuit-court rulings go uncorrected.”

THE DEBATE OVER adding judges to the Court of Appeals is happening in an election year when candidates are jockeying for position during a heated primary season.

The June primary for statewide offices will feature a huge slate of General Assembly members who will be hoping to use the upcoming session to highlight their policy positions and political skills. One of the House Republicans who is opposed to the governor’s proposal is Del. Jason Miyares (R-82), who is running for attorney general.

“Flipping the ideological makeup of this court will make it soft on crime,” said Miyares, who is one of two Republicans running in the June primary for attorney general. “This is yet another reason why we must

restore conservative leadership back to Richmond for a safe and secure commonwealth.”

Advocates for expanding the Court of Appeals say Virginia’s system is broken. Under the current system, the vast majority of defendants seeking an appeal for criminal convictions are denied. Even in civil cases, appeals are usually only heard in certain kinds of cases. That creates a disparity that is a black eye for Virginia, which is the only state in the country that has a system that does not guarantee a right for people to appeal a court ruling they feel is flawed.

“On a case by case basis, it’s harmful be-

“The Supreme Court barely takes any cases, so the circuit courts are effectively the court of last resort. That gives circuit court judges a tremendous amount of power because their decisions are rarely reviewed.”

—Sen. Scott Surovell (D-36)

cause if a judge made an error in your case you didn’t get justice,” said Andrew Elders, policy director for Justice Forward Virginia. “On a larger scale, the Court of Appeals makes law because it gives judges clarity about difficult questions.”

Despite opposition from some Repub-

licans, the proposal to provide an appeal of right has overwhelming support from lawyers and business groups. The Virginia Chamber of Commerce and the Virginia Manufacturers Association support the effort, pointing out that the current system “undermines the quality of justice delivered in Virginia.”

The Virginia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers supports the effort, adding that its members want to make sure every criminal appeal has an opportunity to present oral arguments.

The Virginia Trial Lawyers Association also supports the proposal, although its members raised concerns about systemic advantage of well-funded interests and a potential for less efficient administration of justice. “An appeal of right would give litigants from all walks of life the comfort of knowing that they received meaningful process and review of their causes,” wrote Valerie O’Brien, executive director of

the Virginia Trial Lawyers Association. “Receiving reasoned decisions and explanations in all cases would promote confidence in the judicial system in that it would provide both the litigants and the public with a better explanation for why a given case produced a given result.”

Delivering Smiles

Red Hill Garden Club delivers 200 arrangements to Meals On Wheels.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the Red Hill Garden Club delivered 200 hand-crafted floral arrangements to Senior Services of Alexandria Dec. 17 to be included with meals for the city's Meals On Wheels recipients during the holidays.

"Red Hill Garden Club and Senior Services of Alexandria have been partnering for many years where we provide special flower arrangements that go with the meals that are delivered by the Meals On Wheels service that Senior Services provides during the holidays," said club president Monica Murphy. "This year in particular has been very important because needed services have basically doubled if not tripled so we increased our arrangements from the usual 50 or 60 to 200."

Club members Jane Foote and Carter Flemming assisted in the delivery to Jeffrey's Catering, which provides the meals for the Meals On Wheels program. SSA executive director Mary Lee Anderson and Meals On Wheels coordinators MaryAnne Beatty and Marshal Hespe were on hand to accept the floral delivery.

"The club loves this activity and is something we feel strongly about," Murphy added.



Red Hill Garden Club president Monica Murphy makes a delivery of floral arrangements to Jeffrey's Catering Dec. 17. The club crafted 200 holiday arrangements to be delivered to Meals On Wheels recipients.

"We are huge supporters of Senior Services and feel that what they do for the community is outstanding. "Mary Lee has been a close friend and someone that we have supported. Several of our members have been on her board and many volunteered with SSA, especially the Meals On Wheels and Friendly Visitors programs."

For more information on Senior Services of Alexandria or to volunteer, visit www.seniorservicesalx.org.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Red Hill Garden Club members (standing l-r) Jane Foote, Carter Flemming and president Monica Murphy join Senior Services of Alexandria Executive Director Mary Lee Anderson and Meals on Wheels coordinators Marshal Hespe and MaryAnne Beatty (kneeling) Dec. 17 at Jeffrey's Catering. The club delivered 200 floral arrangements for delivery to SSA Meals On Wheels recipients.

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Merry Christmas

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

The pages of the Connection (including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Potomac Almanac and the Centre View) are usually full of holiday spirit, beginning before Thanksgiving. While in this, the year of COVID, the year 2020, a year like no other, the holidays have been

EDITORIAL muted in so many ways. Still we have celebrated help for the needy whose numbers have expanded with the pandemic; collecting toys and warm coats for children who might not otherwise receive them; holiday celebrations, concerts and performances via Zoom; socially distanced Santa, tree lightings; stories of giving; the Virtual Nutcracker; and more.

And still, Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. Whether you believe the Christmas story literally or in spirit, you know it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption. In this holiday of 2020, like no other as we keep saying, we need the Christmas story in whatever way we can access it.

Christmas is also about embracing

ing the teachings of Jesus: to love thy neighbor as thyself; to help the needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the poor; to care for those who are sick; to invite and welcome strangers; to treat others as you would have them treat you. These teachings have deep meaning and consequence for us right now.

Matthew 7:12:

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you.”

Matthew 25:35-40:

“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go

to visit you?’

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

SO SHARE the verse relating the birth of Jesus from the Bible, Luke 2: 4-19:

Whether you embrace the Christmas story literally or in spirit, it is the story of joy, hope and love, with the promise of redemption.

“And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David.) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that

she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

“And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Slow Down On ADUs

Dear Mayor Wilson, Vice Mayor Bennett-Parker and Members of the City Council:

The Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations (AFCFA) is compelled to address policy being drafted by the Department of Planning and Zoning for City Council’s consideration that will make accessory dwelling units (ADUs) a by-right use for single-family parcels. AFCFA understands that ADUs take many forms, some of which our member associations might be inclined to support. Still, such a consequential policy, which so significantly affects the residents of Alexandria, merits thorough, rather than limited, public engagement. It is inopportune for the City to consider such a sweeping policy change amid a pandemic that so severely impacts the health and livelihood of many Alexandrians. We note that the survey responses

represent a tiny percentage of city residents. Given the extraordinary financial and time demands that citizens face during this pandemic, we are concerned that the tiny response rate may reflect citizens’ inability to focus on this issue, not silent assent. We encourage the City to take a more measured approach, preferably postponing any action until post-pandemic normalcy is restored. This would give citizens and neighborhood organizations a fair opportunity to provide thorough and meaningful input, including through in-person meetings. The artificially expedited deadline staff and Council are now pursuing is inappropriate for such a fundamental change to our city.

While AFCFA is not advocating a position for or against ADUs at this time, our members have raised numerous concerns. These include ADU qualification definitions; adjoined versus separate structures; sufficiency of setback restrictions; compliance with underlying zon-

ing; occupancy and parking provisions; short- and long-term rental policies; property rights of neighbors; and, most particularly, regulatory enforcement. Above all, the demand signal for ADUs warrants further clarification.

Absent a compelling reason to enact this policy immediately, we recommend taking a pause to facilitate thorough public participation. Accordingly, AFCFA requests that the City Council not act on any proposed ADU zoning changes until such time as the public is able to engage fully and collaboratively. At a minimum, the city should publish its proposed ADU policy in its entirety and allow at least 60 days for public comment. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to working with Council and Staff towards a reasonable, inclusive, and equitable ADU policy development process.

Bryan Kirkes
Pete Benavage
Co-Chairs

We Need More Than 10% Affordable Housing

To the Editor:

Thank you, Councilman Seifeldin, for standing up for making developers do more to provide affordable housing. One suspects that city hall is affording developers extra density in exchange for a measly 10% being devoted to affordable housing merely as a cover for densification many of us don’t want. Mayor Wilson tacitly admitted as much when he fretted about Beauregard developers opting for by-right development versus what he imagines are “ambitious” affordable housing developer contributions.

Quite the contrary, examples abound of where 10% is so little as to be arguably de minimis (e.g.,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 16



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2019

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SENIOR LIVING

Surviving Christmas Day in Solitude

Ideas for coping with being alone of the holiday.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

While Christmas Day will be different and difficult for many this year, will be especially difficult for seniors who live alone and will be in solitude because of COVID-19 risks. This is particularly this case for those who are spending it without loved ones or who are missing religious or social observances for the first time.

Part of making it through the next few days, and other milestones that come before widespread vaccination, is accepting that there will be highs and lows, excitement and disappointment and acknowledging that the day will pass.

Local churches have found creative solutions to fill the void of those who are missing religious services, such as those held on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. "Though we'll have two limited-capacity outdoor Christmas Eve services in our cemetery, most of our parishioners will be attending church through our prerecorded virtual service," said Elizabeth Rees,

Senior Associate Rector at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Alexandria. "We have been working hard to include as many parishioner faces as possible through prayers, readings, choir pieces put together digitally, and candle-lighting montages."

In addition to calling homebound, elderly parishioners, Rees says the church created Advent calendars which include scripture passages. "It is a hard time for seniors especially, since many of them aren't as facile with things like Zoom and FaceTime that allow them to at least see people remotely," she said.

The lack of social celebratory connections can be challenging, says Alice Clark of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at George Mason University, who suggests pre-arranged virtual group chat sessions, such as those organized by OLLI.

"We have launched a 24/7 chat room for our members to jump on any time to an ongoing open Zoom session and chat with friends," she said. "They can even arrange for

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Beth Gibbs, who will be alone on Christmas, has developed a plan to make it through the day.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BETH GIBBS

friends to login at a certain time for an organized group chat. It is meant to serve as a social lifeline between terms and during the holidays." A virtual dinner on Christmas Day with family and friends can also provide comfort.

Creating an hour-by-hour or minute-by-minute plan is the strategy of 77-year-old Beth Gibbs,

during the holidays," she said.

Her creativity comes in the form of writing. "I write every day for two to three hours," she said. "I finished a book that I've been working on for two years and started two others. I also laugh out loud every day."

For those who are missing the majesty and grandeur of Christmas music, one option is a virtual holiday concert, entitled, "Joy" by the nonprofit Encore Creativity for Older Adults, the largest choral organization for adults 55 and older. This year, the Christmas concert will include more than 400 singers from Maryland, Virginia and other

parts of the country, as well as musicians playing string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments.

"Since the pandemic, Encore had to pivot and we created Encore University, a comprehensive virtual program of singing, rehearsing and a wide range of courses in vocal technique, music history and music theory," said Georgetta Morque of Encore. "Many of the singers say singing brings them joy, gives them purpose and keeps them engaged with others, even virtually."

The concert is free for viewing until Jan. 16.

"This is a very different way of celebrating Christmas this year for everyone," said Rees.

who will be spending the holidays alone.

"What I'll miss most during the holidays is simple human interaction," said Gibbs of Flourish From The Ground Up, a blog that seeks to help others develop self-awareness. "Smiling eyes above a masked face help but don't replace the close physical contact of a hug from my son, my brother and his family and all the nieces and nephews. I'll really miss seeing them in person during the holidays. I guess I'll have to be okay with Zoom."

Gibbs has a few ways of coping: creativity, laughter, yoga and 20 minutes of meditation each day. "I'll be employing all of them

"Smiling eyes above a masked face help but don't replace the close physical contact of a hug from my son."

— Beth Gibbs

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Highest Single Family Sale



Mary Ellen Rotondo of McEneaney Associates represented the seller and Janet Caterson Price of McEneaney Associates represented the buyer of 217 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

This notable transaction is the highest single family home sale in Old Town Alexandria since 2008 at \$4,825,000 million. As one of Old Town's most distinguished and historic properties, 217 South Fairfax was built circa 1780 and underwent an extensive expansion that preserved the historic elements of the home while incorporating modern amenities, such as the smokehouse conversion into a cutting-edge office. With more than 8,000 square feet of modern luxury living, the home features six bedrooms, six and a

half baths, and impressive rooms for entertaining including a subterranean media center.

"217 S Fairfax is among the finest properties in the DC, Maryland and Virginia region. Winning the listing and positioning the historic property to attract the right buyer required extensive research, marketing acumen and business savvy," said Mary Ellen Rotondo.

"The estate is a property like no other — its stewards have fashioned and stylized it with a deep respect for the past and with chic current living standards," said Janet Caterson Price.



BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 3

RESIDENTIAL LEAF COLLECTION UPDATE

On Monday, November 2 the City of Alexandria began its annual leaf vacuuming and leaf bag collection program. Alexandria is divided into five collection zones, each with a specific start date and three separate passes. Residents can access the Residential Leaf Collection

Viewer (an interactive map) to look up assigned leaf collection dates based on the home address. This week leaf collection was completed in Zone 1 Pass 2. Residents in Zone 1 should bag leaves for collection at their normal refuse collection location prior to the next scheduled pass. Currently, they are completing leaf collection in Zone 2 Pass 3 (final pass) and Zone 5C Pass 2. On Monday, December 21 leaf collection will start in Zone 3 Pass 3 (final pass) and Zone 5D

Pass 2. Free leaf bags for residents who receive City trash services are no longer available. Bio bags are exhausted for the remaining of this season. Visit the City's website or call the leaf collection hotline at 703.746.LEAF (5323), which is updated by noon every Friday. To report a collection issue online use Alex311.

COMMENT ON SIMPSON PARK DOG PARK RENOVATION PLANS

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and the Department of Project Implementation have revised the Simpson Park Dog Park Renovation plans based on community feedback. The community is encouraged to review the plan and provide input via email by Friday, January 8, 2021. The Simpson Park Dog Park Renovation Project is a recommendation of the 2014 Citywide Parks Improvements Plan for Simpson Park. The project will address erosion and drainage

issues in the dog park and will provide an improved experience for the community. Review the design concept by visiting alexandriava.gov/91885. For comments or questions, contact Bethany Znidersic, Principal Planner, at bethany.znidersic@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-5492. Comments will be accepted by mail at 1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 or email until 5 p.m. on Friday, January 8, 2021.



Stella Hanly and Rupert



Stella Hanly and Archie



Joanna Fortin

Needy Puppy Leads to a New Life

Stella Hanly begins tenure at Animal Welfare League of Alexandria just before the pandemic changes everything.

BY ASHLEY SIMPSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Fifteen years ago, Stella Hanly worked as a software consultant for a global corporation. She was relatively new to the United States from her native Northern Ireland, where she grew up surrounded by animals. However, at that point in her life, Hanly just couldn't see how the travel demands of her corporate job would allow her to properly care for a pet.

Everything changed when a friend – a veterinarian – made what was ultimately a life-changing request: would Hanly temporarily take in an abandoned puppy?

"It was one of my two weeks off traveling, and my friend had two dogs dumped at her clinic in rural southern Georgia – skinny puppies with mange and no hair," Hanly recalled. "Of course I agreed to foster. We had no idea what breed he was – we thought maybe a chihuahua, he was so small. Once he started eating, though, he grew like a weed. We quickly saw he was definitely not a chihuahua. I named him Rupert, and fifteen years later, Rupert's still with me. He may not be the best-behaved dog, but I love him. Thus began my journey with animal rescue."

Since adopting Rupert, Hanly left the corporate world for a career in animal welfare. Fast forward to today, and Hanly is the Executive Director of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA), a non-profit organization that provides shelter and other important forms of support for thousands of local animals every year.

Hanly assumed the role in November of 2019 – just before the onset of the global pandemic. So, much like her foray into animal welfare in general, Hanly's first year at the helm of the AWLA has been unexpected.

"This was definitely not the first year I anticipated or imagined," Hanly said. "And, while it hasn't been the first year I'd hoped for, we have thrived. I couldn't be more grateful for the staff and our community in

Alexandria. Otherwise, I wouldn't be the Executive Director of an organization that has continued to have such an important community impact even in the face of a public health crisis."

Every year, the AWLA's work touches the lives of thousands of animals – dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, and more. And, thanks to Hanly and her quick-thinking, adaptive team, 2020 has been no exception. Almost immediately following the governor's stay-at-home order in March, the AWLA team found ways to provide their full spectrum of services to the community while still adhering to COVID-related guidelines.

This meant moving a lot of processes and programming into the virtual sphere, which Hanly said has yielded some unexpected benefits in addition to keeping the AWLA up and running without pause this year.

"There were definitely bumps in the road, but thanks to our communications team, we set up an online scheduling system that has made things relatively seamless," Hanly said. "All in all, responding to COVID-related challenges has gone much better than we originally expected. There are parts of this that we won't get rid of. We will always have a virtual component."

For one, virtual pet adoptions: in March, Hanly's first task for her team was to digitalize the pet adoption process. Online adoptions have been so successful that they will continue at AWLA, even after COVID has been conquered.

"It was astonishing to me, for one, how many people took to doing it, and then also, how going virtual didn't seem to affect the quality of matches," Hanly said. "Our return rate is lower than it used to be. It turns out that, doing things virtually, the staff could get a really good feeling for the life of the adopter, and then make recommendations. It stopped being so much about how the pets looked and more about the fit."

She added that AWLA pet adoptions were up 20 percent in November.

The AWLA team also created an online avenue for coordinating pet surrenders, which

seems to have taken some of the pain out of what is often an emotionally intense experience.

"It used to be that pet surrenders were all walk-ins," Hanly explained. "Now that it is appointment-based, it is better for animal care staff and for everyone involved. Those surrendering their animals submit their forms ahead of time and we do the handover outside. This also makes it much easier for the people saying good-bye to their animals as they don't have to come into the building."

The successful response to the pandemic went beyond executing logistical changes, though. For example, the AWLA also supports many pets in the community through its community Pet Pantry, a resource that far more people relied on during the pandemic for food and other supplies for their animals.

"When restaurants shut down and workers got laid off, we had an increase in requests from our pantry," Hanly said. "We had to put out a request to the community, which had already been so wonderful in responding to our need for fosters. The first thing we requested was cat litter, and when we put out a call for it, we got so much cat litter, I couldn't believe it. Every time we put out a call for help, our community responds in an extraordinary way. This is so important because being able to provide those supplies to help owned animals in the community leads to keeping animals in loving homes."

Under Hanly's leadership, the AWLA has continued to provide humane education programs, too – including two sessions of summer camp for local kids.

"We did do most things virtually, but we did do an in-person summer camp for local kids," Hanly said. "All summer long, we offered week-long programs for students of different ages, and the attendees learned about animal behavior and how to interact with animals. It was the same idea as other years, but we changed the layout to make it safer: the class sizes were smaller, we followed all CDC requirements and recommendations."

And while these days the AWLA 38-person staff is all back at work as usual (with masks, of course), Hanly said she will never forget how everyone pulled their weight, and more, in the thick of the pandemic – when it was just a "skeleton crew" every day physically at the shelter tending to the animals.

"I owe it all to my staff," she said. "Not just the animal care team who was coming in every day, but also for everyone who for weeks had to work from home away from the animals, which is just not conducive to a happy life for those of us who do this kind of work. Now, the staff is here, cheerful every day, and they haven't complained."

Hanly's staff appreciated how their Executive Director has responded to these trying times of 2020.

"Stella has worked hard to integrate the AWLA into the City of Alexandria's framework and to build relationships with and collaborate with City agencies as well as other community nonprofits," said Joanna Fortin, AWLA's Director of Community Programs. "She is very supportive of new ideas, initiatives, and collaborations aimed at helping more people and their pets and encourages staff to use creativity when solving problems or approaching new projects. This has been particularly helpful and impactful as we have worked to redesign processes and shift priorities due to COVID."

COVID or not, Hanly will always be focused on making AWLA a safe space both for animals and for people.

"We're a successful shelter in large part because we're here expressly to help," she said. "I tell people who work here, 'leave your judgment at the door.' We try so hard to be welcoming and I think people see that as soon as they come through the doors. Our staff is filled with friendly people who are passionate about offering support at every step of the way, even post-adoption. We work hard to build relationships and to be an important, contributing part of the Alexandria community."

To learn about all AWLA has to offer, check out their website at AlexandriaAnimals.org. To donate, visit AlexandriaAnimals.org/Donate.

CHILDREN AND STUDENT GAZETTE

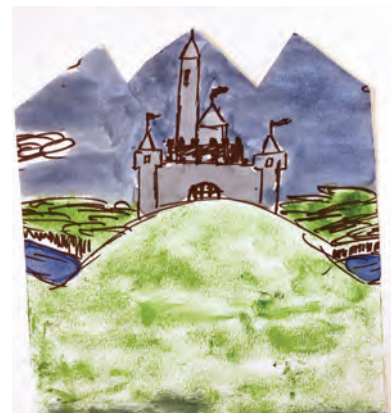


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4th grade,
Alexandria
Country Day
School



Patrick King
2nd grade,
Alexandria
Country
Day School

Alexandria Country Day School



Zack Foster
6th grade,
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Pepper Lantz 1st grade,
Alexandria Country Day School.



Aki Ishihara
4th grade,
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Harry Ringel 2nd grade
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Garrett Williamson 1st grade,
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bees class.



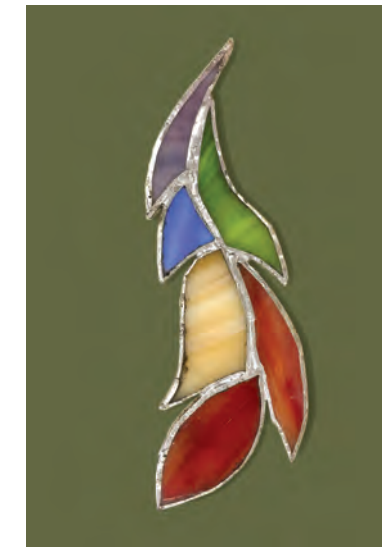
Xavier Ginyard Fourth Grade



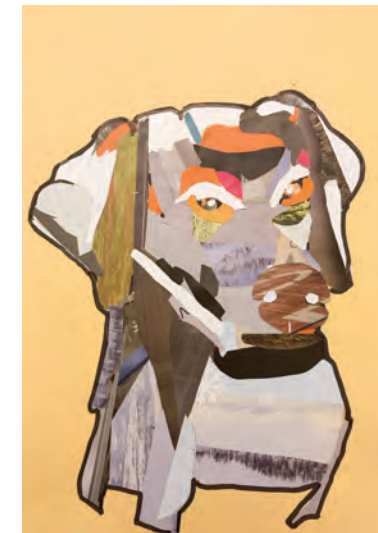
Michael Corso 7th Grade



Grace Hendy 8th Grade



Adrienne Perfall 11th Grade



Thijmen van der Waals
7th Grade



Stella Whitley 6th Grade

St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School

William
Adams
11th Grade



Fitch Whitley Third Grade



Cambell Nguyen Fourth Grade



Sydney Worsham 9th Grade



Pendleton Fraley Third Grade

A Witness Tree Carol

SATIRE, FROM FROM THEOGONY, TC WILLIAMS

BY ETHAN "DICKENS" GOTSCH

Stave One: A Stern Warning

The T.C. Williams Witness Tree was dead: to begin with. There is no doubt whatever about that. It had lived for more than 100 years, but now it was as dead as a dead daffodil. The Mayor of

Alexandria knew it was dead? Of course, he did. How could it be otherwise? He and the City Council had been working for years to eliminate that tree. Despite months of pleading and petitioning by Alexandria citizens to save the tree, all Mayor Justineer Schmooze had to say was, "Bah Humbug!" After all, trees make paper, and paper makes money, and there was nothing in the world Schmooze loved more

than money.

But the Witness Tree was just the beginning, for it was the night before the big City Council vote. You see, Taylor Run was the site of a lush landscape of flora known as Chinquapin Trail, but Schmooze had other plans. Old Town was a major moneymaker for the City of Alexandria, but it was getting a little overcrowded, and there wasn't enough space for more hotels, yoga studios,

and ice cream parlors. His solution: a new, profitable neighborhood on the former Chinquapin Trail that would be called "New Old Town." If all went according to plan, the council would vote to demolish the forest the next day.

To read the remaining 2,000+ words of this satire, see:
<https://www.acpsk12.org/theogony/2020-2021/2020/12/17/a-witness-tree-carol/>

Last-Minute Stocking Stuffers to Support Restaurants

BY HOPE NELSON
ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET

Let's face it: Sometimes, you find yourself at Christmas Eve Eve and still have yet to procure a gift or two for some loved ones on your list. No problem: These restaurants and cafes have you covered. Gift cards to the rescue – and your recipients will never know the difference. Buying restaurant gift cards also helps rescue the restaurants.

The Dairy Godmother, 2310 Mount Vernon Ave.

Is someone in your life especially deserving of a sweet treat? Let The Dairy Godmother sprinkle some magic on your behalf. From thick, rich custards to lighter sorbet to some decadent dairy-free options as well, there's something for any elf on your list. A gift card will help you stuff stockings with ease. Egg nog custard, anyone?

Chadwicks, 203 Strand St.

Give the gift of hearty American fare with a certificate to Chadwicks. The stalwart along The Strand has faced 2020's challenges head-on and pivoted – and pivoted again – as events warranted. To wit: Hosts and servers became delivery drivers when indoor dining was suspended; the restaurant's outdoor dining space expanded by a good 100% to accommodate those looking for some more fresh air; and, like so many



Holiday Cookie Platter



Peppermint Stick
Frozen Custard
Cake



Peppermint Stick
frozen custard
truffles



Peppermint Stick
Frozen Custard Pie

Treats from Dairy Godmother. Instagram @thedairygodmom.

other eateries, curbside pickup has become the name of the game. With Chadwicks' extensive menu, a gift card certainly wouldn't go amiss with most any recipient.

Elizabeth's Counter, 804 N. Henry St.

Get a card, give a card to help those in need – isn't that what the holidays are all about? Along with purchasing a card from Elizabeth's Counter for a friend, you can also buy one to support ALIVE, a food pantry and services organization that helps the city's most vulnerable. This purchase helps two groups: The recipients at ALIVE and also the staff at Elizabeth's Counter, which like so many cafes is struggling during the pandemic. With their card, your loved ones can splurge on an array of doughnuts and hearty plant-based comfort food (including fried chik'n and burgers).

Bagel Uprising, 2307-A Mount Vernon Ave.

For breakfast, lunch, dinner or even snack time, bagels get you where you need to go. And Bagel Uprising aims to keep the holiday season merry and bright with a selection of gift cards, which recipients can use to buy a baker's dozen of bagels, order some sandwiches or even pick up a pizza bagel or two (or more).

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

NOW THRU JAN. 3

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run. At Cameron Run Regional Park, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Opens nightly 5 to 10 p.m. Ice and Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run will return this year, featuring an ice rink, more than a dozen holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, retail area, food, music and more. The Ice and Lights Village is a short drive from Old Town. Masks are required in all areas of Ice & Lights except when eating or drinking in the concession areas. Admission: \$8.16 for general admission to Village; \$20.68 for admission with skating; starting January 9, 2021, \$12.19 for skating. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Christmas at Mount Vernon. From 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Visit Mount Vernon this winter to participate in holiday activities and meet special guest Aladdin the camel. Learn about camels and George Washington's interest in exotic animals during Camel Talks, offered

Friday through Sunday beginning on November 27. Specialty tours give guests a deeper look into the holidays at Mount Vernon. During the tour "Mrs. Washington's Mount Vernon," hear Martha Washington discuss the day-to-day planning needed for a busy holiday season. The "Holiday Dinner for the Washingtons" tour shares how food was grown, preserved and served during the holidays. Mount Vernon is open 365 days a year, including on Christmas Day. Admission: \$23 for adults; \$12 for youth (ages 6-11); free for children age 5 and below; extra cost for some activities. Visit mountvernon.org/christmas

NOW THRU THE HOLIDAYS

Art on the Avenue. The 25th Annual Art on the Avenue festival will move to a virtual format for 2020, running through the holidays. Over 150 artists will be featured, offering handmade items in a wide range of mediums, including wheel-thrown vases and bowls, tiles, sculpture, tote bags and purses, drawings and pastels, knitted and crocheted hats and gloves, woven scarves and shawls, gourmet food, fused and blown glass, jewelry, paintings, photography, and much more. Traditionally held each fall on Mount Vernon Avenue, Art on the Avenue is a multicultural arts festival that strives to reflect

the vibrant mix of the Del Ray community through the artists and their work, and draws an estimated 75,000 visitors each year. Visit www.artontheavenue.org.

NOW THRU DEC. 31

Small Works Show. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Gallery Underground, 2100 Crystal Drive, Arlington. "Small Works, Great Joy!" an all-member, all-media show of compelling small-scale works by our artists, priced affordably for holiday shopping. Visit the website: <https://galleryunderground.org/>

NOW THRU JAN. 30

Winter Wonderland. At King & Rye's courtyard (480 King Street, Alexandria) is transforming into a Winter Wonderland. In addition to general courtyard seating with heat lamps and holiday décor, new this year, book an igloo for private dining for up to eight guests. This is ideal for social distancing as you are only in the space with your party, and the area is sanitized between parties. The igloos will each have heaters as well as the option to play your own music via a Bluetooth speaker. The igloos will be reservation required with a \$50 rental and \$100 food and beverage minimum. The rental will include a hot cocoa and cookie bar. For food and beverage, enjoy a tapas style menu with a southern twist

and, of course, festive cocktails. Reservations can be booked online or via info@kingandrye.com, available as of December 2, 2020. Visit kingandrye.com/event/winter-wonderland

NOW THRU JAN. 8

Old Town Business Holiday Lamp Post Art Walk. Along King Street and select side streets, Old Town Alexandria. The arts are alive in Old Town this holiday season with the debut of its first-holiday art walk. Don't forget the exceptional shopping and dining Old Town Alexandria has to offer. Old Town Business collaborated with 25 artists from The Art League to create holiday-themed lamp post art pieces along King Street and select side streets. A map of the artwork will be created so folks can stroll the art walk at their own leisure. Lamp Post Art will be located in the following areas.

DEC. 26-27

Nutcracker Ballet. Metropolitan School of the Arts is going forward with a COVID-19 style, Nutcracker ballet performed at the George Washington Masonic Memorial Temple in Alexandria., to debut as a virtual, pre-recorded video to stream on Sat., Dec. 26 at 12 PM, 3 PM and 6 PM; and Sun., Dec. 27, at 11 AM, 2 PM and 5 PM on Metropolitan School of the Arts'

private YouTube channel (YouTube link will be emailed one hour before performance time). Tickets are per household with ticket prices ranging from \$40 to \$80, while early bird pricing is available before Dec. 15. Go to www.metropolitanarts.org for more information, and purchase tickets at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/35491/production/1034231>.

DEC. 26-27

Mansion House Christmas at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. (tours on the half hour). At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Discover how Christmas was celebrated when the Green family lived at Carlyle House and the Mansion House Hotel was being used as a Civil War hospital. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Be sure to check out last minute deals in the Museum Shop. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. All COVID-19 safety procedures will be in place during this tour. Admission: \$10 per adult; \$3 per child; free for children under 6 years old Tickets are available on Eventbrite. Visit novaparks.com.

OPINION

Support Students with Extreme Financial Need this Holiday Season

With the holiday season upon us, gifts, giving and generosity are on everyone's mind, even and especially in a year like no other. At the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, we are so incredibly grateful for the generosity of this community in supporting college scholarships for local students with financial need. We know that for our students, whose families struggle to make ends meet, a college scholarship can change a life forever.

Simply put, the need for college scholarships in Alexandria has never been greater in our 34-year history than right now. The global health pandemic and its economic impacts are devastating for local families who may already live near the poverty line.

There is a crisis building. COVID-19 and its far-reaching socioeconomic impacts are hitting local families with financial need the hardest. These are the very same hard-working students and the very same families that we serve.



Scholarship Fund Board Chair Priscilla Goodwin with Solyana Bekele and Tibebe Gebiso, 2019 recipients of the "Louis Kokonis Teaching Legend" SFA Scholarship. SFA File Photo

You can see the danger they face. These bright students are in danger of giving up on their dreams of college; they are in danger of giving up hope. At the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria, we specialize

in helping students make their college dreams and hopes for a successful future become reality.

There is great need in our community, but there is also great

SEE SUPPORT, PAGE 15

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Running for the Bull Dogs – Marian Stanfield

The early education of African Americans in Alexandria centered on reading, writing, arithmetic and recreation. Recreation in the school was mostly playing outside with classmates. These are typically the daily activities in the segregated schools from 1870 to 1919.

When Parker-Gray School started in 1920, as an elementary school, it gradually became a 12th grade high school in 1953.

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

The curriculum expanded by offering high school courses and physical education.

For most of the students at Parker-Gray, it was the first time they participated in physical education in their school. To boost the spirit of the school's athletic sports, they chose the Bull Dog as their mascot.

Marian Stanfield arrived at Parker-Gray High School in 1958 as a seventh grader. She loved running. In the eighth grade, she signed up for girls' track and field under the supervision of Coach Adkins who was in charge of the girls' track team.

The eighth graders started training two to three days a week. She trained every day in the ninth grade. The girls' track team started competing with other segregated schools in Virginia and in the District of Columbia.



Some of Marian Stanfield's medals that she received in Track and Field.

Marian was a sprinter and a long distance runner. Her decision to be a runner was influenced by her idol, Wilma Rudolph who won three gold medals in track and field in the 1960 Olympic.

Marian enjoyed the feel of the wind on her face while passing her opponents on the track. She won a gold medal at the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) that put the Bull Dogs of Parker-Gray on the map. She continued winning as a sprinter and long distance runner. She won more than 12 medals and trophies.

She also had great oratory skills. In her last year of high school in 1964, Virginia Association of Elks



A 1963 picture – from left to right: Marian Stanfield, Barbara Rice, Patricia Watson and Janet Elliott. They were all part of Parker-Gray High School Field and Track Team.

awarded Marian Stanfield a \$500 scholarship for winning the oratorical contest.

She graduated from Parker-Gray High School and attended Tennessee State University where her idol, Wilma Rudolph attended.

After a short time in college, Marian returned to Alexandria, Va where she began working for the telephone company. During her time at the telephone company, she continued to advance her education by taking college courses in business law. She retired from the telephone company in 1995.

Marian Stanfield was born in 1946 to Elisha and Susie Younger Stanfield. Her parents migrated to Alexandria from Halifax, Va. Marian's siblings are Julious, Irene, Susie, Blanche, Frances, Leon, Elisha, Martha, Herbert and Willie. She has two daughters, Monica and Nakeeah.

From 1961 to 1964, Marian followed the footprints of Wilma Rudolph who had inspired many African American girls in track and field.

Wilma was Marian's role model and the Bull Dogs gave Marian energy and strength to compete in sports.

Char McCargo Bah is a published author, freelance writer, columnist, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. She maintains two blogs, <http://www.theotheralexandria.com> and <http://www.findingthingsforu.com>.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MARIAN STANFIELD

'40 Plus Years of Giving Scholarships' – Parker-Gray Alumni

BY CHAR MCCARGO BAH
GAZETTE PACKET

Parker-Gray High School celebrates their 100th Anniversary this year.

Students who attended Parker-Gray fondly remember the unique school they attended during segregation. These former students are still proud of their principal and teachers for making the school a great institution. In spite of segregation, many of the Parker-Gray graduates found good paying jobs, advanced their education, or were the first to graduate in their family, and the first to have jobs that were not domestic. Those former students wanted to continue the legacy that the staff at Parker-Gray left them.

THE OTHER ALEXANDRIA

In 1975, members of the graduating classes of 1954 and 1955 were holding separate reunion meetings at the Departmental Club when they decided to come together as one for a school-wide reunion.

As a result, the Alumni Association of Parker-Gray School was founded. Their first elected president was James E. Henson, Esq.

In 1976, the former teachers and alumni of Parker-Gray had their first reunion. The vision of those early participants was to preserve the memory of Parker-Gray by establishing a scholarship for the descendants of the alumni so the school's legacy will live on.

More than forty-years later, the Parker-Gray Alumni continues to award young people scholarships. The current elected president is Catherine Ward and the Scholarship Chair is Lovell Lee. Three students have been selected for this year's scholarships.

On Dec. 20, 2020, the recipients will receive the Parker-Gray Alumni Scholarship award and they are:

❖ Aalyhdaezy J. Golden is the granddaughter of Patricia Golden-Roy; she graduated from Justin High School in Fairfax, Virginia and she attends Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria, Va.

Kiyah Stewart is the granddaughter of Minister and Mrs. Alfonzo Terrell. She graduated from Woodbridge High School and she attends Shenandoah University, Winchester, Va.

❖ Christina Thompson is the granddaughter of Dino and Jackie T. Sawyer. She gradu-



Early Parker-Gray High School, celebrating 100th anniversary this year.

ated from Woodbridge High School and she attends Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Va.

Congratulations to the Parker-Gray Alumni's awardees!

Char McCargo Bah is a published author, freelance writer, columnist, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. She maintains two blogs, <http://www.theotheralexandria.com> and <http://www.findingthingsforu.com>.

LETTER

Support Students

FROM PAGE 13

promise. This fall, the generosity of this community provided \$1 million in scholarships and helped send more than 400 students to college. Many of these hard-working students and their families live close to the poverty line and would not be able to afford college without a scholarship.

Scholarships build a stronger Alexandria community. Every local student you help send to college will translate into generations of independence, financial success, and increased opportunity for an Alexandria family living in poverty.

This year, we received a RECORD number of scholarship applications from the TC Titan Class of 2020. Since the pandemic began, we have seen an unprecedented 25% increase in scholarship applications to help our students afford college during their sophomore, junior and senior years to ultimately obtain their college degrees. Students from this very vulnerable COVID-generation need your support to achieve their college goals.

This year, the Scholarship Fund committed an additional \$100,000 to support scholarships and college dreams to meet the increasing need for assistance driven by COVID and COVID-economics. But we need to find a way to raise increased funds over the next several years to accommodate the continuing projected increase in need.

If you are looking for a way to do some good during this difficult time, giving to support college scholarships will make a real difference in our community and our future. One hundred percent of all donations go directly to pay college tuition for a T.C. graduate with need. It's important to realize that 2 out of 3 families at T.C. live near the poverty level and more than half of our scholarship recipients are the first in their family to attend college. The vast majority of our scholarships are awarded to Black students here in Alexandria, but we must work even harder to support these students in their pursuit of higher education. College scholarships and higher education will change the trajectory of students' lives.

Please consider supporting this important cause this holiday season. Scholarships will mean everything to bright, hard-working TC Titan seniors who are applying to college right now and struggling to find a way to pay for it.

Priscilla Goodwin
Board Chair, '79 Titan
Scholarship Fund of
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Trip, and Hopefully Not a Fall

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Having recently returned from a driving sojourn through the south with stops and stays in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida visiting four sets of friends in those three states, I can say with certainty that wearing masks, social distancing and common sense consideration for your fellow citizen were not nearly so accepted as we had hoped. Though we didn't exactly mingle with the masses, we were, nonetheless, in uncharted territory. As such, my wife and I will be getting covid tests after a week or so of being at home. Though still symptom free, it seems prudent under the very unique circumstances in which the world finds itself that we not wait too much longer. Time is very likely of the essence.

As a precaution - and courtesy to our southern hosts, we both got tested before our trip and with negative results, off we drove with one less concern. Now we could say with certainty that we had acted respectfully and with other people's prospective health in mind. Nevertheless, it was hardly a guarantee that we would remain covid free. After all, it was only a test. It was not an inoculation. Speaking of which, as a cancer patient with a compromised immune system, I imagine I'm likely to get my two shots sooner rather than later. But what about my wife, Dina. She raised an interesting question. Though she's not in any of the categories of early shot recipients, she is however living with someone who is: me. Moreover, I don't suppose it would be to my advantage living in the same household/sleeping in the same bed/caring for a covid-positive person: my wife, even after receiving my shot. Data for that situation likely doesn't exist yet. I don't imagine it's akin to playing with fire - for me, more likely like playing with embers. Still, there seems to exist a risk, perhaps one that's been considered in the hierarchy/schedule of "inoculees." In summary, will family members of high-risk covid 19 recipients receive their vaccinations earlier on in the schedule than they might otherwise have been eligible? Or is the demand too great, given the worldwide pandemic, which I imagine it is.

If the plan is to minimize the risk for those most at risk, how do you accomplish that while leaving those closest (literally and figuratively) to them unprotected? I'm not asking for special treatment or dispensation from the Pope (has he gotten his shot?), I'm just wondering. Granted, there's not an unlimited supply - on or off the shelves, of vaccines, but there does seem to be nearly unlimited numbers of people who need to be vaccinated to accomplish a sort of worldwide herd-type immunity. That being said, if other people living in the home of an individual qualified/fortunate to receive a shot or two, are not inoculated as well, will it in fact enable the virus to move on, so to speak and find some other host susceptible enough to keep the virus straining? Will the proximity of other non-inoculated people defeat the purpose of getting the tier ones and twos inoculated? (I sound like Carrie Bradshaw (Sarah Jessica Parker) from "Sex and the City" sounding out one of her columns.)

I don't mean to be paranoid; I'm just wondering/theorizing if my fear is at all founded in reality or am I just cruising for a verbal bruising? I'm also curious if there's any discretion in the recipient process. Presumably, there are lots of circumstances/patients like me where the cancer patients' health and welfare - to varying degrees, are dependent on the health of people (family, friends or caregivers) entrusted to care for them. Giving the vaccine to the patient but denying it for the people responsible for their wellbeing seems counterproductive - or short sighted. I may very well be inoculated against covid in the not too distant future, but if I don't receive the care and feeding I need, I may survive covid but still die from my underlying disease: cancer. I understand there's no perfect solution at present. But it's the future I'm worried about.

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

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Republican Women in Alexandria Install New Officers for 2021

The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club of Alexandria installed its 2021 officers during its December meeting on Zoom. The holiday party was cancelled due to COVID restrictions. Paula Steiner, President of the Virginia Federation of Republican Women (VFRW), presided over the candlelight ceremony, which included an oath of office. The 2021 officers are:

Linda App, President; Susie Miller, 1st Vice President of Programs; Shawn Blaine, 2nd Vice President of Membership; Suzanne Morrison, Treasurer; Jan Bates, Corresponding Secretary; Nadine Bacaj, Recording Secretary.

Commonwealth Republican Women's Club President Linda App, serving her second term, said that the Presidential Election year brought new members and excitement to CRWC, and she hopes to capitalize on that energy in the 2021 elections. "We'll be getting out the vote for the GOP nominees up and down the ballot, from Governor to City Council."

CRWC's December newsletter summarized the club's accomplishments in 2020. App said, "We had a surprisingly effective year in 2020, considering the COVID limitations. In addition to providing interesting monthly programs, we held events to support Community Lodgings with cash and Goya food donations, provided the Alexandria Police Foundation with homemade masks and financial support, celebrated the 100th Anniversary of votes for women, donated funds for the educational work of the



The Commonwealth Republican Women's Club supported the Alexandria Police Department's toy drive. Supporters included: left to right, Ruth Cleveland, Suzanne Morrison, Linda App, Bill Cleveland and Officer Bennie Evans.

Frederick Douglass Foundation, marched in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Old Town, and increased our presence at early voting locations and precincts on Election Day."

Susie Miller, serving a second term as 1st VP, is excited about Commonwealth Republican Women's Club's coordination with the local Republican party, known as the Alexandria Republican City Committee (ARCC - www.AlexGOP.org). "Three of our members sit on the ARCC Executive Committee: myself, Linda App, and Ruth Cleveland. This helps us communicate and ensure synergy in our efforts on behalf of the party." Cleveland is married to former Alexandria Vice Mayor Bill Cleveland.

Commonwealth Republican Women's Club is the Alexandria chapter of both the Virginia and the National Federation of Republican Women (VFRW and NFRW).

CRWC encourages local Republican women of all ages to become more politically involved by helping support and elect GOP candidates to public office at the local, state, and national levels. The club also has a conservative book club and organizes activities to support charitable organizations. More information is available at www.alexandriacrwc.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 6
www.usaid.gov/india/partner-resources/infographic-de-minimis-rate-indirect-costs
<https://fawiki.fws.gov/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=21268677>). If city hall were serious about affordable housing as anything more than a guise for densification, it would insist that a much higher amount of additional density be devoted to affordable housing and would hold developers to stricter expectations. If, instead of 10%, city hall insisted on 50% of additional density being devoted to affordable housing, so what if most developers pass and opt for by-right? If only one quarter of developers contribute at 50% of the extra density city hall is giving them, that's 12.5% more affordable housing, versus only 10% under what city council is currently considering.

Dino Drudi
 Alexandria

Virginia's Voters Should Decide

Dear Editor:

This letter is in response to the December 16, 2020 Alexandria Gazette article "Drop-

ping Out of the Electoral College" about a bill before the General Assembly to have Virginia join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. The bill does not, in fact, propose that Virginia drop out of the Electoral College, and it does not establish a national popular vote in lieu of the Electoral College. It proposes to change the way Virginia's Electoral College votes are cast. The Electoral College itself would remain.

Under the rules of the compact, member states pledge to cast all of their electoral votes for the winner of the national popular vote regardless of who wins the majority of votes in their own respective states.

Simply put, under the compact, Virginia's Electoral College votes would be determined by voters in other states. That is a terrible idea. It would both disenfranchise Virginia voters and violate the will of Virginia's voters.

This is not a partisan issue; it is an issue about whether or not Virginia's voters will determine our Electoral College votes. Virginia politicians who support the compact are saying that Virginia voters don't matter very much.

Linda App
 Alexandria

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PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AWLA



PHOTOGRAPHS BY MARY CARTER

Bella, a 12-year-old Chihuahua mix who joined Mary Carter's family in November.

Mary Carter holding Bella, with her children Jackie (left), Chloe and Hugo Christian.

Two Dogs, One Family Add Up to Joy for Everyone

"I think that's our takeaway from 2020 — to take better care of the vulnerable among us."

BY BARBARA S. MOFFET

It's never too late in life to find love. Even for senior dogs. Mary Carter and her family know all about it. Carter, her husband and their three children — Chloe, 12, Jackie, 10, and Hugo, 4 — had left their California home, traveled the world for most of 2019 and then settled in Baltimore. To keep a promise Carter had made to the family, as soon as they bought a house they set out to find a dog.

Carter immediately thought of an old friend who was now the Executive Director of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, Stella Hanly. Was there, by chance, a special dog at the shelter that might fit in with Carter's family?

Hanly described an eight-year-old Chihuahua mix who had come to the AWLA from a shelter in West Virginia; she was a gentle soul but also very playful. It wasn't long before Carter and her children were meeting "Meemaw" on Zoom, seeing her rich brownish-black fur and floppy ears, and most of all, her sweetness. They were informed about her health challenges — a severe heart murmur, for which she was taking medications. It didn't matter to them.

"We were so in love with her, we were prepared to move mountains to make sure that for her time left she'd feel loved, healthy and safe," Carter said.

After undergoing dental surgery that left her with almost no teeth, Meemaw joined Carter's family in August and seemed to thrive. She loved accompanying the family on walks and would routinely roll over to let them rub her rotund belly. She forged a special bond with oldest child Chloe, who was feeling especially lonely in the pandemic. Meemaw slept in Chloe's room most nights.

A veterinary cardiologist told them that Meemaw might soon need treatment for her heart, but it didn't seem to be urgent. But in October, Meemaw's behavior changed dramatically; she had no appetite for her food and wasn't interested in going for walks. An emergency room visit confirmed that Meemaw had a poor prognosis, and in a few days the family realized that the kindest thing for their beloved dog would be euthanasia.

"We were just in shock," Carter recalled. "This had happened so quickly. But we decided we should keep our hearts open because Meemaw would have wanted that." Maybe there was another dog out there to cherish?

Carter called Hanly at the AWLA once again. She told Hanly that in Meemaw's memory, they would like to continue to adopt senior dogs who needed extra TLC. Hanly had had first-hand experience with another Chihuahua mix, this one a 12-year-old blonde pup known



Hugo frolics with Meemaw.

as Bella, who had been Hanly's office mate for several weeks. Like Meemaw, Bella had been transferred to the AWLA from a rescue group and had significant health issues: She had needed surgery to remove multiple tumors, along with some major dental work. She also was suffering from heartworm, which would require several months of treatment. Carter thought she sounded perfect for the family.

Carter and her family adopted Bella on Nov. 12, and she is thriving.

As sweet and mild mannered as Meemaw, Bella is on the shy side, so quiet that they added a little cat bell to her collar. She often stations herself in her favorite bed, brought home with her from the AWLA, and when she's ready for human attention she stands up and looks at one of the family. Usually it's Carter's husband, James Christian, that she goes to. She's chosen him as her favorite, though she loves the children and Carter as well.

Hanly is gratified by the family's

support of Bella. "I always think senior dogs teach people that every day together is a gift," she said. "In a more practical sense, senior dogs are typically house trained and sleep a lot. They mostly just want to snuggle while you watch TV, and that suits a lot of people very well."

Carter has no regrets about the family's adoption choices. "We only had Meemaw for just shy of three months," she said. "In that time we got the most out of what we had."

We created a lot of memories, and we still talk about them: the first day we brought her home, things she did that surprised us. Now we're creating memories with Bella. They enrich us and our lives, maybe for a few months, maybe for a few years. That puts more value on the time we do have.

"I think that's our takeaway from 2020 — to take better care of the vulnerable among us."

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is a local 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, Alexandria's only open-access animal shelter. In response to the global pandemic, the AWLA has initiated a virtual adoption process and is operating a Pet Pantry that provides pet food and supplies to community members in need. The AWLA also offers assistance to Alexandrians with questions about wildlife and animals in the community. More information can be found at AlexandriaAnimals.org.

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