

Star Search

Celebrities and athletes
have called Alexandria home.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Their faces are instantly recognizable from the world of sports and entertainment. But at one time, these notable individuals walked the streets of Alexandria, playing with childhood friends, attending Alexandria schools and performing in local theater productions.

In August of 1967, "Light My Fire" by The Doors was atop the charts with Jim Morrison having graduated only a few years earlier from George Washington High

**"I have called
Alexandria home
for decades.
There is no
place else I
would rather be."**

— Television personality and
salon owner Monte Durham

School. In front of a crowd estimated at more than 4,000, Morrison gave what is reported to be his only performance in his hometown when The Doors performed at the Alexandria Roller Rink on North Saint Asaph Street (now the site of the Sheraton Suites). The group would go on to sell more than 100 million records worldwide.

Willard Scott was America's
SEE CELEBRITIES, PAGE 10



Academy Award winner Marcia Gay Harden got her theatrical start at the Little Theatre of Alexandria.



Jim Morrison, standing rear second from right, and The Doors pose with DJ Jack Alix, holding a copy of GO Magazine between his teeth, before The Doors' show at the Alexandria Roller Rink on Aug. 18, 1967. Also pictured are members of the Blades of Grass and the Jackettes Go-Go Girls. The show is believed to be the only time that Morrison, who graduated from George Washington High School, played in Alexandria.



Actor Chris Meloni of Law and Order: Special Victims Unit was the captain and quarterback of the 1978 undefeated St. Stephen's football team.



Jim Morrison as a senior at George Washington High School.



Born Ellen Naomi Cohen in Alexandria, Mama Cass Elliot, center back, was a 1961 graduate of George Washington High School. John Phillips, right, was also raised in Alexandria and the two performed together as the Mamas and the Papas. He played basketball at George Washington High School.



World champion and Olympic bronze medalist Noah Lyles began his track and field career as a student at T.C. Williams High School.



Actor Dermot Mulroney was born in Alexandria and got his acting start at the Little Theatre of Alexandria.

Your Home Is My Priority



JUST LISTED

1117 N. Gaillard Street, Alexandria, VA 22304
\$1,424,900

This stunning four-bedroom home in Vauxclease offers a luxurious and spacious living experience. As you enter the two-story foyer, you'll be greeted by beautiful Travertine tile flooring that sets the tone for the elegance throughout the house. A wonderfully open floor plan with a gorgeous chef's kitchen, expansive family and living rooms and a separate dining room make this home an entertainer's dream. The exterior of the home is just as impressive as the interior. A wraparound deck overlooks a magnificent, landscaped yard that is perfect for hosting outdoor get-togethers and enjoying the natural beauty that envelopes you. A lower stone patio with a fire pit is ideal for small gatherings, and multiple natural benches invite you to relax and take in the peaceful surroundings. There are also several quaint paths that wind their way through the property.



FOR SALE

427 S Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
\$1,965,000

Be the first to live in this totally renovated house in Old Town's desirable southeast quadrant. Over 2,000 square feet of living space including an additional main level room that can function as a potential third bedroom, family room, or home office. Modern elements blend effortlessly with historic Federal-style architecture reflecting quality design and construction details of this move-in ready home. Offering exposure on three sides, sunlight beams within throughout the day.

UNDER CONTRACT

607 S Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
\$1,399,900

This stunning home in the southeast quadrant of Old Town is in pristine condition and offers a plethora of features that are sure to impress. With 3 bedrooms and 2 baths upstairs, and a first-floor family room, separate dining room, living room and kitchen, this property provides ample space for comfortable living. One of the highlights is the large gourmet kitchen boasting high-end appliances, quartz counters, loads of storage and a peninsula. There is also a powder room on the first level.



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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023

A Home to History

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

For centuries, Alexandria has been known primarily as the hometown of George Washington, attracting history aficionados from across the globe to its cobblestone streets and lively waterfront. But there is also the city's more complicated history as home to Robert E. Lee, slavery and segregation.

Thanks to the work of city historians and dedicated volunteers, a fuller history is slowly being told of the city that was first settled in 1695 and formally founded in 1749.

While Mount Vernon was Washington's primary residence, there are many buildings with ties to the Founding Father including Gadsby's Tavern and Christ Church, both popular tourist attractions.

But Alexandria was also once known as a thriving trading port of enslaved people. The Franklin and Armfield Slave Pen at 1315 Duke Street was one of the largest trading companies of enslaved people in the country. The Freedom House Museum is what remains of the large complex dedicated to trafficking thousands of Black men, women, and children from 1828 - 1861.

Then thousands of African Americans flocked to the city during the Civil War fleeing the bondage of slavery in the south. With living conditions crowded and dire, many perished from disease and deprivation.

In 1864, after hundreds had died, the Superintendent of Contrabands, as the freedmen were known, ordered that a property on the southern edge of town be confiscated for use as a cemetery and an estimated 1,800 African Americans were laid to rest there before the last burial took place in January of 1869. Today, the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial is a significant site as part of the African American Civil Rights Network.

"We are so proud to be the first Virginia site included with the Civil Rights Network," said Audrey Davis, director of African American History of the Office of Historic Alexandria when the site was dedicated in 2021. "It is so important to us that people are now recognizing the petition for this cemetery as one of the earliest Civil Rights actions in Alexandria. While it is not the earliest, it is a very, very important organized fight for Civil Rights by African Americans and we are very proud of that."

With a population of just under 13,000 in 1860, Alexandria is now home to 160,000, some with ties dating back more than two centuries.

"Alexandria was a great place to grow up," said Thomas Hulfish III, a sixth generation Alexandrian whose first family member arrived as a Scottish sea captain in 1780. "I loved playing along the industrial waterfront. Alexandria was here because of the river and when the railroad arrived it became a busy, bustling town."

Hulfish has seen many a resident come and go over the years, including his child



PHOTO/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

President Calvin Coolidge and first lady Grace Coolidge, standing, attend the laying of the cornerstone of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in 1923.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

The annual Scottish Walk parade draws tens of thousands of visitors from across the region to kick off the holiday season and raise funds for the Campagna Center.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria National Cemetery is one of the original national cemeteries established during the Civil War in 1862.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the 31st Masonic District gather in front of the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial during the 2021 dedication of the site's inclusion in the African American Civil Rights Network.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

The Captain Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial honors the service and sacrifice of the 68 men from Alexandria who either died in Vietnam and the surrounding area or remain missing in action. The plaza is located in front of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Del Ray.

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ SEPTEMBER 14-20, 2023 ♦ 3

REMEMBRANCE

PHOTOS BY AMY BERTSCH/ASO



The Alexandria City Honor Guard presents the colors during the National Anthem at the Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony at Market Square.



U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) addresses the crowd at the Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony at Market Square.

Remembering 9-11 City pays tribute to first responders, victims of terrorist attack.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The City of Alexandria paid tribute to those who sacrificed and were lost in the terrorist attacks of 9-11 during a remembrance ceremony held Sept. 11 in Market Square.

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) joined city and state officials and public safety chiefs as Mayor Justin Wilson reminded attendees of the importance of unity in the face

of divisiveness and community in times of need.

"The most important thing that came out of the 9-11 experience was that national unity that we saw in the immediate aftermath," Wilson said. "I would argue in the 22 years since, we haven't seen it again. That unity is one of the most important lessons of 9-11 and the reason that we have gatherings like today."

The city recognized the contributions of first responders and others in the wake of

the 9-11 attacks, including firefighters, medics, law enforcement officers, and civilians from across the commonwealth.

Police Chief Don Hayes, Sheriff Sean Casey and Assistant Fire Chief Andrew Duke, representing the Alexandria public safety departments that responded to the call for support at the Pentagon, each gave remarks.

"We may wear different uniforms, but there is something inside us that beats on the same heartbeat," said Hayes. "We are one Alexandria and one public safety."

In addition to remembering the acts of bravery from first responders, the ceremony mourned the losses suffered that day and the repercussions felt since.

"9-11 ended a long national holiday in American history," Beyer said. "It had been 60 years since any enemy had dared to attack us. 9-11 changed our lives forever."

Beyer continued, "I believe history has a direction, and that direction is forward. Keeping 9-11 in our hearts and minds will inspire us to keep moving forward."

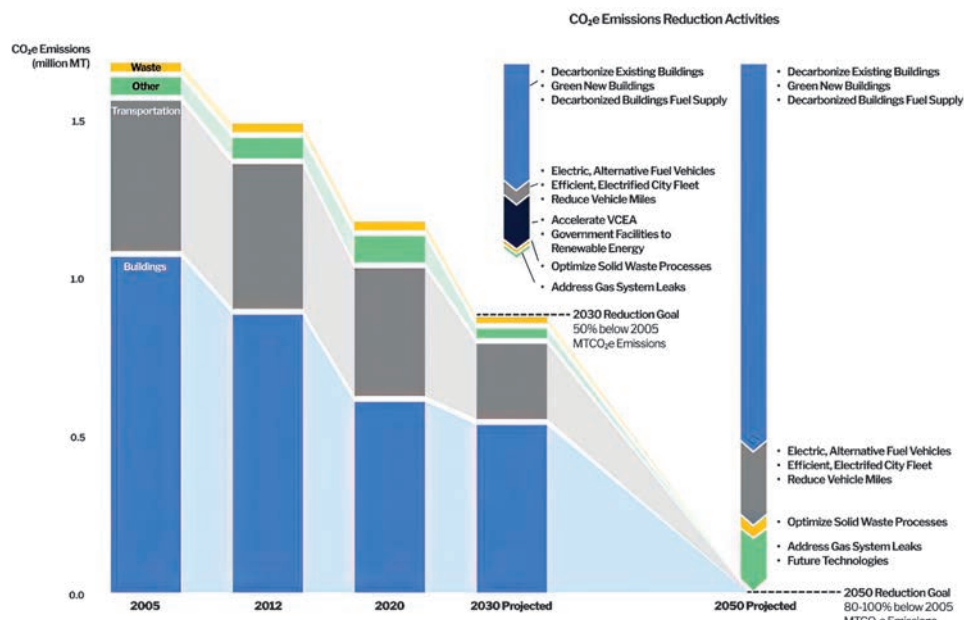
"9-11 changed our lives forever."
— U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8)



Officials on stage listen to remarks during the Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony at Market Square.



Deputy Sheriff Todd Stubblefield offers a prayer at the Sept. 11 remembrance ceremony at Market Square.



SOURCE: ALEXANDRIA ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

This graph of implementation milestones over the next 30 years shows the largest drop in emissions coming from decarbonizing existing buildings and creating strict requirements for new buildings.

Home Sick

Outdated apartment complexes gush greenhouse gas emissions.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria's old and outdated apartment buildings are the number one source of carbon emissions in the city, leaky structures that allow air conditioning and heating to escape through inefficient windows and permeable roofs. Now city officials have a plan to decarbonize sick buildings, and make sure new ones don't contribute to climate change. The plans are outlined in an action plan now setting goals for the next few decades.

"They set pretty ambitious targets for retrofitting existing buildings," said Benjamin Preston, senior environmental policy researcher at the Rand Corporation. "What you see in the policies that are being proposed in that action plan recognizes that they have to figure out how to create financial incentives to get homeowners to implement these policies or to come up with clever ways of financing retrofits."

The Energy and Climate Action Plan approved earlier this year includes strategies to improve the efficiency of lighting and appliances as well as heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems.

The document also suggests ways to electrify buildings, replacing old fuel-powered heating systems that contribute to climate change. Because the city chose to combine emissions from buildings and emissions from electricity production, the final report puts a spotlight on buildings as a chief concern for the city.

"Obviously those emissions are being produced elsewhere at the power plant," said Preston. "Nevertheless, they're looking downstream where the electricity is going, and they are attributing power plant emissions back to the city based on electricity

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Hot, Wet, and Wild!

What can Alexandrians do about climate change? On Monday, Sept. 18, Agenda Alexandria will host a panel discussion to take a look at what Alexandria is doing to prepare for climate change. The event is free and open to the public at the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street. Panelists include:

- ❖ **Ryan Freed**, climate action officer for the city of Alexandria
- ❖ **Rose Stephens-Booker**, director of State Mobilization Building Decarbonization Coalition
- ❖ **Kathie Hoekstra**, chairwoman of the Alexandria's Environmental Policy Commission

used in the buildings."

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS from transportation are often seen as a chief source of greenhouse gas emissions, and the action plan identifies significant problems there as well. But because the report focuses so heavily on large apartment complexes as the city's chief source of emissions rather than cars or buses, many people were surprised at the findings.

"I was surprised," admitted Mary Harris, co-chairwoman of the Alexandria Energy and Climate Change Action Plan Task Force. "I would have suspected it was transportation. But in fact it was buildings by a mile."

Four years ago, the Alexandria City Council adopted a resolution declaring a climate emergency, setting the stage for the action plan that is now outlining goals for the future. Perhaps the most ambitious goal is reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Alexandria by 100 percent over the next 20 years. Task force members who helped put the plan together say they are hoping to use a mix of incentives to property owners and zoning requirements for future buildings — essentially a carrot-and-stick approach that will often depend on voluntary action to accomplish the goal.

"Nobody's coming after your gas stove," said Harris. "But if we want to meet a goal of reducing emissions, we need to electrify as many buildings as we can, reduce energy use in those buildings and generally decarbonize them."



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OBITUARY

Joseph Gerald ‘Gerry’ Hebert

**Voting rights titan,
ALIVE! supporter
dies at 74.**

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Gerry Hebert was the strongest man in the world. At least that is what he always playfully told his children when they were young. And for decades it appeared he was just that as he fearlessly protested, marched and used his legal acumen to fight for voting rights across the country for nearly half a century. On Sept. 7, the noted Civil Rights attorney died at his Alexandria home following a six-month battle with glioblastoma. He was 74.

“Growing up, my dad referred to himself as ‘the strongest man in the world,’” said Hebert’s daughter Greta in one of many medical updates posted on the Caring Bridge website. “No matter what it was, he could do it, and that was his reason. The resolve, tenacity and courage I have witnessed [during this battle] has been beyond human. No one could be better prepared.”

Tributes to the legal stalwart poured in across social media, including from ALIVE!, where Hebert had served in many capacities, including as a past president.

“Gerry has been at the heart of ALIVE! for almost 40 years,” said ALIVE! in a Facebook statement. “We are so grateful for all the hard work and dedication he demonstrated to ALIVE!’s mission and to the community of Alexandria.”

Joseph Gerald Hebert was born Feb. 13, 1949, in Worcester, Mass. to Joseph Gerald Laurie Hebert and Adeline Agnes Whitehead Hebert. A graduate of St. John’s High School in Shrewsbury, Hebert went on to earn his bachelor’s degree from Stonehill College and Juris Doctor from Suffolk University Law School.

Hebert worked in the U.S. Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division from 1973 to 1994. While at the DOJ, he won acclaim for his work in school desegregation cases and served as the lead attorney in voting rights and redistricting lawsuits, including several cases decided by the U. S. Supreme Court. Post-DOJ, Hebert spent time in private practice specializing in election law and the Voting Rights Act. His expertise led him to the Campaign Legal Center in 2004, serving as Executive Director until 2018, before retiring from the organization in 2021.

“Under Gerry’s leadership, CLC expanded its litigation practice and grew its staff and resources to increase the organization’s abil-



Prominent voting rights lawyer and community volunteer Gerry Hebert died Sept. 7 at the age of 74.



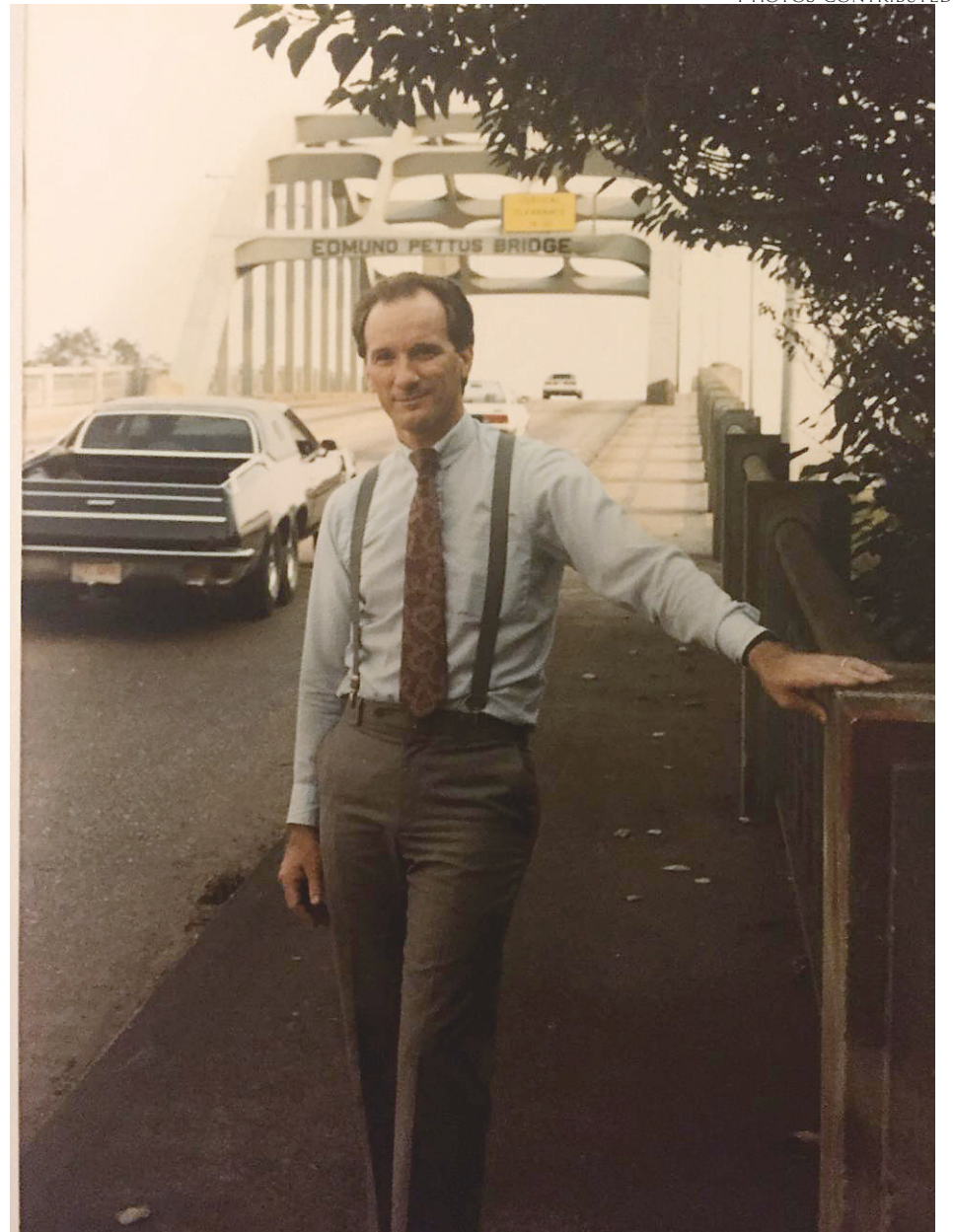
Voting rights lawyer Gerry Hebert on the steps of the U.S. Capitol in 2009.

ity to advocate on behalf of voters,” said the CLC in a statement. “He was deeply committed to mentoring young lawyers and built a robust intern program at CLC that continues today.”

In 2015, Hebert led CLC in creating the Voting Rights Institute (VRI), a partnership with the American Constitution Society and Georgetown Law. The institute provides opportunities for law students and graduates to learn how to litigate voting rights cases.

During this time, Hebert was an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center. He also taught at University of Virginia, American University, and New York

SEE GERRY HEBERT, PAGE 18



Voting rights lawyer Gerry Hebert on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala.

**“Gerry has been at the heart
of ALIVE! for almost 40 years.”**

— ALIVE! Facebook post



Gerry Hebert with “Team Hebert” at the Race For Hope DC 5K on May 7.

COMMUNITY

ALIVE! Kicks-Off Hunger Action Day on Sept. 15

Join City of Alexandria for West End Food Hub Event

Sept 15th 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.
510-F South Van Dorn St,
Alexandria, VA 22304

ALIVE! is partnering with the City of Alexandria and Hunger Free Alexandria to raise awareness of food insecurity with a kickoff event at the ALIVE! Food Hub on the West End, followed by a Food Hub open house on Hunger Action Day, Sept. 15.

Speaking: Jenn Ayers, ALIVE!'s Executive Director; Vice Mayor Amy Jackson, City of Alexandria; Melissa Jensen, Food Security Coordinator for the City of Alexandria, Department of Community and Human Services

Contribute shelf stable food items by taking the 10 Can Challenge and donating shelf stable food items to ALIVE! and other food assistance programs. Learn more at this donation challenge and see food assistance resources at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/>

economic-support/food-assistance

About the ALIVE! Food Hubs:

As a sub-awardee of the City of Alexandria, ALIVE! received funding from the American Rescue Plan Act to open brick and mortar locations to distribute free food and to connect city of Alexandria residents in need with support services.

Alexandria City residents are able to visit ALIVE!'s Food Hubs at times that are more convenient to their schedules, and can select the specific items they need in a market-like experience. At each Food Hub, ALIVE! staff and volunteers also work to connect clients with other public and private support services. Having service navigators on site to provide information and help clients sign up for these services may provide just the boost they need to start up the path toward self-sustainability.

Del Ray Food Hub, 2601 Mount Vernon Ave.,

Operating Hours:
Tuesdays 11am – 6pm (Closed 2pm – 3pm)
Wednesdays 11am – 6pm (Closed 2pm – 3pm)
Thursdays 11am – 6pm (Closed 2pm – 3pm)
Saturdays 10am – 2pm

West End Food Hub, 510-F South Van Dorn Street

Operating Hours: SEE ALIVE!, PAGE 13

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SEASON

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ASO at 80-oh!

SAT • Sep 30, 2023 at 7:30pm
SUN • Oct 1, 2023 at 3:00pm

James Ross, Music Director
Elissa Lee Koljonen, violin


Lester Green: *Toast*
(ASO at 80 commission, sponsored by Classical Movements)

Quinn Mason: *Toast of the Town*

Johannes Brahms: Violin Concerto

Pyotr Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 4

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Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

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

| Jurisdiction | Fed Struc Id | Route # | Route Name | Crossing | Posted Date |
|--------------|--------------|---------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| PATRICK | 13372 | 699 | HUGHES BROWN RD/RTE 699 | WHITE MUD CREEK | 8/22/2023 |
| WYTHE | 19743 | 671 | CRIGGER RD | CRIGGER CREEK | 8/10/2023 |
| PATRICK | 13337 | 675 | FRIENDS MISSION/RTE 675 | ARARAT RIVER | 8/10/2023 |
| BEDFORD | 2918 | 804 | TEASS TERRACE/RTE 804 | NININGER CREEK | 8/9/2023 |
| PATRICK | 13336 | 672 | JOHNSON CR RD/RTE 672 | JOHNSON CREEK | 8/9/2023 |
| PATRICK | 13276 | 626 | ABRAM PENN HWY/RTE 626 | N. MAYO RIVER | 8/1/2023 |

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

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

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

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

A Win For Virginia

BY: DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK

Last Wednesday, Sept. 6, the Commonwealth of Virginia took a significant step towards improving the lives of Virginians when the General Assembly returned to Richmond to vote on the final passage of the long-awaited budget deal. The clock is ticking now with the Governor having until this upcoming Friday, Sept. 15, to sign the amended budget into law. The good news is that this budget compromise represents a series of victories for the people of Virginia, as it prioritizes investments in key areas such as public education, healthcare and affordable housing, all the while providing relief for Virginia families, especially veterans and children. It is also fiscally responsible in that it recognizes that revenue growth may be subsiding and thus the focus is on one-time initiatives.

One of the most significant highlights of this budget is the substantial investment we made in Virginia's public schools. With over \$900 million allocated to public education, the budget seeks to address critical issues that have plagued the educational system. Notably, it lifts Virginia's arbitrary cap on state funding for support staff, paving the way for an additional 3,670 support staff positions to be created across the Commonwealth. This move comes in response to the findings of this summer's JLARC report on education funding, which highlighted the urgent need for investments in the state's educational system. To support school divisions like Fairfax County with large percentages of low-income students, the budget allocates over \$400 million in one-time flexible funding. This



targeted funding aims to bridge the gap in educational opportunities and create a more equitable learning environment for all Virginian students.

Virginia taxpayers will also see direct benefits from this budget. Individual taxpayers will receive one-time tax rebates of \$200, while couples filing jointly will receive \$400. That should occur sometime in the fall. The annual sales tax holiday

will now take place over the weekend of Oct. 20-22, 2023, providing further savings for Virginians. The deal also includes a provision that makes all of Virginia's military retirees eligible to exempt their retirement pay from income tax. This new exemption, phased into the tax code, will ultimately reach \$40,000 by 2025. This change will put more money into the hands of retired veterans of every rank, demonstrating our commitment to supporting those who have served our country.

In addition to these benefits, the budget also addresses the issue of rising health insurance premiums. By lowering health insurance premiums purchased through the Exchange by 15%, the budget prevents premiums from increasing by a staggering 28.4%. This measure ensures that Virginians can access affordable healthcare and prevents them from facing financial hardship due to healthcare costs.

Lastly, the budget demonstrates a commitment to fiscal responsibility by approving less than \$100 million of the Governor's proposed \$1 billion corporate tax scheme. This move rejects the most substantial tax giveaways that would primarily benefit millionaires and large corporations, instead focusing on policies that put money back into the pockets of Virginia's workers.



Gum Springs Museum and Cultural Center

In conclusion, the budget deal, which also includes strong investments in water quality, public safety, and support for 14 museums including the Gum Springs Museum and Cultural Center, approved by the General Assembly last week underlines a strong commitment to improving the lives of Virginians. By investing in education, providing one-time tax relief, and addressing healthcare challenges, this budget demonstrates a dedication to the well-being of all residents. My colleagues in the General Assembly and I are determined to put the needs of our constituents first, ensuring that no family has to make difficult choices between essential expenses, yet all the while recognizing that although we have made historic investments in education, there is even more education funding needed moving forward. That will be a battle for the next budget of 2024-25.

Six Months Late, Finally a Budget

Raising Virginia's standard deduction from just \$3000/\$6000 to almost three times that amount causes an annual revenue loss of over \$1.1 billion.

BY DEL. VIVIAN WATTS

The General Assembly finally passed a full budget for this year. It goes into effect at midnight Friday, Sept. 15, unless the Governor wants to amend it. If he does, there will be another 30-day delay. Politically, I doubt that'll happen because it would delay taxpayers receiving a tax rebate check just before the upcoming November election of up to \$200 for individuals and \$400 for married filers.

The virtually unprecedented six-month delay in passing an updated budget, in fact, was all about taxes – just like it was the only other time a budget update wasn't passed before the start of the budget year



July 1. That was 20 years ago and was over cutting the car tax. That year, an update of the second year of Virginia's two-year budget never was passed.

This year, it was over how much we should permanently cut taxes given that tax cuts reduce Virginia's revenue available to support education. Even though Virginia is below what most states give local schools, 52% to 55% of Virginia state tax revenue goes to support education.

In July, JLARC (our independent Joint Audit and Review Commission) released an extensive report documenting that Virginia's level

of state funding far under-estimates what local schools actually cost. The state bases its share

on just \$10.7 billion, while what K-12 actually costs is much, much higher at \$17.3 billion. The report concluded it would take an annual increase of over \$3 billion in state funding support to address major areas of need it identified.

SEE WATTS, PAGE 13

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An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

Published by
Local Media Connection LLC

1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

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A Connection Newspaper

The Alexandria Gazette Packet is distributed weekly to selected homes in the City of Alexandria. Any owners or occupants of premises that do not wish to receive the paper can notify the publisher by telephone at 703-778-9426 or by email to circulation@connectionnewspapers.com, and the distributor will be notified to discontinue service.



About Gazette Packet in 2023

IN THE MIDST of the crisis which never ends, we at the Gazette still hear the call to serve our communities, with a bit of wonder that we are able to continue. We still seek to fulfill our mission by continuing to publish, even with reduced resources. It's still our mission to provide information about where to get help and how to help; to tell the stories of those who are helping, of those who are hungry. It's still our mission to tell the stories of those working for social and racial justice, and battling income inequality.

It is our mission, set out in the first amendment of the U.S. Constitution, to press local government every day for transparency, although this continues to become more difficult. Your local paper can be your window into the workings of schools, police, transportation, zoning, stormwater management, services, and a nearly infinite number of other functions. These are the things that impact our lives at home and work.

The public has a right to expect transparency from such local institutions. The founders clearly anticipated the ongoing need for the press to help in this role.

It is still our mission to deliver the local news you need, to help make sense of what is happening in your community, to advocate for community good, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to record achievements, milestones and events in the community and people's lives. It is still our mission to cover the normal news of the local communities.

We publish photos and notes about personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

We also publish items about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, anniversaries and other business events and milestones are welcome.

If you are planning an event open to the public that you would like to have listed in our calendars, we appreciate getting notice at least two weeks ahead of the event, and we encourage photos.

Your community Connection newspaper is published by the independent, locally owned Local Media Connection LLC. Our flagship paper, the Alexandria Gazette Packet, is one of, perhaps the oldest continuously publishing papers in the United

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States, beginning in 1784.

We are blessed with remarkable, award-winning staff, contributing writers and photographers who are dedicated to our mission. Most have been writing for the Gazette and Connection for years, some for more than a decade (or two, or three). Each brings areas of interest and expertise. Check the bylines. Don't miss Bonnie Hobbs, Mercia Hobson, Jeanne Theismann, Janet Barnett, Michael Pope, Mike Salmon, Susan Laume, Glenda Booth, Eden Brown, Shirley Ruhe, Hope Nelson, Marilyn Campbell and others. (Our late editor Kemal Kurpahic used to refer to pay for writers as "symbolic.")

Local newspapers, including the Connection Newspapers, are facing an existential threat from the combination of nationwide downturn in newspaper advertising that has been worsening over several years, com-

pounded by the economic crisis.

Revenue has not nearly rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, and we are going to need more help to keep going. We will renew calls for contributions and subscriptions. If you value local news and you have a budget for advertising and promotion, please endeavor to spend some of it with local newspapers including ours.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

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Celebrities and Athletes Have Called Alexandria Home



Television personality and longtime resident Monte Durham opened Salon Monte at the Alexandria waterfront.

FROM PAGE 1

jovial weatherman, entertaining viewers of the Today Show with lighthearted antics and his trademark centenarian birthday wishes. But before the world took notice, Scott was just a kid from Alexandria with an early passion for radio.

"When Willard was very young, he built a crystal radio," said Tom Hulfish, who would play with Scott near the Scott home on Commonwealth Avenue. "Every afternoon he would get on his radio and broadcast the news to the neighborhood. Mind you he was only 8 or 9 years old when he did this."

Scott parlayed his boyhood passion into a lifelong career in broadcasting, spending 65 years with NBC, first in Washington then in New York.

"I don't think anyone who knew him growing up was surprised at the success that he achieved," Hulfish said of the 1951 George Washington High School graduate and class president.

Other notable graduates of George Washington High School, now GW Middle School, include

John Philipps and Cass Elliott of the Grammy-award winning Mamas and the Papas.

Philips played basketball at George Washington High School, where he graduated in 1953, while Elliott, born Ellen Naomi Cohen, graduated in 1961.

T.C. Williams High School, now Alexandria City High School, has seen its share of graduates go on to national fame, including Chip Esten of the TV show Nashville, Casey Wilson of Saturday Night Live, and world champion and Olympic bronze medalist Noah Lyles, who delivered the commencement address for his alma mater in 2020.

Olympic boxer Troy Isley grew up in Alexandria and got his boxing start in the third grade when he joined the Alexandria Boxing Club at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

"Even here in Alexandria, we don't all have the same advantages," said Isley during a recent visit to Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, where he graduated in 2009. "But whatever your circumstances, if you stick to your goals and don't lose fo-



Actress and Saturday Night Live alum Casey Wilson was born in Alexandria and is a 1998 graduate of T.C. Williams High School.

cus, it is possible to make it out."

Actor Chris Meloni of Law and Order: Special Victims Unit was the captain and quarterback of the 1978 undefeated St. Stephen's football team while NFL Hall of Famer Joe Namath made his pro football debut on Aug. 7, 1965, in Alexandria.

Namath and the New York Jets took on the Houston Oilers in a preseason game at what was then George Washington High School. Namath had just signed the richest contract in pro football history and as the Alexandria Gazette reported at the time, "the eyes of the sports world will be focused on Alexandria to see just how he fares against the play-for-pay boys."

Sports history was made when Earl Lloyd, who grew up in a segregated Alexandria, became the first African American to play in the NBA when he took to the court for the Washington Capitols on Oct. 31, 1950, in Rochester, N.Y.

In the arts, Academy award winner Marci Gay Harden and actor Dermot Mulroney both graced the stage at the Little Theatre of Alexandria early in their careers while television personality Monte Durham, a longtime Alexandria resident, opened Salon Monte at



Dave Grohl of Foo Fighters fame briefly attended Bishop Ireton High School and Annandale HS before dropping out to pursue a European concert tour.

the Alexandria waterfront.

"While I was raised in West Virginia, I have called Alexandria home for decades," Durham said when he opened his salon. "There is no place else I would rather be."



Joe Namath talks with New York Jets coach Weeb Ewbank during Namath's professional NFL debut in Alexandria on Aug. 7, 1965. The Jets played their first preseason game against the Houston Oilers at what was then George Washington High School.



Local boxer Troy Isley, center, represented the U.S. in the Tokyo Olympics.



Alexandria's Earl Lloyd (11), playing in an NBA championship game in 1955, made history as the first African American to play in the NBA when he took to the court for the Washington Capitols on Oct. 31, 1950, in Rochester, N.Y.



Actor and 1983 T.C. Williams graduate Chip Esten returned to Alexandria to perform a benefit concert for the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria.



Television personality Willard Scott, left, was born in Alexandria and graduated from George Washington High School in 1951.

NEWCOMERS HISTORY



PHOTO BY TESS WILHELM

Alexandria Aces players storm the field after winning the 2022 League Championship Series of the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League, taking the title for the first time with a 5-3 win over defending champions Bethesda Big Train July 30 at Shirley Povich Field in Bethesda.



PHOTO BY MARK MOGLE/GAZETTE PACKET

The Holiday Boat Parade of Lights takes place along the Alexandria waterfront the first weekend in December.



PHOTO BY JEANNE LEISMAN/GAZETTE PACKET

Known as the Spite House, the historic Queen Street property is one of the smallest in the city.

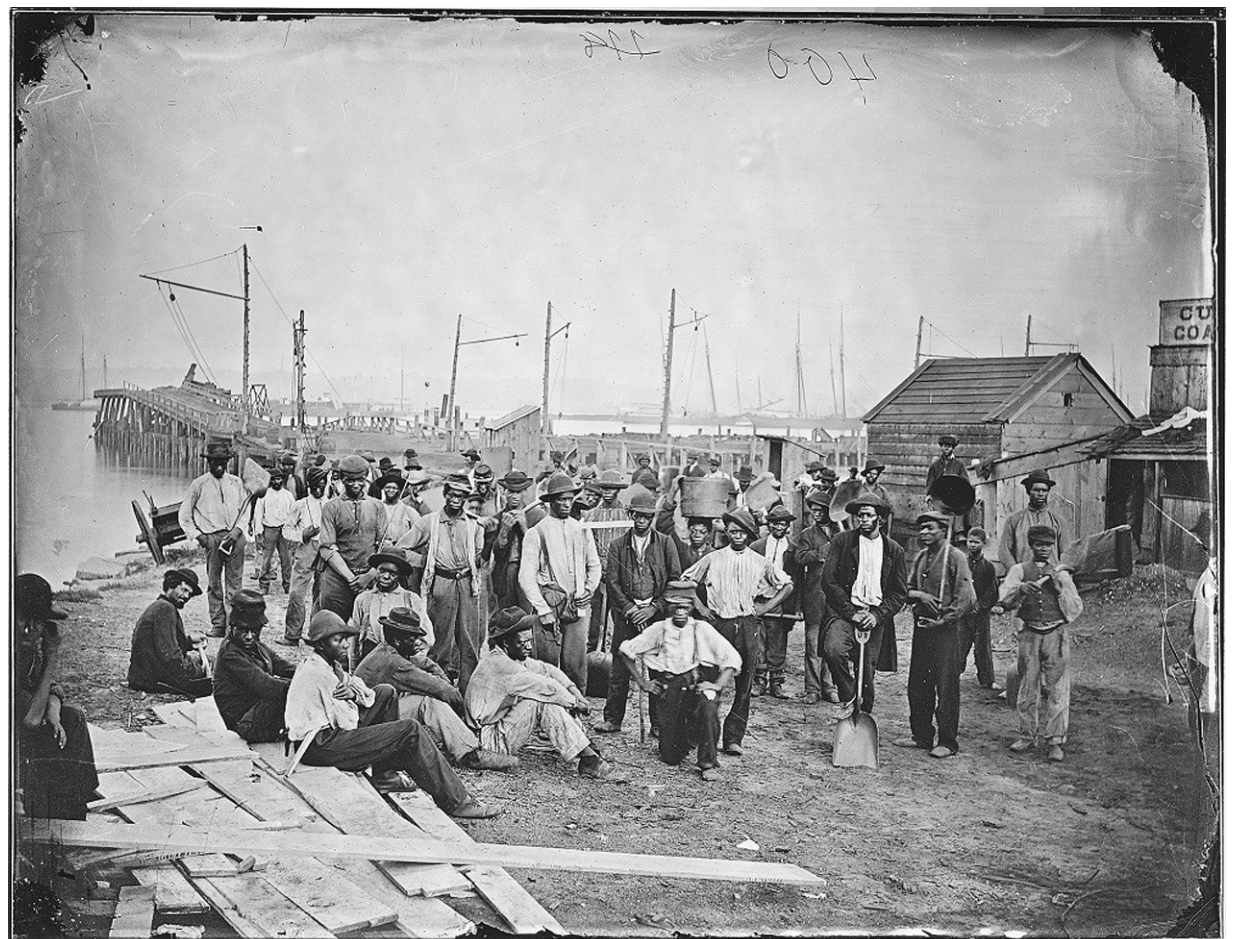


PHOTO COURTESY NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Noted Civil War photographer Matthew Brady captures an image of African American laborers at the Coal Wharf in Alexandria, ca. 1860-1865. The site is near Tide Lock Park in North Old Town.

A Home to History

FROM PAGE 3

hood friend Willard Scott. But too many newcomers do not take the time to enjoy what makes Alexandria special.

"I know so many people who live here and really don't know Alexandria at all because they don't do anything other than go to work in Washington and come home," Hulfish lamented. "The best way to enjoy Alexandria is to join the community. Do something. Join organizations – churches, civic associations – anything to take part in the community."

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In addition to George Washington and Robert E. Lee, the city also claims musician Jim Morrison and House of Cards creator Beau Willimon as hometown notables.

History buffs will know that U.S. president Gerald Ford was a longtime resident and that U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers lived here after he was released from a Soviet prison in 1962. And Earl Lloyd, who grew up in a segregated Alexandria, was the first African American to break the color barrier in the NBA in 1950.

At 15.4 square miles, pre-pandemic Alex-

andria hosted nationally recognized events such as the Scottish Walk Weekend and Del Ray's Art on the Avenue, both of which have continued to grow since making their return. But off the beaten paths of King Street and Mount Vernon Avenue are attractions such as the Tomb of the Unknown Revolutionary War Soldier and the National Inventors Hall of Fame.

Another Alexandria landmark is the Captain Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Located in front of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center, the plaza honors

the 68 Alexandrians who lost their lives in the Vietnam War.

King Street in Old Town and Mount Vernon Avenue in Del Ray serve as the shopping and dining hubs of the city. Both are lined with locally owned boutiques and restaurants that are once again thriving after the challenges of COVID-19 guidelines.

"I've enjoyed Alexandria so very much. I never thought about living anywhere else," Hulfish said.

MORE NEWCOMERS HISTORY, PAGE 12

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ SEPTEMBER 14-20, 2023 ♦ 11

NEWCOMERS HISTORY

“Alexandria was a great place to grow up.”
— Sixth generation Alexandrian Tom Hulfish



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site features many Civil War programs and reenactments throughout the year.



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Local organizations participate in many of the parades held during the year.

A Home to History



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is one of many live entertainment venues across the city.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

The Friendship Firehouse Museum is one of several historic museums in the city.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

The Old Town Farmers Market is considered the oldest continuous farmers market in the country with George Washington one of the first merchants.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Fireworks over the Potomac River are a tradition of First Night Alexandria.

OPINION

Watts

FROM PAGE 8

That JLARC report shifted the budget discussion towards a harder look at total tax relief. We had already cut state taxes over \$4 billion last year by removing the sales tax on food, raising the standard deduction, and giving one-time rebates of up to \$250/\$500. Given the almost \$3 billion in permanent tax relief in last year's cuts, plus documented education under-funding and mounting concern about a federal government shutdown that would affect 30% of Virginia's economy, the budget compromise we just passed only put an additional \$280 million into permanent tax cuts while over \$900 million will go back to taxpayers through the one-time \$200/\$400 rebate.

Over \$96 million of the permanent tax cut will go to continuing the challenge of closing the large gap between the standard deduction Virginia taxpayers can take when they figure their state income tax and what they get on their federal income tax. Five years ago, Virginia's standard deduction was only \$3000 for a single filer and \$6000 for joint filers. It had been 15 years since it had been raised. Meanwhile, the federal standard deduction had grown to \$12,000/\$24,000 pushed by annual increases for inflation and the 2017 federal tax reform. Annual inflation adjustments, since, have increased it to \$13,850/\$27,700.

Such a large gap is especially unfair to Virginia taxpayers because Virginia's tax law requires that if you choose the federal standard deduction, you can't choose to itemize deductions when you file

your Virginia tax. Why? Virginia has chosen not to fund the bureaucracy it would take to audit itemized deductions and has always piggy-backed on federal tax audits.

Therefore, in 2018, we increased Virginia's standard deduction to \$4500/\$9000 resulting in an ongoing, annual tax savings for approximately 80% of Virginia taxpayers. The 20% that don't benefit are those who itemize to pay less in federal taxes and tend to be businesses or persons in the top 5% of income. Last year, we again increased the standard deduction making it \$8,000/\$16,000. Now, we've increased Virginia's standard deduction to \$8,500/\$17,000.

This constant push to lower taxes for most taxpayers by raising the standard deduction has resulted in Virginia's income tax being more progressive. In sharp contrast, the original proposal to lower the highest tax rate from 5.75 to 5.5 would have given most of the tax cut to the top 5% of income. They would have gotten thousands of dollars while the majority of taxpayers got less than \$50 and many would get no tax relief.

However, the total effect of our raising the standard deduction from just \$3000/\$6000 to almost three times that amount is an annual revenue loss of over \$1.1 billion. That cost in the face of documented under-funding schools and the mental health crisis was why the General Assembly finally came to agreement that the bulk of the remaining current budget surplus needed to be returned to taxpayers as a one-time rebate and not as an even greater permanent tax cut.

ALIVE!

FROM PAGE 7

Tuesdays 11am - 6pm (Closed 2pm - 3pm)

Wednesdays 11am - 6pm (Closed 2pm - 3pm)

Thursdays 11am - 6pm (Closed 2pm - 3pm)

Saturdays 10am - 2pm

About the 10 Can Challenge:

This Hunger Action Day, fight hunger by taking the 10 Can Challenge!

Buy 10 cans of food you love. Wear orange (the color of Hunger Awareness) and post your cans to social media on Sept. 15 with the hashtag #HungerActionDayAlex.

Donate the cans at one of the participating locations:

DCHS (4850 Mark Center Dr): Friday, 8am - 5pm

ALIVE! (801 South Payne St): Friday, 9am - 4pm & Saturday, 9am - 12pm

West End Food Pantry (5150 Fillmore Ave): Friday, 9am - 11am

Lazarus Food Pantry (118 N. Washington St): Friday

Old Town North Farmers Market (Montgomery Park, 901 North Royal St):

Thursday, 3pm - 7pm & Sunday, 10am - 2pm

Sunrise of Alexandria (3520 Duke St):

Friday-Saturday, 10am - 4pm

Taste of Asia (362 S Pickett St):

Friday-Sunday, 11am - 8:30pm

Tequila and Taco (540 John Carlyle St):

Friday-Sunday, 11am - 8:30pm

Pork Barrel (2312 Mt Vernon Ave):

Friday-Sunday, 11:30am - 10:30pm

Whiskey and Oyster (301 John Carlyle St): Friday-Saturday, 11am - 10pm & Sunday 11am - 8pm

ALIVE!

ALIVE! is the largest private safety net in the City of Alexandria dedicated to fighting poverty and hunger. Founded in 1969 as Alexandria Involved Ecumenically by 14 faith communities in response to rising levels of poverty. ALIVE! has grown to 50 interfaith member congregations.

çMore at: alive-inc.org

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NEWCOMERS & COMMUNITY GUIDE 2023



The Batteries at Fort Hunt, part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway National Park.



Osprey Nest in Dyke Marsh, home to many kinds of wildlife.



The Mount Vernon Trail runs through Dyke Marsh, part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway National Park.



The Mount Vernon Trail runs through Dyke Marsh, part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway National Park.



Theodore Roosevelt Island



Boats sailing off Daingerfield Island, part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway National Park.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PHOTOS

Our National Park

George Washington Memorial Parkway has at least 25 species of mammals, 243 birds, six native turtles, 99 trees and 591 wildflowers.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

It doesn't have Yellowstone's spewing geysers or Denali's high peaks, but it is a national park. It's the George Washington Memorial Parkway, which stretches from Mount Vernon Estate on the south end, with a break on Alexandria's Washington Street, then to the Beltway/495 in McLean and the seven-mile Clara Barton Parkway in Maryland.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the parkway is a slow-speed thoroughfare, with 4,580 acres of parkland mostly paralleling the Potomac River. By design, it is not a multi-laned, superhighway, asphalt ribbon. The parkway is in fact a national park, with many sweeping vistas, a rich history and 25 possible stops in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D. C.

Its designers envisioned a series of changing vistas that highlight special places. There's no central visitor center, yet the parkway has approximately 7.3 million recreational visits a year and over 33 million non-recreational "visits." Most of the latter are local and commuter traffic.

What's There?

Here are a few sites to visit:

❖ Fort Hunt Park, where the 1902 Battery Commander's Tower stands largely unchanged, built as part of the Spanish-American War's coastal defense, from which the commander could coordinate firings from still-standing batteries. In World War II, Fort 14 ❖ ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ❖ SEPTEMBER 14-20, 2023



The south section of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Hunt, known as P.O. Box 1142, was a top-secret camp used to interrogate over 3,500 German prisoners of war.

❖ The Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, a 480-acre, freshwater, tidal, narrow-leaved cattail wetland, one of the last along the Potomac River.

❖ Jones Point, home to one of the country's last riverine lighthouses, which operated from 1856 to 1926. President George Washington chose this point as the southern tip of the new 10-mile-square-mile U.S. capital district.

❖ Tributes to war heroes -- the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial, Arlington House, Arlington National Cemetery and the Waves

and Gulls memorial, honoring the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps.

❖ Glen Echo Park, centered by a restored, 1921 Dentzel carousel. In its heyday, bands like the Dorsey Brothers and Bill Haley and the Comets performed in the 7,500-square-foot dance hall.

❖ The Potomac Gorge, a 15-mile, rugged river corridor, a nationally significant natural area.

❖ Great Falls, a series of cataracts and falls, one of the most ecologically significant natural areas in the entire national park system. British politician Lord Bryce wrote in 1913, "No European city has so noble a cataract in its vicinity as the Great



Many people enjoy the vistas from overlooks and other spots along the parkway.

Falls of the Potomac. . ."

❖ The 17-acre Lady Bird Johnson Park and LBJ Memorial Grove, with a 43-ton, Texas granite monolith, looming amid white pines, dogwoods, azaleas and rhododendrons.

❖ Theodore Roosevelt Island, largely a woodland that planners intended it to be "similar in character to the natural primeval forests which once covered this and others of the Potomac islands." A memorial honors the island's namesake.

❖ Fort Marcy, well-preserved Civil War earthwork walls, trenches, rifle pits and a parade ground.

SEE GEORGE WASHINGTON, PAGE 15
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COMMUNITY

Giving Thanks Miracle League honors first responders.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Miracle League of Alexandria honored first responders from across the city during its Miracle League game Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.

"We first started this in 2011," said Miracle League of Alexandria chairman Mac Slover. "We are honoring our first responders, including police, fire, EMS, and sheriff's department personnel."

Members of Omega Psi Phi fraternity were on hand to support the players and serve refreshments.

"We have been a part of this for 10-plus years," said fraternity member Zack Morse II. "I remember when this was a pretty old field and now we are blessed to have what we do today – a field that allows players of all abilities to play safely."

The fraternity provided snacks and refreshments to players and attendees.

"We like to come out during the season and support Mac and his endeavors," Morse said. "We provide refreshments and food. Some of our more active brothers are able to go out and participate and play softball."

It is our way of giving back."

Police Chief Don Hayes and Sheriff Sean Casey were on hand to meet the Miracle League players, who took to the field as part of the remembrance of the 9-11 terrorist attacks.

"This is the 22nd anniversary of the 9-11 attacks," Slover said. "I feel it is important that we do this every year to honor our first responders and remember the victims that we lost that day."



Police Chief Don Hayes, left, and Sheriff Sean Casey, right, join Miracle League players prior to the Miracle League Game honoring first responders Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.



Members of Omega Psi Phi fraternity and a Miracle League teammate prepare to serve refreshments at the game honoring first responders Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center.



Players signal "three strikes you're out" during the singing of Take Me Out to the Ball Game Sept. 9 at the Miracle League Field.



Miracle League teammates place their hands over their hearts during the National Anthem Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center Miracle Field.



A Miracle League player sings Take Me Out to the Ballgame, a game day tradition, prior to the start of the Sept. 9 game at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center Miracle League Field.

George Washington Memorial Parkway

FROM PAGE 15

A Unique Road Envisioned

The Parkway's planners designed a road to preserve and enhance the Potomac River valley and honor the nation's first President, George Washington, by creating a grand gateway to his home, Mount Vernon.

They wanted to keep both banks of the river in public ownership. Lt. Col. Peter Hains, the first land surveyor, told Congress that the parkway should "have the character of a mon-

umental structure, such as would comport with the dignity of this great nation ... and the grandeur of character of the man to whom it is dedicated It should be such a work as no American need feel ashamed of."

The road's designers sought to integrate the road with the natural undulating terrain and contours, winding in gentle curves and highlighting natural areas and vistas. The National Park Service has planted over 250,000 trees, shrubs and vines.

Sections between the 14th and

Memorial Bridges were left open to offer sweeping views of Washington, D. C. Signs and lights are minimized and billboards are prohibited. Most of the bridges are made of reinforced concrete faced with hand-laid, rough-cut stone for a natural look.

Built in Stages

Some local businesspeople, the Mount Vernon Avenue Association, initiated the idea in the 1880s, advocating for a national road from Washington to Mount Vernon. Officials deferred road construction in

the 1890s and between 1892 and 1896, built the Washington, Alexandria and Mount Vernon Electric Railway through Alexandria to Mount Vernon, a trolley that carried Mount Vernon visitors, locals and farm goods. A trolley station sat in today's circle at Mount Vernon.

The initial federal sponsoring agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Public Roads, wanted to demonstrate modern highway design principles like overpasses, cloverleaves, limited



Much of the parkway is tree lined.

PHOTO BY CIENDA BOOTH

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://tallshipprovidence.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.

SEPT. 1-30

The "Farther Afield" Exhibit. At Del 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

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 Per-

spectives, 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.

SEPT. 7 TO OCT. 15

Every Rock Has a Story

– **Anne Stine.** At The Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Artist's Reception is Sunday, Oct. 1, from 4-6 p.m. Award-winning painter Anne Stine debuts her latest collection of encaustic works titled, Every Rock Has a Story, in September, at the Athenaeum Gallery. Her collection of 20 geological paintings explores the interconnection between Earth and humanity through representational and abstract imagery. "Every rock has a story", a popular geological phrase, meaning history is captured within the Earth's formations from the majestic mountains to the tiniest pebbles that reside beneath our feet.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Ecology Walk. 10:00 a.m. At Dyke Marsh, Alexandria. Join naturalist and biologist Charles Smith on an ecology walk and learn all about tidal marsh ecology, vegetative communities, system stressors, seasonality of vegetation and wildlife and ecosystems' importance. To register, email info@fodm.org and put "September Ecology Walk" in the subject box. Meet at the Haul Road trail entrance. Bring water, wear sturdy shoes and sun protection. Hosted by the Friends of Dyke Marsh.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 16

Classic Car Show. 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. At Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria. 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 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.

SEPT. 16-17

Colonial Market & Fair. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate, Mount Vernon. Step back in time at Colonial Market & Fair, featuring food and

wares made by Colonial artisans. Attend the Luke Adams Glass Art Signing on Sept. 17. Renowned Massachusetts glassblower returns to sign hand-blown glass pumpkins and other one-of-a-kind pieces.

TUESDAYS/SEPT. 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.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 21

Taste of Old Town North. 4-8 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 North Royal Street, Alexandria. The Taste of Old Town North is a free, family-and pet-friendly event where you can shop at the farmers market, create 'art in the park,' taste gourmet dishes and wines from local restaurants and businesses, taste cider from Lost Boy Cider, participate in instructor-led wellness demos and listen to music from two local bands. Participating restaurants include Julia's on the Potomac, St. Elmo's, Yunnan by Potomac, and Hank's Oyster Bar. The Taste will feature a reading by City of Alexandria Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam of the three winning haiku from the Haiku Project. Visitors to the Taste can also learn more about the great work of ALIVE!, a local non-profit dedicated to fighting poverty and hunger and helping neighbors in need. The rain date for the Taste of Old Town North is September 28, 4:00 - 8:00 pm.

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



A Classic Car Show featuring "orphan" vehicles will be held on Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023 at The Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum in Alexandria

Consortium, formerly Three Man Soul Machine, and Sally and the Mander. Rain date is September 28. Visit Oldtownnorth.org.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Fall Garden Festival. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. This free event celebrates a world of unique plants, captivating garden accessories, live music that sets the perfect ambiance and delectable food options to satisfy your cravings. It's not just any garden gathering -- it's a vibrant celebration of all things green and gorgeous. The Fall Garden Festival is your one-stop destination for gardening inspiration and unique finds. Gather your friends and family and join us for a day filled with nature's beauty and the joy of the gardening community.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

The HalloWEIRD Art Market. 10 a.m.–4 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features a variety of artwork from local artisans celebrating the spooky and playful sides of the fall season and aerial performances by Monarca in Flight. Join us for lots of fun at this outdoor, family-friendly, rain-or-shine event. HalloWEIRD takes place at corner of Commonwealth and Mount Vernon Avenues). Details at DelRayArtisans.org/halloween-2023

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.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 24

Made in ALX Fall Makers' Market. 12-5 p.m. At Port City Brewing Co., 3950 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria. This is the fall's most fun sip-and-shop, featuring craft beer from the award-winning Port City Brewing Co. along with food, shopping and activities. The kid-friendly and pet-friendly event will feature more than 30 artists from Alexandria and nearby with a wide variety of crafts and items. Several vendors will be new to the Made in ALX Fall Makers' Market this year! This year's market will include:

a scavenger hunt with prizes from Made in ALX and Port City Brewing Co. the National Breast Center Foundation Angel Wings photo station oracle readings with Alexandria's Blonde Spiritual Millennial Sarah Locke new crafts and artworks from the region's best artists, creators and makers.

Food vendors will include Rockland's BBQ, Kam and 46 Hawaiian and Filipino Food Truck, Watts Popcorn, Pickles & Cures, and Scuttlebutt Bakeshop.

OCT. 7, 2023

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>.

THE BIRCHMERE

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

SEPTEMBER

Wed. 13: Jonathan Coulton and Paul & Storm \$39.50
Thu. 14: James McMurtry w/ BettySoo \$39.50
Fri. 15: The Jayhawks w/ Freedy Johnston \$49.50 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 16: Tommy Emmanuel, CGP with Larry Campbell & Teresa Williams \$59.50 SOLD OUT!
Sun. 17: Tommy Emmanuel, CGP with Larry Campbell & Teresa Williams \$59.50
Mon. 18: Patty Griffin w/ Scott Miller \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
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!
Fri. 22: Patton Oswalt: Effervescent \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 23: 40 Fingers \$35.00
Sun. 24: Therapy Gecko Live! Lyle The Therapy Gecko \$29.50
Thu. 28: Yachtley Crew \$35.00
Fri. 29: The Whispers \$95.00
Sat. 30: The Whispers \$95.00

News Briefs

SOURCE: CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

School Zone Speed Cameras

Go Live 9/18

The City of Alexandria's new school zone speed camera program will go live and begin issuing citations on Monday, Sept. 18. Speed cameras are in the following school zones:

❖ Francis Hammond Middle School (Seminary Road, between Kenmore Avenue and North Jordan Street)

❖ John Adams Elementary School and Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School (North Beauregard Street, between North Highview Lane and Reading Avenue)

❖ George Washington Middle School (Mount Vernon Avenue, between Braddock Road and Luray Avenue)

Speed cameras are only active when school speed limit signs are flashing. Each school zone is approximately one-quarter mile in length and has a 15mph speed limit. Citations are \$100 and will be sent via mail. Signs are in place to inform drivers they are entering a speed camera zone. If you receive a citation in the mail, follow the instructions on the citation to make your payment or dispute the violation.

The City conducted a two-week warning period in June at the end of the 2022-23 academic year and an additional warning period from Aug. 21 through Sept. 15.

The City selected the speed camera locations using a data-driven process that considered factors such as crash history, traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, and age and number of students.

The City is committed to providing Safe Routes to School, and vehicle speed is among the top concerns cited by parents when asked about their children's safety when walking or biking to school.

Speed cameras are a proven safety measure that can reduce the number of crashes by more than 50%, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Automated enforcement also enables the City to use police resources in other high-priority areas.

West Glebe Road Bridge Project Marks Completion

A reconstructed West Glebe Road Bridge has again brought Alexandria and Arlington closer together.

City and County officials held a ribbon-cutting Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2023, to mark completion of the \$9.89 million project following a replacement of the deteriorated roadway substructure. Construction lasted from May 2022 and was completed in July, 2023

The bridge, dating back to 1956, is a vital connection over Four Mile Run for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as heavy auto traffic between Alexandria and Arlington.

Replacement of the West Glebe Road Bridge had been proposed almost two decades ago but became a top priority in 2018 when, during a routine inspection, engineers found advanced decay and imposed a 5-ton vehicle weight limit.

The reconstructed bridge features new wider sidewalks, designated bike lanes, improved lighting and side arcs and patterns inspired by the natural surroundings, as designed by artist Vicki Scuri.

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Obituary



Megan Jane DeFranco, 44, passed away unexpectedly on August 27, 2023 in her home in Washington, D.C. A beloved sister, aunt, daughter, and friend, Megan was born June 29, 1979 at Alexandria Hospital. She attended the Basilica School of St. Mary, and graduated from (then) T.C. Williams High School in 1997.

Megan is survived by her sisters Antoinette Vejstrup, Alexis Mason, and Genevieve DeFranco; her brothers-in-law Morten Vejstrup and John Mason; her nieces and nephew, Allegra, Giuliana, and Bennett; her partner, Keith Babor; and her mother, Kathleen DeFranco. Megan was

preceded by her father, Richard DeFranco, with whom she will be laid to rest at Glenwood Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Megan put her heart and soul into her work, the throughline of which was community. She brought joy through her warmth, and through her ability to always see the best in people. She spent time working in dental and veterinary offices, was a corporate trainer at California Pizza Kitchen, and spent many years working at Hops Brewery in Alexandria, VA. Most recently, she was working at HIPS (Honoring Individual Power and Strength), an organization dedicated to promoting the health, rights and dignity of individuals in the D.C. area.

Megan was unbelievably quick-witted, an invaluable ally, and always willing to help someone in need. She was hardworking, loving, kind, and generous. She was known for her incredible sense of humor, and for her gift of one-liners. Megan made friends everywhere she went. She will be greatly missed by all who had the fortune of knowing her.

Family and friends are invited to attend a memorial service in remembrance of Megan, held Friday, September 22 from 1-3pm at Demaine Funeral Home in Old Town, Alexandria. A mass in her honor will be held Saturday, September 23 at 10:30am at the Basilica of St. Mary.

The family requests that those who wish to express sympathy consider donating in Megan's name and honor to HIPS. Donations can be made on their website: www.hips.org.

Obituary

Anita Jane Denison, 89, of Alexandria, VA, passed away at her home on August 17, 2023, just shy of her 90th birthday. She was born on August 24, 1933, in Baltimore, MD, to the late Joseph Alvin Gerber and Florence Emily Gerber (née Bromwell). Anita was a passionate and independent woman who had a deep love for animals and politics.

Anita attended Forest Park High School in Baltimore, and graduated from Towson High School. She studied the classics and liberal arts at St. John's College in Annapolis, where she was admitted as one of the college's first class to include women, in 1951.

Anita had a remarkable career, working at various prestigious organizations throughout her life. She worked on Capitol Hill and later joined the National Association of Broadcasters, as well as Time-Life, before eventually finding her place at Virginia Theological Seminary.

Outside of her career, Anita indulged in a variety of hobbies. She was an avid painter and had a great appreciation for the arts, including ballet and theater. She enjoyed spending time outdoors and at her vacation homes in Vermont and Florida, skiing and playing tennis.

Anita is survived by her sister, Joan Irvin and her husband Don, of Alexandria, VA. She is also survived by her nieces, Jennifer Irvin, also of Alexandria, and Allison Shea and her husband Dennis, of State College, PA, as well as their children, who brought her immeasurable joy, Caroline Shea and Alrisha Shea.

Anita was preceded in death by her ex-husband, Dalton Spencer Denison. She cherished her family and friends deeply and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

The family would like to extend their appreciation to Anita's caregivers and to Capitol Caring Hospice, who made it possible to honor her wishes that she transition at home with her beloved dogs by her side.

A small service for family and close friends will be held at Mount Comfort Cemetery in Alexandria, VA, on October 4, 2023, at 10 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to the ASPCA or the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network in Anita's honor.

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Obituary

Obituary

Obituary



Joseph Gerald Hebert (Gerry), Voting Rights Attorney of Alexandria, Virginia passed away at the age of 74 on September 7, 2023.

Gerry was born in Worcester, Massachusetts to Joseph Gerald Laurie Hebert and Adeline Agnes Whitehead Hebert on February 13, 1949. A graduate of St. John's High School in Shrewsbury, Gerry went on to earn his bachelor's degree from Stonehill College and Juris Doctor from Suffolk University Law School.

A respected Civil Rights and Voting Rights attorney, Gerry worked in the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division from 1973 to 1994. While at the DOJ, he won acclaim for his work in school

desegregation cases and served as the lead attorney in voting rights and redistricting lawsuits, including several cases decided by the U. S. Supreme Court. Post-DOJ, Gerry spent time in private practice specializing in election law and the Voting Rights Act. His expertise led him to the Campaign Legal Center in 2004, serving as Executive Director until 2018, before retiring from the organization in 2021. During this time, Gerry was also an adjunct professor at Georgetown University Law Center and developed a thriving intern program for CLC. He also taught at University of Virginia, American University, and New York Law School. He was awarded the Wasserstein Fellowship at Harvard Law School and Mentor in Residence at Yale Law School. In 2015, Gerry spearheaded the CLC effort to establish the Voting Rights Institute (VRI), a partnership with the American Constitution Society and Georgetown Law, which created opportunities for law students and graduates to learn how to litigate voting rights cases.

Gerry's advocacy extended beyond his professional career. He served as PTA president at George Mason Elementary School, where he was a fixture in the hallways for years, his voice on the loudspeaker delivering the morning announcements. He worked particularly hard to ensure that families of color were involved in their children's education, and that the needs of George Mason Elementary were made known to the School Board.

As ASA soccer coach to many of Alexandria's youth, Gerry shared his own athletic skills, always ending a weekly practice - at the request of the team - punting the ball straight up in the air, multiple stories high.

A man of strong faith and an enthusiastic choir member, Gerry served the Fairlington United Methodist Church community in many capacities including lay leader.

Gerry worked tirelessly to help Alexandrians in need, volunteering with ALIVE! Inc. since 1986. He dedicated his time and talents, serving as ALIVE's president, director of development, chair of the furniture program, and Last Saturday food distribution coordinator. Earlier this year, Gerry was awarded Volunteer Alexandria's 2023 Joan White Grassroots Volunteer Service Award for his commitment to ALIVE's mission, specifically for his work to open both of ALIVE's beautiful and welcoming food hubs, ensuring that Alexandrians maintained their integrity while receiving food and critical services.

Gerry approached his personal life with the same passion and purpose. He was omnipresent in his children's lives as he filled the roles of brown bag lunch maker, short order breakfast cook, and overprotective parent. He could be found lifting his grandchildren to top the Christmas tree, eating Oreos and drinking straight from the milk carton in the middle of the night, or dancing in the street with Victoria during a red light at the intersection of Braddock and Russell. He would "give you a nickel" if you could name the artist from the 60's singing on the radio. He'd send you recipes for the perfect pork chop, articles about the latest threat to justice and democracy, and a heads up about recent sunscreen recalls. He was deeply devoted to playing the guitar, discovering the best deal on good wine, and playing the lottery. He never said goodbye without also holding up his hand to sign "I love you." He had the timing of a stand-up comedian, all the wisdom of a perfect storyteller, and an unfulfilled desire to travel the world. He was just beginning to discover what retirement was like and between the Rock 'n Roll cruises he took with Victoria, his long ponytail, and his Bohemian pants, he confirmed his family's suspicion that he really did dream of being the next great American folk singer. He was a lively wedding dancer, a proficient recaller of sports stats, and even attended MLB professional umpire school. Gerry was an expert magician, the friend you were thankful to call yours, and as far as his family knew, he was "the strongest man in the world."

Gerry is preceded in death by his mother and father.

Gerry is survived by his wife of 37 years, Victoria, his children, Christy Przystawik (Tom Przystawik), Greta Gordon (Jim Gordon), Brooke Harris (Ben Harris), Josh Hebert, and Marlea Hebert (Anthony DiBerardinis). His brother, Tom Hebert (Maria Hebert), and his ten grandchildren Gunter, Annika, Amelie, Harper, Sadie, Bailey, Brigid, Adrian, Tyler, and Abe.

A funeral service will be held at 11AM on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at Fairlington United Methodist Church.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made in honor of Gerry to The Campaign Legal Center, ALIVE, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Fairlington United Methodist Church (music program), and Greater Birmingham Ministries.

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OBITUARY

Gerry Hebert

FROM PAGE 6

Law School. He was awarded the Wasserstein Fellowship at Harvard Law School and Mentor in Residence at Yale Law School.

Hebert used his advocacy skills during his time as PTA president at George Mason Elementary School, where he worked to ensure that families of color were involved in their children's education, and that the needs of George Mason Elementary were made known to the School Board.

Herbert served as a youth soccer coach for the Alexandria Soccer Association and put his musical skills to use as a choir member at Fairlington United Methodist Church, where he served in many capacities including lay leader.

A dedicated volunteer with ALIVE! since 1986, Hebert served as ALIVE's president, director of development, chair of the furniture program, and Last Saturday food distribution coordinator. Earlier this year, Hebert was awarded Volunteer Alexandria's 2023 Joan White Grassroots Volunteer Service Award for his commitment to ALIVE!'s mission, specifically for his work to open two new ALIVE! food hubs.

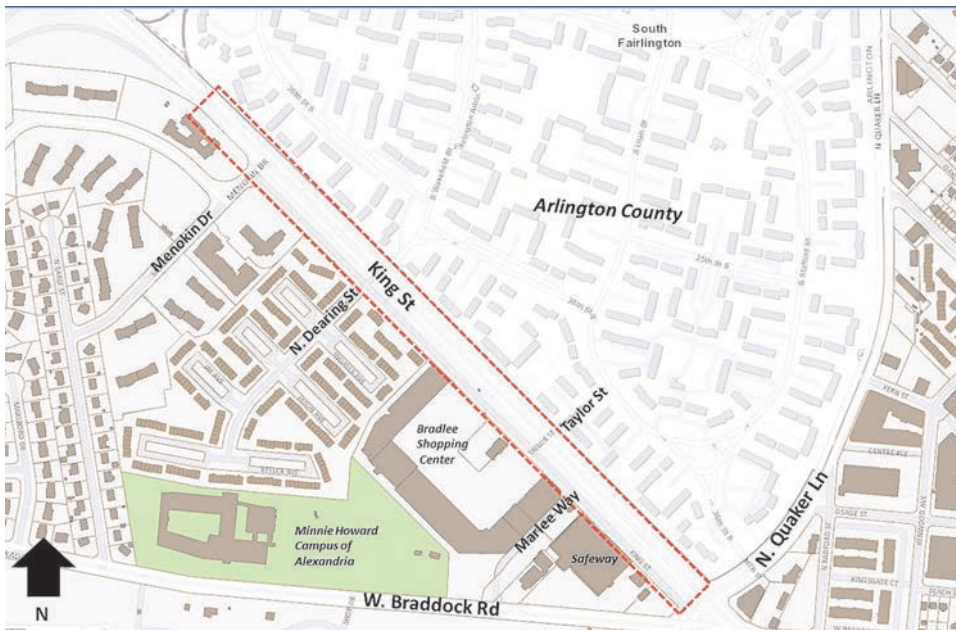
Hebert is survived by his wife of 37 years, Victoria; children, Christy Przysawik (Tom Przysawik), Greta Gordon (Jim Gordon), Brooke Harris (Ben Harris), Josh Hebert, and Marlea Hebert (Anthony DiBerardinis); brother, Tom Hebert (Maria Hebert); and 10 grandchildren, Gunter, Annika, Amelie, Harper, Sadie, Bailey, Brigid, Adrian, Tyler and Abe. He was predeceased by his mother and father.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to The Campaign Legal Center, ALIVE!, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, Fairlington United Methodist Church (music program), and Greater Birmingham Ministries.

A funeral service will be held Sept. 16 at Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King Street, at 11 a.m. A reception will follow at the ALX Community Atrium in Alexandria, 277 S. Washington Street, at 1 p.m.

In announcing his death, Hebert's family said: "Gerry was just beginning to discover what retirement was like and between the Rock 'n Roll cruises he took with Victoria, his long ponytail, and his Bohemian pants, he confirmed his family's suspicion that he really did dream of being the next great American folk singer. He was the friend you were thankful to call yours, and as far as his family knew, he was 'the strongest man in the world.'"

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King Street-Bradlee Safety Project Launching Soon

The City of Alexandria is launching a new project to study safety and mobility elements along King Street, from N. Quaker Lane to Menokin Drive (see map).

The King Street-Bradlee Safety and Mobility Enhancements Project will explore ways to improve travel through this commercial corridor.

On Sept. 20, the City will open an online feedback form to solicit community input on challenges navigating this corridor. If you've walked, biked, driven, or taken public transportation through this area, please

provide feedback.

Feedback will be used to guide future design considerations to improve safety and access through the corridor, as well as address stormwater improvements.

The Alexandria Mobility Plan identified this corridor as a priority location to install enhanced bicycle facilities and additional sidewalks to complete critical gaps in the existing transportation network.

Safety improvements could help the City reach its Vision Zero goal of eliminating all fatal and severe crashes.

Visit alexandriava.gov/go/4769

Our National Park

FROM PAGE 15

access, widely-spaced exits and entrances and tree-lined rights-of-way. Officials dedicated the first segment from Arlington Memorial Bridge to Mount Vernon in 1932 and hailed it as "America's Most Modern Motorway." It was built in stages from 1929 to 1970.

Engineers designed the southern part, the Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway, for vehicles going 35 to 45 miles per hour. Its successor, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, anticipated speeds of up to 60 mph. Sections built after World War II have longer curves and continuous safety medians.

By the late 1940s, the road went as far north as Spout Run. Builders completed the northern part in the 1950s and 1960s, partly spurred by the Civilian Intelligence Agency's (CIA) headquarters locating at Langley. President Dwight D. Eisenhower cut the ribbon and opened the road to traffic on this part in 1959. By 1962, the parkway reached the new Beltway.

The original plans included a parkway

from Fort Washington, Maryland, north to just above Great Falls, but this was never built, some say because there was no equivalent to the CIA or Dulles Airport driving its construction.

Respecting Nature

For an urban park, the parkway is especially rich in biodiversity. For example, for species counts, the parkway has at least 25 mammals, 243 birds, six native turtles, 99 trees and 591 wildflowers. At least 81 plants and animals considered rare, threatened or endangered in Virginia or Maryland.

Visitors might watch bald eagles fighting over a fish, as a jet descends to National Airport; great blue herons feeding as an Army or Marine helicopter passes overhead; a spring wildflower "show" at Turkey Run Park; a silver-haired bat darting around at dusk; turtles sunning and wild rice billowing in the fall breeze in Dyke Marsh.

It's a special road, but not just a road, a national park.

Information: www.nps.gov/gwmp

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Each local newspaper 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 and 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 omicron 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 or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>
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Debit This!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I don't know if what I'm about to write comes under the heading of a rant, a pet peeve (drivers backing into parking spaces is my "numero" uno irrational preoccupation), or a logical and reasonable request/solution for an ever-increasing, almost mandatory facet of our respective lives: using a credit card reader when paying in-person with a credit/debit card. I have been in businesses where cash is not accepted (covid notwithstanding).

Apparently, cash is no longer king. More and more as we pay our way around our face-to-face transactions, cash is further down the line in the payment pecking order. Cash might as well be Green Stamps or the "red-headed stepchild," given how little respect and appreciation payees receive for the receipt of paper money rather than plastic.

As for accessing cash from an ATM; though they are not 100% identical, they seem familiar enough from one to the next. All I ask, other than for a cure for cancer (let's be realistic as to what really matters), is some uncharacteristic but much needed government intervention into the private sector to facilitate the shopping/buying experience in person and "uniformalize" the debit-card readers. I would imagine helping/encouraging consumers to consume in the easiest and most efficient manner would certainly be good for the GDP in addition to all our buying/paying experiences. It seems logical, prudent even, that installing some kind system-wide organization/design of the debit keys would benefit an aging population in specific, and society in general where everything everywhere requires a piece of plastic to finalize a purchase.

A few examples: computer keyboards, telephones, cash registers, radio dials, bingo cards, among so many other devices. All meant to simplify our lives.

And yet the similarities/dare I say adherence to some sort of governmental mandate has not stifled the private sector from being able to think about their businesses independently enough to thrive in a highly competitive Western World. Moreover, given that capitalism wants to incentivize its citizens to not only think about growing rich but to act as well on those instincts, it seems sensible to assist the process in any way possible - short of command and control, which enables said business to attract a profitable market share and additionally, rewards the customer for their patronage.

Wouldn't an enjoyable, relatively hassle-free consumer experience enhance a business's profile? If the last thing a consumer does - after they've selected their merchandise/product and taken it to the register to pay, is to have a quick and simple payment system/process to finalize their purchase/selection; wouldn't that encourage, almost instinctively, for the consumer to revisit the establishment that made their transaction so easy?

And given that part of a business's success is measured by repeat business/how sales compare to the previous year, retaining that clientele by providing a pleasant buying experience from start to finish, would seem a reasonable path to pursue/provide. Certainly, I know very little about business to what I know as compared to my years as an independent salesman - selling insurance and newspaper advertising, but I've been a consumer my whole life, and after bad experiences, you rarely return to where you had that bad experience. And since there are so many choices, both in person and online, it would behoove a business to be as attractive as it can be to prospective buyers. Not that consumers are always right, but as customers, they warrant respect and accommodation. Paying customers and especially repeat customers don't grow on trees. As the business, you must grow on them.

Why don't we all work together in a sort of private-public-type partnership?

One where, as Spock from Star Trek: the original has said many times; "The good of the many outweigh the good of the few." Streamlining a system that is pretty much our daily consuming bread that would enable the masses ("Hoi Polloi," as The Three Stooges titled one of their many two-reel comedy shorts, referred to them/us) to have fewer hurdles to completing their consuming transactions would benefit everybody. And capitalism thrives when more are merrier.

If businesses/government ever want to make a deposit on the future, they should make an investment in the present. Help all us consumers to consume more and feel stupid less. Make debit machines exactly alike in look, feel and touch, please? Thank you from the bottom of my wallet.

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

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