

# Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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AUGUST 31, 2023



Hilco Redevelopment Partners representatives Amelia Alcivar, EVP of Corporate Affairs, Siobhan Steen, Director of Development, and Michelle Chang, VP of Development, volunteer at the Firefighters and Friends backpack distribution Aug. 19 at Charles Houston Recreation Center.



Sarah Blair, a teacher at William Ramsey, assist a child in selecting a backpack Aug. 19 at Charles Houston Recreation Center.



Volunteers prepare backpacks filled with school supplies for distribution Aug. 19 at William Ramsey Elementary School.



Mayor Justin Wilson, second from left, and Fire Chief Corey Smedley, right, are joined by Tomashia Cornitcher and Gaynelle Diaz at the backpack distribution Aug. 19 at William Ramsey Elementary School

## To the Rescue Backpacks, books distributed to families in need.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**H**undreds of families turned out Aug. 19 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center as the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority and Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue partnered to distribute 800 backpacks to local children as they prepared to head back to school.

“We gave away nearly 800 backpacks with school supplies this year,” said event organizer Willie Bailey. “We distributed the backpacks at several locations, including Charles Houston Recreation Center and William Ramsay Elementary School. The nonprofit InspireLit gave away over 1,000 books to children that attended the event.”

Lines formed prior to the start of the event, with Bailey estimating between 600-700 people coming through the doors of the rec center. Hundreds more lined up outside William Ramsey.

“ARHA is grateful for this continued partnership that equips our youth with the backpacks and supplies they need,” said Gaynelle Diaz of ARHA. “It not only helps the parents but also sets the students up for a successful school year.”

Michael Johnson of the Alexandria Department of Recreation and Cultural Activities has been a part of the event since its inception several years ago.

“The partnership between the Department of Recreation Parks & Cultural Activities along with ARHA and Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue is one that over the years has provided not only material sup-



Volunteers pose for a group photo at the Firefighters and Friends backpack distribution Aug. 19 at Charles Houston Recreation Center.

**“It takes a village and the village showed up today.”**

— Backpack drive organizer Willie Bailey

port to families but also helps them with the everyday needs including food and clothing, just everyday human needs,” Johnson said.

Hilco Redevelopment Partners, developers of the Potomac River Generating Station Power Plant in North Old Town, was a key sponsor of the event and had volunteers on hand to assist with the distribution of backpacks and school supplies.

“At HRP, we believe that building inclusive, sustainable communities is about more than developing physical buildings; it’s about being engaged partners and good neighbors,”

said Amelia Chassé Alcivar, spokesperson for Hilco Redevelopment Partners. “We are proud to partner with great organizations like ARHA and Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue to ensure that all Alexandrians benefit from the economic growth this project will create.”

In addition to Hilco Redevelopment Partners, sponsors for the event include: InspireLit (Books); Apple Federal Credit Union; Nationwide Credit Corporation; Promax Realtors; Duncan Blair Family; Alexandria Department of Recreation and Cultural Activities; Department of Human Services; Planning and Zoning; Capital Youth Empowerment Program; Communications and Public Information; Psi-Nu Omega Psi Phi / Alexandria Chapter; and Alexandria Police, Fire, and Sheriff’s office personnel.

“Our sponsors were phenomenal,” Bailey said. “Several families did not hesitate to mention that without our support today their children would not have what they need to start the school year off right.”

Bailey, a member of the ACPS School board and recently retired Deputy Chief with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, is a lifelong resident of Del Ray and begins his planning for the backpack drive months in advance.

“I am very grateful and proud of the work we do as a team,” Bailey said. “We collaborate to help improve the lives of others from all walks of life. It takes a village and the village showed up today.”

To learn more or to donate, visit [www.ffandfriends2therescue.org](http://www.ffandfriends2therescue.org).

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



LEARN MORE ABOUT

# First Time Home Buyer Programs

IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

When you're looking to buy a home during these times, it's important to work with a resourceful real estate agent. Are you looking for an affordable home in an area with top-rated schools as noted in GreatSchools.org? Melissa can share one of her top picks in the DC metro area with you. There are communities that you may not have ever visited nearby that may be the perfect option for that new home purchase at a price that fits your budget and is a reasonable commute to your work.

Are you comfortable with your current rent payments but struggling to save for your down payment and closing costs? Melissa is a Virginia Housing Qualified trainer and can help you navigate through various state and county programs in the DC Metro area that most people don't even know about! If you haven't owned a home in the past three years, you may qualify for reduced interest rates, 1% down payments, and even up to \$75,000 in grant assistance from various county programs. There is even a program that can save money on your taxes when saving for a home.



**Why wait? Let's meet for coffee and I can share some great information with you. Scan the QR code for more information about Northern Virginia Housing Programs.**



## Melissa Rosario

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# NEWS

## Lyles Takes Triple Crown

Alexandria sprinter makes history at World Championships.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**N**oah Lyles, a 2016 graduate of what is now Alexandria City High School, became the fifth male sprinter in history to win the World Championship Sprint Triple Crown at the World Athletic Championships held in late August in Budapest, Hungary.

Lyles achieved the feat by clinching three gold medals at the championships. He secured victories in the 100-meter, 200-meter, and 4x100-meter relay events. His victory in the 100-meter officially gives him the title of fastest man in the world, taking home the gold in a personal best 9.83 seconds on Aug. 20.

Prior to the Championship, Lyles used social media to outline his goals for the competition.

"There is what I will accept, and then there's what my greatest expectation is," Lyles posted on X, formerly known as Twitter. "What I will accept is grabbing a medal in the 100m, whatever color, and winning the 200m. My greatest aspiration is that I



PHOTO NOAH LYLES/X

Noah Lyles, a 2016 graduate of T.C. Williams High School, became the fastest man in the world with a victory in the 100-meter race at the World Athletic Championships in Budapest, Hungary Aug. 20.

will grab three golds and gain a world record in the 200m."

On Aug. 25, Lyles took gold in the 200m

with a time of 19.52 seconds, becoming the first male sprinter since Usain Bolt in the 2016 Olympics to win both the 100 and 200

"They can doubt you, call you crazy, and even make fun of you but as long as you believe in yourself that's all that matters."

— World Champion Noah Lyles

in a worldwide championship.

Mayor Justin Wilson tweeted his congratulations: "The Sprint Double is done! Congrats to Noah Lyles!"

Lyles won a third gold on Aug. 26 as the anchor of the US 4x100m relay team.

The 26-year-old Lyles joins iconic athletes like Usain Bolt, Carl Lewis and other legendary sprinters who have achieved the World Championship Sprint Triple Crown.

Lyles also became the first person since Bolt in 2015 to win the 100m and 200m at the same event.

Following his record-breaking performance, Lyles posted on X, "They can doubt you, call you crazy, and even make fun of you but as long as you believe in yourself that's all that matters."

## Meet the 2023 Living Legends

### John Porter to host Oct. 18 reception.

**T**he 2023 class of Living Legends of Alexandria will be honored at the Meet the Legends reception Oct. 18 at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

John Porter, who was selected a Living Legend in 2010, will be the host of the ceremony honoring David Baker, Nelson Green Jr.\*, Dana Lawhorne, Carolyn B. Lewis, Patty and Kate Moran, Gary Oelze\*, Redella S. "Del" Pepper, John "Jack" Sullivan, Charles Wilson and William Vosbeck\*.

The program will feature video presentations of the newly inducted Legends. A reception catered by the HomeGrown Restaurant Group and Alexandria Cupcake will follow and provide guests the opportunity to meet and mingle with the new Alexandria Legends.

Living Legends are chosen because they have improved the quality of life in the City of Alexandria by having led the creation or redevelopment of something that wouldn't have existed without their involvement or demonstrated substantial and sustained contributions over a significant period. These community leaders have met one or both criteria.

Tickets are \$65 and can be purchased online at



PHOTO BY NINA TISARA/TISARA PHOTOGRAPHY

Alexandria Living Legend John Porter will emcee the 2023 Living Legends of Alexandria Ceremony and Reception Oct. 18 at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

Alexandrialegends.com. To be a sponsor or purchase a congratulatory ad, please contact Living-LegendsALX@gmail.com or call Mary Wadland, 703-224-8911.

\* These Legends will be honored posthumously.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

## BRIEFS

### 9/11 Remembrance Ceremony

The City of Alexandria will hold a remembrance ceremony at Alexandria City Hall - Market Square to mark the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001. The ceremony, open to the public, will remember those killed, those who survived, and all who were affected. The event will also show gratitude and honor to those who risked or gave their lives while responding to the incident to save others. Monday, Sept. 11 at 10 a.m.

In case of inclement weather, the event will be held in City Hall.

### Classic Car Show

Sept. 16, Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum  
10 a.m.-1 p.m. Free

Come to a classic car show featuring a variety of Packards and other "orphan" vehicles. This show will bring together cars that are no longer manufactured – hence the term "orphans." The show is free, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., and is co-sponsored by Packards Virginia and the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum.

This year's show will feature, among other vehicles, at least three Packards – a 1927 Packard Phaeton, a 1940 Packard Club Sedan, and a 1933 Packard Coupe Roadster; as well as at least two Hudsons — a 1954 Hudson Hornet, a 1934 Hudson Terraplane Coupe. Other cars scheduled to participate include a 1961 Nash Metropolitan, a 1967 Pontiac GTO, a 1988 Volga GAZ. 24-10, and a 1955 MG ZA Magnette.

Inside, visit the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum's exhibits that tell the full scope of Alexandria's rich history and enjoy the museum shop. Also visit the special exhibition, Alexandria Hospital: Women Mobilize the Community.

The Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum is located at 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria. Visit packards-va.org or call 703.424.5871.

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## OBITUARY

# Roberta “Bobbie” Shaw Thomas

## Community leader dies at 88.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**B**obbie Thomas, a well-known community leader, died in her sleep Aug. 22, at Goodwin House Baileys Crossroads. She was 88.

Thomas was born Roberta Shaw on March 15, 1935, in Greenville, Miss., to Ruth Levings Shaw, who died when Thomas was a child. Thomas went on to be raised by parents Jane Bartholomew and Robert H. Shaw in Grosse Pointe, Mich., before moving to Northern Virginia where she was a member of the first graduating class of George Mason High School in Falls Church.

Thomas graduated from The College of William and Mary, where she was a member of Pi Beta Phi and competed as a member of the fencing team. She married her first husband, Henry Alexander Thomas, the day after she graduated and went on to spend the majority of her adult life in Alexandria.

Thomas taught school in Richmond and Alexandria public schools. She was president of the University of Richmond Law School Wives Association. She continued serving as president of Alexandria and Virginia legal auxiliaries and served on the same National Board.

The mother of three children, Thomas held offices in several PTA's and was active in Girl and Cub Scouts. She was an active Twig, later a sustaining member. Thomas belonged to Riverport Garden Club and was secretary of Hunting Creek Garden Club, Junior Friends, secretary of Kiwanis Auxiliary, and a lifelong blood donor.

“Mom was always extraordinarily positive,” said Robert “Griff” Thomas. “She was always a real cheerleader for the family. Her most favorite thing of all the jobs she had was being a mom – it was her favorite job.”

Thomas was a long-time Immanuel



Roberta “Bobbie” Thomas died Aug. 22 at the age of 88.

Roberta “Bobbie” Thomas, right, with her son Griff in 2017. Thomas died Aug. 22 at the age of 88.



PHOTOS BY LUCELLE O'FLAHERTY

Church-on-the-Hill member, where she taught Sunday School for over a decade. She belonged to Belle Haven Country Club since 1958. She opened a small business, “Roberta’s,” specializing in color consulting

**“She had a fun life and was really empathetic – being connected to people mattered a lot to her.”**

— Griff Thomas on Roberta “Bobbie” Thomas

and specialty advertising. She also worked in real estate with her daughter, Anne.

Athletic from her collegiate fencing days, Thomas played tennis and later golf, where she met her current husband, William Twyman Williams, at one of her early golf clinics.

“Before Mom met Will her motto was ‘Live separately, visit frequently,’” Griff Thomas

said. “I always thought that’s a good motto for life but meeting Will changed that for her.”

She began her golf career late in life and practiced hard and played with dedication.

By 2004, she won the Belle Haven Country Club Nine Hole Ladies Golf Invitational and followed that in 2007 by winning the two-day Belle Haven Country Club Memorial Tournament taking home the Natalie Olmi Trophy.

“Mom turned out to be really good at golf,” Griff Thomas said.

“When she and Will decided to get married they ran off to the Greenbriar for a golf trip. They have been together over 25 years now and played courses from Virginia to California and from Maine to Florida.”

Thomas was predeceased by first husband Henry Alexander Thomas, daughter Anne Alexander Thomas, and grandson William Seth McClelland. Surviving is her husband

William Twyman Williams of Alexandria, sons, Robert Griffith Thomas of St. Petersburg, Fla., Henry Shaw Thomas of Denver, grandchildren, Carter Robinson Thomas and Mary Page Thomas, sister Sally Shaw Wyckoff (Jim), brothers, Peter B. Shaw (Linda), Robert H. Shaw Jr. (Libby), sister-in-law Suzanne F. Thomas (Bill deceased) and all their families.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m., Monday, Sept. 18, in the Zabriskie Chapel, at Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, 3606 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304. In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent in memory of Bobbie Thomas to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill Memorials, 3606 Seminary Rd, Alexandria, VA 22304.

“There are so many anecdotes I could tell about Mom but not sure any are suitable for printing,” Griff Thomas said with a laugh. “She had a fun life and was really empathetic – being connected to people mattered a lot to her.”

## Fort Belvoir’s 25th Annual Oktoberfest

Sept. 28 - Oct. 1, 2023

Fort Belvoir’s Family and MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) hosts the 25th annual Oktoberfest. Located at Fremont Field on Fort Belvoir, Oktoberfest is a four-day festival that highlights authentic German cuisine, beverages, music, and dancing, plus carnival rides and more. Volksmarch 5K/10K Walk and much more. This is a fun-filled event geared toward the whole family

Event is open to all (100% ID Check) with free entry to Fremont Field.

Once a year, US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir welcomes the general public to celebrate Oktoberfest. The general public with a State Drivers’ License and their Dependents can enter and enjoy this four-day festival celebrating all things German. Children 12 and younger need to be accompanied by an adult at all times.

<https://belvoir.armymwr.com/programs/oktoberfest>

## BULLETIN BOARD

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

### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. [www.volunteeralexandria.org](http://www.volunteeralexandria.org)

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

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is

an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League’s programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](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 [donaalrea@aol.com](mailto:donaalrea@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).



NEWS

# Two Shootings Saturday Night

Alexandria Police report that they are investigating two separate shootings that occurred within 15 minutes of each other Saturday night.

At approximately 7:52 p.m. officers responded to the 3800 block of Florence Drive. A 26-year-old male victim was found with a gunshot wound and transferred to the hospital with life-threatening injuries. Officers are still investigating and ask anyone with information to call Detective T. Griffin at (703) 859-3271.

## 2nd Incident, Dozens on Dirt Bikes and ATVs

At 8:05 p.m., officers responded to reports of a shooting in the 700 block of S Patrick St. Upon arriving to the scene, officers learned dozens of individuals riding dirt bikes, all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles and other recreational vehicles were gathered at two neighboring gas stations when individuals began shooting.

There are two confirmed injured victims of this incident. Victim #1, a 30-year-old male, was located near the National Harbor and transported to a local hospital with a gunshot wound that is non-life threatening. Victim #2, a 30-year-old male, was identified at a local hospital with a gunshot wound that is non-life threatening.

Anyone with information reference to the shooting is asked to contact Alexandria Police Detective B. Smith at 703-746-6159. Anyone with video, audio, or digital images relating to the shooting can upload to <https://alexandriapdva.evidence.com/axon/community-request/public/700s-patrickshooting>

Collaboration between Alexandria and Arlington County Police, alongside our regional partners, continue for this investigation.

As a reminder to the community, it is illegal to ride a dirt bike or ATV on public roads in Virginia.

**Get the latest underground updates from the RiverRenew team.**

**RiverRenew Community Listening Sessions**  
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

<b>September 12</b> Pendleton Street	<b>September 13</b> Royal Street	<b>September 14</b> Hooffs Run
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Scan the QR code or visit [bit.ly/2023-CLS](https://bit.ly/2023-CLS) for event details and meeting locations




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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Monarch butterfly garden sign and milkweed at the Hollin Hall Senior Center in Mount Vernon.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Monarch butterfly caterpillar on a milkweed leaf on Aug. 26 at the Hollin Hall Senior Center in Mount Vernon.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Larry Meade, president of the Northern Virginia Bird Club, led the August 26 butterfly walk.

# Butterflies Bring Cheer at Summer's End

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

The numbers of butterflies may be down this year, noted Larry Meade as he led an Aug. 26 butterfly and dragonfly walk for 18 enthusiasts in Dyke Marsh. Nevertheless, the group delighted in finding 12 species, from the summer azure with a one-or-so-inch wingspan to a spicebush butterfly with a 3.5-to-4.5-inch wingspan.

He attributed the lower numbers to several possible factors, including a “cool start” last spring and an ongoing drought resulting in fewer blossoms. Butterflies “eat” or actually nectar on flowers and prefer certain plants. While a few, like the mourning cloak, might emerge from winter hibernation on a warm early spring day, most are active in Northern Virginia from April to October. Butterflies develop through a process called “metamorphosis” and go through several stages called “instars” which take time. “They need warm

weather,” Meade explained, adding, “Insects are solar powered. They like the sun.”

“Butterflies are day-flying moths,” he said, and both insects are in the order Lepidoptera. Both insects have four wings with distinctive markings and their larvae are caterpillars. Unlike moths, butterflies have a club or bulb on their antennae and in general are more colorful than most moths.

On Saturday, summer azures seemed abundant, fluttering around seemingly erratically. On a leaf or on the ground, they could be mistaken for a little splotch of white bird poop. Zabulon skippers prefer forest edges, said Meade. They were darting around and displaying an orange wing patch. Mating pearl crescents elicited oohs and awe.

The swallowtails, viewed as large butterflies in North America, wowed the walkers. The male eastern tiger swallowtail is yellow with black stripes. There are two morphs of females, one yellow and one black. The tiger swallowtails were nectaring on bear’s foot plants.

Swallowtails have tail-like extensions on each hindwing, hence their name. A black male spicebush swallowtail provided some drama, its bluish, hind-wing bands glowing in the sun.

The group also spotted Needham’s skippers and common whitetail dragonflies. The whitetail has a striking white body and distinctive dark bands on its otherwise translucent wings. “Dragonflies cannot walk. They fly or perch,” Meade observed.

“Once you start watching dragonflies, you can’t help but notice how amazing they are. They fly at speeds of up to 30 miles per hour, zip forward and backward, pivot in a flash and hover with ease,” wrote Jill U. Adams, in an Audubon magazine article.

In 2022, Friends of Dyke Marsh volunteers documented 31 butterfly species and 22 dragonfly and damselfly species in the preserve.

### Migrating Monarchs

While the Saturday group saw no monarch

butterflies, Meade predicted that people will see some migrating through the region soon.

These bright orange and black butterflies, which weigh one-fifth the weight of a penny, migrate through Northern Virginia in September and October en route to central Mexico’s mountains. Some will fly 2,000 miles from Canada to reach their winter sites. Monarch caterpillars feed exclusively on milkweed leaves.

Locals have spotted a few monarchs and their caterpillars recently. On Saturday, a monarch caterpillar was under a common milkweed leaf at the Hollin Hall Senior Center’s monarch waystation, clear evidence that an adult had laid a pencil-point-size egg there. Pamela Krist, who lives in Fair Oaks Estates, brought home a sickly-looking milkweed plant from Merrifield Gardens six weeks ago and last week found four monarch caterpillars on the plant. One started what’s called a “J hang,” dangling upside down in a formation resembling the letter J, a step toward forming a green, bag-like

### Events and Resources

Sept. 5, Online butterfly identification webinar, by Larry Meade. Visit <https://www.audubonva.org/calendar>.

September 6 and 23, Native Plant Sale, Green Spring Gardens, Virginia Native Plant Society, Potowmack Chapter, <https://vnps.org/events/>.

September 10, Annual North American Butterfly Association butterfly count. Visit <https://www.audubonva.org/calendar>.

Butterfly Gardening Basics, <http://nababutterfly.com/basics-of-butterfly-gardening/>

chrysalis. Krist moved two to a cloth terrarium with some milkweed plants for their pupation and safety. She plans to tag some monarchs for Monarch Watch, to help track the butterflies’ migration routes and population trends.

“The caterpillar does all the work, but the butterfly gets all the publicity,” said comedian George Carlin. Get ready for some monarch butterfly publicity.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Pamela Krist, master gardener, plants native plants to support native insects, here monarch caterpillars on common milkweed.



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

Silvery checkerspot butterfly



PHOTO BY LARRY MEADE

Mating pearl crescent butterflies.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The whitetail dragonfly has a snow white body and distinctive dark wing patches.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Tiger swallowtail butterfly on bear’s foot in the Dyke Marsh native plant area.



PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

Like many butterflies, tiny summer azures get minerals from the soil.

### I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study

City of Alexandria, Fairfax County, and Prince George’s County, MD

#### Virtual Public Information Meeting

Tuesday, September 12, 2023 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. (presentation starts at 6:30 p.m.)  
<https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>

#### In-Person Public Information Meetings

All meeting times are 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. (presentation starts at 7 p.m.)

#### Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Oxon Hill High School (Auditorium), 6701 Leyte Dr, Oxon Hill, MD 20745

#### Tuesday, September 19, 2023

Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center (Multi-purpose Room), 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria, VA 22314

#### Wednesday, September 20, 2023

John R. Lewis High School (Cafeteria), 6540 Franconia Rd., Springfield, VA 22150

Learn about and provide input on the Virginia Department of Transportation’s (VDOT) I-495 Southside Express Lanes Study (495 Southside Study), an environmental study evaluating the potential extension of the Express Lanes system on the southern section of the Capital Beltway (I-495) by 11 miles from the Springfield interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, Virginia, across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George’s County, Maryland.

Since introducing the 495 Southside Study at the Public Information Meetings in May 2022, VDOT has developed proposed preliminary alternative concepts to address identified transportation needs within the study area, which are to extend and provide continuity of the Express Lanes system on I-495, provide additional travel choices, reduce congestion and improve travel reliability, improve safety, and provide consistency with local and regional plans. VDOT will share preliminary alternative concepts for review and input at upcoming public meetings to inform the range of alternatives that will be carried forward in the study.

The virtual public information meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 12, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. with a presentation at 6:30 p.m. Visit <https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside> or call 703-691-6715 for information about how to access and participate in the virtual meeting.

The in-person public information meetings will be held on Wednesday, September 13, at Oxon Hill High School, Tuesday, September 19, at Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center, and Wednesday, September 20, at John R. Lewis High School. All meetings will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m., with a formal presentation beginning at 7 p.m. Meeting display boards will be available to review, and VDOT representatives will be present to answer questions.

VDOT, in coordination with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other federal, state and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland, is conducting an Environmental Assessment in compliance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771.

Review and provide input on VDOT’s preliminary alternative concepts that will inform the range of alternatives to be carried forward in the Environmental Assessment on the webpage (<https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>), or during business hours at VDOT’s Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6715 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer your questions. Meeting materials will be posted on the study webpage prior to the public information meetings.

Provide your input by completing a public opinion survey at <https://www.virginiadot.org/495Southside>, and by providing your written comments at one of the meetings or submitting them by October 2, 2023 to Nick Nies, AICP, VDOT 495 Southside Express Lanes Study NEPA Project Manager, 9030 Stony Point Parkway, Suite 220, Richmond, VA 23235, or email [495southsideexpresslanes@VDOT.Virginia.gov](mailto:495southsideexpresslanes@VDOT.Virginia.gov).

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

UPC: 122608

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## CEREMONY

# Sheriff's Office Recognizes Inmates

Educational certificates presented to 50 at Detention Center ceremony.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

Sheriff Sean Casey and members of the Alexandria Sheriff's Office recognized inmates that have earned various educational certificates during a luncheon ceremony Aug. 24 at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.

Inmates were recognized for several things including earning their GED, results of a writing contest, earning professional traffic flagger and OSHA certifications, and participating in financial fitness, conflict resolution and anger management classes.

"Today is about honoring all of our residents who have graduated from various educational and reentry and job skill programs that are held here," said Sheriff Casey. "The reason we do these programs is to ensure that when people leave the facility they can go out and be successful members of our community."

Councilmember Sarah Bagley was the guest speaker at the event with Casey providing closing remarks. A reception followed the presentation of certificates to 50 individuals.

"Unfortunately, I am locked up but while I am here I want to learn as much as I can," said Wayne Ward, who received two certificates – one in occupational safety health administration and one in flagging. "These are certificates that can be used nationwide. I wanted to take advantage and be open to learning something while I am here."

Presenting certificates were Jane Collins of HEARD Creative Writing Contest, Robert Kinzey of the Society for Financial Education & Professional Development, and Elizabeth Jones Valderrama of Offender Aid & Restoration.

"The residents of the Alexandria Detention Center that are here today have demonstrated the ability to remain positive and to invest in themselves to take advantage of what this facility is offering them," said Bagley. "I want them to know that we see it and we appreciate it and that they should keep going in those efforts."

Bobby Smith Jr. received certificates in anger management, finance fitness and conflict resolution.

"Conflict resolution will help me a lot in my communications with family and friends," Smith said. "Sometimes communi-

"I wanted to take advantage and be open to learning something while I am here."

— Adult Detention Center resident  
Wayne Ward



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Sheriff Sean Casey, left, is joined by Wayne Ward, Councilwoman Sarah Bagley, Bobbie Smith and Deputy Sheriff Todd Stubblefield at the Alexandria Sheriff's Office Incentive Luncheon Aug. 24 at the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center.

cation is the breakdown that ends up causing conflict so I need to put more tools in my toolbox for that."

Smith added, "I am the head of household and money management is very important and something that is not taught enough so I took the opportunity when it was presented to me. And anger management has taught me to find the root of my decision making and how to scale my emotions – all basic life skills."

Held on the 60th anniversary of the "I

Have a Dream" speech by Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr, the program for the event featured a quote from the famous speech: "I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream."

Ward summed up his thoughts on others in his situation. "Be honest with yourself and work on the things that got you in here. You can't forget what got you here. People want to blame others but you have to be mindful of what put you here and work on that."

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# ENTERTAINMENT

## ALEXANDRIA COLONIAL TOURS' GHOST & GRAVEYARD TOUR

Wednesdays through Sundays in September at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Nightly in October at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 for adults; \$10 for children; free for children under 6 years old. Tours meet at the Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King Street, Alexandria.

Walk your way through the charming streets of historic Old Town Alexandria. Follow a colonial-costumed guide by lantern light for an engaging history tour on Alexandria's original Ghost and Graveyard Tour. During this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends, folklore, unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Visit alexcolonialtours.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://tallship-providence.org/>

## JULY 25-SEPT. 17

**Captured: Plants and Places.** 1-4 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Step into the world of plants across the region and in still life at a season-spanning photography exhibit July 25 to Sept. 17 at Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center. The lyrical collection "Captured: Plants and Places" features botanical imagery drawn from the Washington area to Maine, including studio photos, intimate outdoor vignettes and landscape scenes. The photographers' varying visions and styles in color and black-and-white invite viewers to explore the wonder of wild and horticultural lands. An opening reception with the artists is July 30 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. in the Atrium at Green Springs Gardens Horticultural Center.

## JULY 27 TO SEPT. 3

**Obscura: Tinam Valk Exhibit.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception on Sunday, Aug. 13 from 4-6 p.m. Tinam Valk's work explores the ambiguity of subjects such as oceans, rivers, landscapes, sometimes a combination of land and water, and figures or animals depicted within a land and water environment. Photographs, ranging from 60 to 100 years old in combination with sketches and memory and made-up environments, serve as a source for much of this work.

## SEPT. 1-30

**The "Farther Afield" Exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Alexandria.



The Perspectives Exhibit will take place Sept. 2-30, 2023 at the Van Landingham Gallery in the Torpedo Factory, Alexandria.

Ray Artisans gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Featuring art by local artists that takes the viewer on a journey, whether that is someplace an hour away from Alexandria or halfway across the world. Opening Reception: Friday, September 1, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on October 1). Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](https://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## SEPT. 2-30

**Perspectives Exhibit.** 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Gallery 311, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association's (TFAA) Van Landingham Gallery presents Perspectives, a juried membership show featuring artworks that showcase the talent and creativity of the TFAA. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, original paintings, jewelry, works on paper, sculpture, and more. The following artists are featured in the main exhibit: Diana Papazian, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Helen Power, Karen Waltermire, Nancy Ramsey, Ann Barbieri, Tara Barr, and Lynn Chadwick.

## TUESDAYS/SEPT. 5, 12, 19, 26,

**Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens,** Tuesdays @ 10. 10 - 11:30 a.m., Simpson Demonstration Gardens, 420 E. Monroe Ave, Alexandria. Meet and talk with Extension Master Gardeners in the Simpson Demonstration Gardens to learn about lawn alternatives suitable for our climate and your growing conditions. Free.

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 9

**Memorial Benefit Concert.** 2 p.m. At Aldersgate United Methodist

Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Benefitting United Community and in memory of Phil Bolin, come to a Memorial Benefit Concert/Recital. Join in this enchanting performance honoring the memory of Phil Bolin featuring mezzo-soprano, Caroline Nielson, and pianist, Eddie Rothmel. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. All ticket purchases are non-refundable and will be donated to support United Community. Visit [unitedcommunity.org/concerts](https://unitedcommunity.org/concerts).

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 9

**Virginia Arts & Music Festival.** 12 to 8:30 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington Street, Alexandria.

**Festival Program**  
12-2:30 p.m. — Magic of Color and Shape Visual arts exhibition opening with a complimentary reception. Featured artists: Karen Tyler, Tatyana Shramko, Iryna Smitchkova, Sermin Ciddi, Marcos Teixeira, Sarah Havah Theebaum, Dawn Shuler, Bugra Karaagac and a special tribute to Mirella Monti Belshé, who passed away this June.

3-4:30 p.m. — Poetical Insights: All the senses of the heart and mind Poetry and poetical story reading, featuring poems by Wayne David Hubbard, Sola Owonibi, Joseph Jablosnki aka 'The Walking Mall Poet', Margot Gotzmann (Sarah Havah Theebaum) and others, as well as poems and stories by Sufi masters.

4:30-5:15 p.m. — Lunch break — complimentary light lunch offered by organizers

5:30-6:30 p.m. — Exploring the Musical Journey: Towards the known and the unknown horizons — Lynne Mackey — pianist — classical music concert Looking both forward and back, the concert



The "Farther Afield" Exhibit takes place Sept. 1-30, 2023 at Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Alexandria.

contains an eclectic mix of styles and music. Composers range from Charles Griffes, Henry Cowell and Sergei Rachmaninoff, to Tan Dun, Alexina Louie and Ann Silsbee, exploring the nature of known and unknown horizons.

7-8:30 p.m. — Documenting Beauty and Mystery: Oriental and western architecture and art in movie excerpts and comments — movie tasting  
Visit the website [www.arts-and-hearts.org](https://www.arts-and-hearts.org)

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 9

**Used Book Sale:** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. 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>.

## SUNDAY/SEPT. 10

**8th Annual George Washington Patriot 5K and 10-Miler Race.** 10-Mile race starts at 7:15 a.m. 5K race starts at 7:30 a.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. Race in-person or virtually, and cross the finish line with George Washington's Mansion in view. The Finish Festival will offer each runner music, food and beverage concessions, and a complimentary beer. All participants will receive a commemorative George Washington Patriot Run T-shirt and a finisher medal engraved with George Washington's bust. Awards will be presented to first place overall, by age division, and for the military/first responder categories. Visit <https://www.mountvernon.org/plan-your-visit/calendar/events/george-washington-patriot-run/>

## SEPT. 16-17

**Colonial Market and Fair.** At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate.

Step back in time for food and wares by colonial artisans, theatrical entertainment, live music, and demonstrations - all included in the regular price of admission.

## THURSDAY/SEPT. 21

**Taste of Old Town North.** 4-8 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 N. Royal St., Alexandria. Head to Montgomery Park for a celebration of greater Old Town North featuring local businesses including restaurants like Julia's on the Potomac, Hank's Oyster Bar, St. Elmo's and Yunnan by Potomac Noodle House. Plus, enjoy music from New Breed Soul Consortium, formerly Three Man Soul Machine, and Sally and the Mander. Rain date is September 28. Visit [Oldtownnorth.org](https://Oldtownnorth.org).

## SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

**81st Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour.** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At various locations throughout Old Town Alexandria. Admission: \$45/person. The Twig, The Junior Auxiliary of Inova Alexandria Hospital, proudly announces the 81st Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour to be held on Saturday, September 23. New this year, a digital tour book guiding participants through the homes will be accessible to ticket holders via their mobile device. Hard copies of the tour book are available for purchase, in advance, for \$5 each. Please note that this event sold out last year, so early ticket purchase is recommended. Visit [thetwig.org/homes-tour](https://thetwig.org/homes-tour).

## THE BIRCHMERE

**At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria.** All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com). Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or [www.Birchmere.com](https://www.Birchmere.com).

## AUGUST

Thu. 31: Black Violin – The Black Violin Experience \$90.50

## SEPTEMBER

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 10



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**Obituary**

**Richard C. Banks, Ornithologist**


**Richard Charles "Dick" Banks, (April 19, 1931 - October 24, 2021)**, a major contributor to North American Ornithology, died peacefully at his home in Alexandria, Virginia, after several months in Hospice care.

Born in Steubenville, Ohio to Clinton Seegers Banks and Elizabeth May Harter Banks, Dick was an avid birder and an Eagle Scout. He majored in Wildlife Conservation at Ohio State University where he was a member of the Army ROTC. Upon his graduation in 1953, he was commissioned into the Medical Service Corps and served for a year in South Korea.

Following his Army service, he earned a Master's Degree and PhD from UC Berkeley and worked as Curator of Birds, Mammals, and Exhibits at the San Diego Natural History Museum, where he met his future wife, Gladys Sparks.

In 1966, Dick joined the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Bird and Mammal Labs located in the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History, where he worked until his official retirement in 2005 and for many years thereafter as an Emeritus Research Zoologist. The author or co-author of nearly 100 scientific papers on the systematics, distribution and nomenclature of North American birds, he was the founder of the Ornithological Council and served as President of the American Ornithologists' Union, The Wilson Ornithological Society, and the Washington Biologists' Field Club.

Dick and his wife Gladys (known to most as "Chuck") were married in 1967 and settled in Alexandria, VA, where they both lived until her death in 2009 and his in 2021. Predeceased by a sister, Eleanor Ash of Bergholz, Ohio, he is survived by his sons, David Banks of Kansas City, MO, Randy Banks of Wyckoff, NJ, two granddaughters, Randy's daughters Julia and Taline Banks, and a niece, Barbara Glover, of Kensington, Ohio.



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**CALENDAR**

- FROM PAGE 9
- Fri. 1: Raheem DeVaughn \$85.00
  - Sat. 2: Raheem DeVaughn \$85.00
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  - Fri. 8: Brett Dennen "Fool In Paradise Acoustic Tour" w/ Mon Rovia \$39.50
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  - Tue. 19: Joshua Radin w/ Maddie Poppe \$45.00
  - Wed. 20: Robert Earl Keen (Solo) \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
  - Thu. 21: Robert Earl Keen (Solo) \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
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# Alexandria's Role in Recognizing Women Innovators

BY JANE PLITT  
NATIONAL CENTER OF WOMEN'S INNOVATIONS

The National Center of Women's Innovations, a new local non-profit, has chosen to be headquartered near the nation's capital in Alexandria, Virginia. NCWI's goal is to acknowledge and mainstream the forgotten women innovators of yesterday and today. The NCWI vision is intended to inspire all -- particularly young girls -- to pursue STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics).

Says, Julie Chapman, NCWI's Board Vice-Chair, "We are thrilled that local leaders including Congressman Beyer, State Senator Ebbins, Mayor Wilson, Vice Mayor Jackson, business leaders Scott Shaw, Charlotte Hall, Chamber CEO Joe Haggerty, social service leaders Mary Lee Anderson, Brittany Greer, Heather Peeler, Brooke Curran, and Va. Tech. Dr. Pamela Gilchrist, have joined forces as honorary gala and organizational advisors."

As part of its launch, the Center will honor Dr. Gladys Brown West on her 93rd birth-

day at the organization's Inaugural Gala on Oct. 27, 2023. Sixty-seven years ago, Gladys Mae Brown was hired at the U.S. Naval Proving Ground in Dahlgren, Virginia. In 1956, she was only the second woman and one of four Black employees in her division. This woman who grew up on her parent's small Virginia farm and faced the segregation of the sixties, ended up developing satellite programs that led to the creation of what is today the Global Positioning System -- better known as GPS.

ABC National Correspondent Deborah Roberts will keynote the black-tie event on Oct. 27, 2023 at the Ritz-Carlton in Pentagon City. Alpha Kappa Alpha Incorporated (AKA) sorority will receive the Pioneer Recognition Award for Women Innovators for the early promotion of its sorority sister Dr. West. International AKA President/CEO Reed will accept that award.

Sponsorships and gala tickets are available for the Oct. 27 Gala. Go to [www.womensinnovations.org](http://www.womensinnovations.org). To volunteer contact [jane@womensinnovations.org](mailto:jane@womensinnovations.org)

## BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 3

## Virginia Cooperative Extension Community Needs Assessment

Virginia Cooperative Extension is currently conducting a community needs assessment and seeks your input. This survey focuses on what issues are important to the community and what you'd like to see changed. Feedback will be used to enhance ongoing and future outreach programs. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes. To fill out the survey, visit [alexandriava.gov/recreation-programs/power-on-programs](http://alexandriava.gov/recreation-programs/power-on-programs). The deadline for completing the survey is Sept. 15.

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership between Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, and the local city/county to bring research-backed programs to the local communities. The primary educational programs are Agriculture Natural Resources, 4-H Youth Development, and Family Consumer Services, in addition to volunteer programs 4-H, Masters Gardeners, Financial Education, Food and Nutrition Education, Energy Masters, and Master Naturalists.

For more, contact Sharon Toth at [satoth@vt.edu](mailto:satoth@vt.edu)

For disability accommodation, contact [jackie.person@alexandriava.gov](mailto:jackie.person@alexandriava.gov) or 703.746.5423, Virginia Relay 711.

## Illuminating in Purple for International Overdose Awareness Day

Aug. 31 is International Overdose Awareness Day. It is part of an annual campaign to end overdose incidents; remember those who have died; and raise awareness that substance use disorders can be successfully treated.

Alexandria City Hall, 301 King St., will be illuminated in purple to represent overdose awareness the evening of Aug. 29 through the morning of Sept. 1. Signs and displays will show data about overdoses and their impact on the community.

Drug overdoses and deaths continued to increase in 2023 in Alexandria as well as across the country, particularly among youth. The increase is driven by the use of synthetic opioids like fentanyl, which is 100 times more potent than morphine in unregulated drugs, powders and pills. Fentanyl is often pressed into pills and combined with other substances without the user's knowledge. Consuming even a small amount can lead to an overdose.

Narcan, a nasal spray that can reverse opioid overdoses, is available by calling the Alexandria Health Department at 703-746-4888 and can be obtained without a prescription at most pharmacies. All residents are encouraged to obtain Narcan as a first aid measure for any incidents they may unexpectedly encounter. The City also offers a mail delivery program for residents to obtain free Narcan and fentanyl test strips, which can detect the presence of fentanyl in a drug, by emailing [opioids@alexandriava.gov](mailto:opioids@alexandriava.gov).

Residents are asked to properly dispose of unwanted medicines at permanent drug drop boxes.

The City's Department of Community and Human Services can help locate treatment options in Alexandria for anyone dealing with substance use and is available 24 hours a day at 703-746-3636 (Virginia Relay 711). To get help to stop the use of heroin or other opioids, call the Opioid Treatment Program intake line at 703-746-3610.

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the return of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now ominous clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

Visit [connectionnewspapers.com](http://connectionnewspapers.com) or  
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Connection Newspapers... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac  
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## Our Daily Diversion, Unfortunately



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I imagine you regular readers have noticed that this column has veered away of late from cancer-centric subjects. I wish I could say it was because they rang the bell (a world-wide acknowledgment that a patient has successfully completed their chemotherapy regimen) at the Infusion Center, but "Alas, poor Yurick ... Unfortunately, I did not hear any bells.

What I did hear was how understanding and concerned and willing to help everybody at my homeowner's insurance company's claims department were, everyone except the actual claims adjuster. And that omission is particularly important because it seems -- from what little I know/have observed, he releases the money that satisfies (I can dream, can't I?) my claim and ultimately, he's the one who will determine my future fate: whether it's miserable or rewarding. I just hope his finger is not too fickle.

To this hopefully fairly and reasonably compensated end, I have been preoccupied. Not in the way that prevents me from living my life in any sort of normal/functioning way. Hardly. More that it is a recurring subject of disappointment and bewilderment that something we had absolutely nothing to do with/contributed to in any way, a tree crashing into and onto our house thereby poking a hole in the roof (yes, where the water comes in) is the cause of this consternation. It was that water that shorted out one central air-conditioning unit rendering it useless, seeped into the chandelier in the den and then soaked the 6 x 9 Oriental-type rug on the floor, its pad, and the wood floor underneath, a wood floor dated back probably 100 years. The other damage -- aside from now needing an entire roof replaced, was a broken window from where a limb from the tree that fell hit a window and shattered it and finally, damaging the other central air-conditioning unit. Which, due to the force of the tree hitting it, was nearly knocked off its cement pedestal. In addition, all its connecting wires to the house were nearly pulled away from the house. The total repair/replacement cost we estimated for all damages at maybe \$60,000. However, the insurance company estimated our damage differently. So different in fact that not only are we not in the same universe, but we also don't even speak the same language.

Consequently, no repairs/replacement have commenced unless we commit to pay the miscellaneous contractors ourselves and hope we're reimbursed at 100% or so when the process finally inches forward. And since we can't afford, literally or figuratively, to assume any possible financial discrepancy, we are currently in "no man's land," stuck between a repair/replacement that's needed and one which has received money/commitment from the insurance company insufficient to do the job at hand/return our house to its pre-July 14th status.

And while Rome burns, so to speak, "Belly Acres," as I named our designated-as-historic (according to the Office of Historic Preservation for Montgomery, County, Md.), "log house" -- as its described, its occupants (me, Dina, four cats and one dog) are forced to twiddle our collective thumbs and/or pant non-stop. Given the financial constraints of our reality, all we can do is wait for the powers-that-be to come to their senses and allocate appropriate funds to make us whole again (no pun intended). I would guess all homeowners with similar policies would expect to be covered completely. We don't want more than we deserve. We just want what contractors are telling us we need. Call me naive but I was thinking the \$212.25 I pay monthly -- and have paid since May '92, would provide some reassurance that if a tree hit the fan, the fan would be replaced/ fixed. And until there's a resolution/agreement here, "Belly Acres" and the Louries are going nowhere slowly. Consequently, this subject is the last thing we think about/discuss at dinner and likewise the first thing we mention at breakfast as well.

You bet we're talking about it. At the expense of everything else. Cancer? I can't be bothered. I need a new roof/downspouts/gutters, two central air-conditioners, a chandelier, a rug, its pad, a replacement pane of glass, and refinish the wood floor in two rooms. I need to finish all this stuff so I can get my life back to normal, for a cancer survivor, anyway. I can't have all these issues dragging me down. Cancer is enough of a challenge. I don't need another one. That would be piling on.

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



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## Old Town | \$2,295,000

Currently comprised of three separate units, this home offers nearly 7,000 SF of finished living space, with an additional 2,630 SF available in the unfinished basement. It offers the possibility of rental income, multi-family living, or a conversion to one grand residence. The main home's entrance on 219 Prince St welcomes you into spacious living areas with 5 bedrooms on the second and third levels. The entrance at 126 S. Fairfax St leads to two separate apartments – each featuring a living room, dining room, kitchen, laundry, full bath, and 2 bedrooms.

**Lauren Bishop 202.361.5079**

[www.LaurenBishopHomes.com](http://www.LaurenBishopHomes.com)

## Braddock Heights | \$2,375,000

Stunning custom-built home on a beautiful lot! Formal living and dining rooms plus open floor plan featuring a large gourmet kitchen, breakfast room, great room, and library/office. 5 bedrooms, 4 full & 2 half baths, and finished lower level. 2436 Ridge Road Drive

**Sarah King 703.864.5050**

[www.saraheking.com](http://www.saraheking.com)



## Del Ray | \$2,275,000

Gorgeously updated, complete renovation with designer finishes and lighting, and custom trim work. 6 bedrooms and 5 full baths, beautiful kitchen, large pantry, mudroom, spacious basement and more. ADU features a bedroom, bath & kitchen. 317 E Howell Ave

**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**

[www.JenWalker.com](http://www.JenWalker.com)



## Milway Meadows | \$997,500

Gorgeous, spacious, bright, and beautifully renovated! Four great bedrooms on one level, new windows and doors, incredible closet space and storage thru-out! An easy stroll to the elementary school and neighborhood swim and tennis club! 7518 Cornith Drive

**Robin Arnold 703.966.5457**

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**OPEN SUN 9/3, 2-4PM**

## Stratford on the Potomac | \$885,000

This meticulous 4-bedroom, 2.5-bath home in 22308 has been lovingly cared for and it shows! Exquisite curb appeal with mature trees and plantings – a serene, natural paradise. Delightful deck with awning and patio off the living room. 2105 Wakefield Street

**Tracy Dunn 571.212.3658**

[www.tracybdunn.com](http://www.tracybdunn.com)



## Chapel Hill | \$700,000

This lovely 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath townhome offers a park-like setting nestled in the heart of Alexandria City. Features include hardwoods on the main level, patio off the kitchen, a family room with wood-burning fireplace, & 2 parking spaces. 2726 Franklin Court

**Alyssa Cannon 703.585.8167**

[www.AlyssaCannon.com](http://www.AlyssaCannon.com)



## Sequoyah | \$265,000

This inviting residence features an open floor plan that seamlessly connects the living and dining room areas to the upgraded, bright kitchen. Both full and half baths have been tastefully updated, along with new flooring & lighting throughout the home. 3902 Mariposa Pl #C

**Sallie Seiy 703.798.4666**

[www.SallieSeiy.com](http://www.SallieSeiy.com)



## Hunting Creek Club | \$209,900

Beautiful views of the Potomac River abound in this spacious and light-filled 850-SF, 1-bedroom unit on the 10th floor with a balcony. This community offers a pool, picnic area, tennis court, a 24-hr front desk, & is just 5 blocks from Metro. 2059 Huntington Ave #1003

**Crombie & Olsen 571.969.1774**

[www.crombieandolsen.com](http://www.crombieandolsen.com)

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