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# Alexandria Gazette Packet

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER DECEMBER 12, 2024



The City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums takes to the streets of Old Town Dec. 7 to lead the 53rd annual Scottish Walk Parade.

## Plaid Tidings Scottish Walk celebrates 53 years.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**T**he sound of bagpipes filled the streets of Old Town as the annual Scottish Walk Parade celebrated its 53rd anniversary Dec. 7 to kick off the holiday season across the city.

“This is always the best day of the year in Alexandria,” said Mayor Justin Wilson, who served as parade Grand Marshal. “From morning until night we have non-stop events, the type of events that make this a great community.”

The parade and related Scottish Walk Weekend events benefit the

SEE SCOTTISH WALK, PAGE 6



Cub Scout Pack 135 Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Campagna Center CEO Tammy Mann.



Grand Marshal Mayor Justin Wilson.



A Pipes and Drums color guard along the parade route.



Alexandria City High School Army JROTC



School board member Tim Beatty with Sheriff Sean Casey.



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NEWS

# Most Fatal Roads For Pedestrians

NoVa Families for Safe Streets releases inaugural study of VDOT data on pedestrian, bike crashes in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax.

The most dangerous road corridors for pedestrians in Northern Virginia are Richmond Highway South, Route 29 (formerly known as, Lee Highway) and Duke Street, according to VDOT data analyzed by Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets.

NoVA FSS, the leading pedestrian safety advocacy organization in Northern Virginia with affiliated Families for Safe Streets chapters in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax (collectively NoVA FSS) has released its inaugural study on VDOT's pedestrian and bike crash data for Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax County.

Each NoVA FSS chapter's report of the TREDIS data brings awareness to the long-standing and in-

creasing risks of street safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other vulnerable road users in the communities of Northern Virginia.

❖ Underserved community residents who frequently walk or bike to destinations are more likely to suffer a crash due to unsafe road infrastructure.

❖ 82% of pedestrian fatalities in Northern Virginia happened at night, dawn and dusk

❖ As of YTD Dec 4, 2024, the total pedestrian and bike fatalities in Northern Virginia are double the number of fatalities for all of 2023.

❖ From 2021 to July 2024, Fairfax has more than double the total number of pedestrian and bike

SEE FATAL ROADS, PAGE 7

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# Lighting Up Del Ray

DRBA tree lighting kicks off holiday events.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**H**undreds turned out Dec. 8 for the lighting of the Del Ray Christmas Tree in Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.

Mayor Justin Wilson and Santa joined together to count down to the lighting of the 32-foot-tall tree. They were joined by Mayor-elect Alyia Gaskins and members of City Council.

The festivities included holiday carols and photos with Santa. Windows along Mount Vernon Avenue

were hand-painted with holiday art, and Mount Vernon Avenue was illuminated by thousands of luminarias in honor of the late Nancy Dunning. Dunning, wife of then-Sheriff Jim Dunning, was an active member of the Del Ray community and conceived of the idea of luminarias along the Avenue but died before seeing her idea come to life.

Performances by the Del Ray Youth String Ensemble and the Alexandria Children's Chorus were part of the evening's entertainment along with a community sing-a-long.

The event also served as a fundraiser for Carpenter's Shelter as attendees were encouraged to bring donations of various goods for the facility. Participants also brought new, unwrapped toys for the Alexandria Sheriff's department Operation Elf.

A menorah in the square will be lit during the days of Hanukkah, which runs Dec. 25, 2024 - Jan. 2, 2025.

The Christmas tree lighting is one of the signature events sponsored by the Del Ray Business Association.

visit [www.visitdelray.com](http://www.visitdelray.com).



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Santa arrives to light the holiday tree in Del Ray Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



PHOTO BY 'MANGO' MIKE ANDERSON

Hundreds turn out for the lighting of the Del Ray Christmas tree and menorah Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



PHOTO BY 'MANGO' MIKE ANDERSON

Crowds gather around the Del Ray Christmas tree Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



The crowd awaits the lighting of the Del Ray Christmas tree Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



Santa counts down to the lighting of the Del Ray Christmas tree Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Children enjoy the holiday festivities at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



Former councilman Frank Fannon with son Jackson at the Del Ray Christmas tree lighting Dec. 8 at Pat Miller Neighborhood Square.



# Love on the Docks

Holiday Boat Parade lights up the waterfront.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

The pressure was on as more than 60 boats vied for prizes in 10 categories at the 24th Annual Holiday Boat Parade of Lights held Dec. 7 along the Alexandria waterfront.

Thousands turned out for the mile-long parade sponsored by Amazon, that was led by Alexandria's Fireboat 201, Fireboat 2 from Washington D.C.'s Fire Department and Lady Josephine.

Best in Show was awarded to American Girl, who presented "Country Christmas" decked out as a red pickup truck carrying freshly cut Christmas trees. Best Powerboat went

to Hold My Pier for "Grease Lightning" with Moovin' taking Best Sailboat honors with "Wishing Upon a Star."

Best Movie/TV Theme was awarded to Boondoggle for "Feelings of Christmas." Most Holiday Cheer went to Consuelo with "Reindeer Rave," and Aquaholic taking Thinking Outside the Christmas Box honors with "Santa's Floating UFO."

Other winners included: Most Spirited Crew – All In, "Panda Palooza"; Best Theme – Magical Knots, "Dominick the Italian Christmas Donkey"; Hardest Soul - Aquazam, "Capsized"; and Best Try - Knot Before Noon, "Under the Sea."

The parade was produced by Visit Alexandria in collaboration with the City of Alexandria and the Old Dominion Boat Club.



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Best Theme – Magical Knots "Dominick the Italian Christmas Donkey"



PHOTO BY EVAN MICHIO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Thinking Outside the Christmas Box – Aquaholic "Santa's Floating UFO"



PHOTO BY EVAN MICHIO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Boats line up for the 24th annual Holiday Boat Parade of Lights Dec. 7 along the Alexandria waterfront.



PHOTO BY EVAN MICHIO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Best in Show – American Girl "Country Christmas"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Most Spirited Crew – All In "Panda Palooza"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Best Powerboat – Hold My Pier "Grease Lightning"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO

Best Sailboat – Moovin' "Wishing Upon a Star"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Best Try -- Knot Before Noon "Under the Sea"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Most Holiday Cheer — Consuelo "Reindeer Rave"



PHOTO BY EVAN MICHIO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Best Movie/TV Theme – Boondoggle "Feelings of Christmas"



PHOTO BY EDUARDO MACEDO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Hardest Soul – Aquazam "Capsized"



PEOPLE

# Beveridge Brings Out the Best

BY SHIRLEY RUHE

**T**om Beveridge sits at his Steinway piano with sunlight filtering through the corner window. He has agreed to play his first composition for piano, composed when he was 10 years old.

Beveridge always knew what he wanted to do and now decades later he is still immersed in the classical music he learned from his father who was a professional organist and choir-master at St. Paul's at Columbia University in NYC. "I grew up playing piano with my father, probably started when I was five or six. I was a professional singer at the age of eight at the St. Thomas Church on 5th Avenue where I was a soprano soloist in the boy's choir."

He says he sang wherever he went to school and majored in music at Harvard where he was in the Glee Club. "I published music for women's voices and chorale at the age of sixteen." Now he has composed 700 works with half of them his originally created arrangements.

In 1960 Beveridge's life took a different direction when he says he got what looked like a draft notice. "At that time most married people were exempt but then the Vietnam War hit, and that wasn't true anymore. I sent the envelope back with address unknown written on the outside." But he joined the Army to avoid the draft "and it was so amazing I spent 20 years." He says, "Everybody thought I was crazy but it was such a nice job with the U.S. Army band. I got to write a lot of music and do a lot of professional singing."

After the Army he lived in New Hampshire for a couple of years and then headed to D.C. where he filled a newly open position in the small McLean Chorale Society. "It was a non paying position but it was my introduction into this world. Then I moved 34 years ago to form the New Dominion Chorale." And he hasn't stopped since then.

In addition to the New Dominion Chorale for some years Beveridge explains he was doing six jobs at once including teaching voice, directing a chorale at George Mason University, serving as Chorus Master of the Washington National Opera. But now he is happy just focusing on one job as Artistic Director of the New Dominion Chorale. Beveridge says he has about 150



SHIRLEY RUHE/THE GAZETTE PACKET  
**Thomas Beveridge plays his first song he composed for piano at 10-years-old.**

regular members of the group, and his programs feature professional soloists as well as contracted professional orchestras.

He explains the Chorale is run very nicely by a talented group of volunteers who comprise the Board and also sing in the group. Emily Roudebush, the current president, says it takes a lot of energy and a considerable amount of time to organize the rehearsal space, design the graphics for the advertising and maintain the website as well as ticket production and sales. But there is a dedicated group of volunteers.

Beveridge is busy finalizing the program for "Gloria, Gloria," his Dec. 15 holiday concert at St. Luke's Catholic Church in McLean where his group performs many of the three concerts they have every year with others performed at the Schlesinger Center in Alexandria. The program focuses on familiar music from Puccini's Gloria to selections from Handel's Messiah to familiar carols in new arrangements. "I don't like to bore the audience."

Beveridge says he generally starts formulating a program a year ahead of the performance. He explains, "I'm a total classicist. I don't change my attitude over time. People come because they want to sing what I do, and they attend because they like to hear what I do."

SEE BEVERIDGE, PAGE 11



# ICE!

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# Scottish Walk Celebrates 53 Years



Emcee Julie Carey of NBC4.



Mitch Opalski and Cele Garrett with At Home Alexandria.



The Rotary Club of Alexandria.



Joe Collum of Burke & Herbert Bank.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

FROM PAGE 1

Campagna Center, which has been serving children and families in the city for 78 years.

Campagna Center CEO Tammy Mann, who announced that she will be stepping down next April, was emotional as she spoke about her 13 years at the center.

"I am just grateful to be here today," Mann said. "It's been a tremendous honor to be able to serve in a community that is as special as Alexandria, and of course the Campagna Center, the people and the work. It's hard to characterize what it has meant."

Colin Meehan, dressed as Buddy the Elf, attended the parade with his family from Philadelphia.

"We come down from Philadelphia every year for the parade," Meehan said. "This is our 18th year – it's a tradition and we love it."

Gary Langlands and Enne Cant, chair and vice chair of the Dundee-Alexandria Twinning Association, attended the parade from Dundee, Scotland.

"We are here to build relationships and understanding between



Victoria Bond and friends.



Colin Meehan of Philadelphia as Buddy the Elf.



Gary Langlands and Enne Cant, chair and vice chair of Dundee-Alexandria Twinning Association, with Jimmie McClellan.

the two cities," Langlands said. "We come just for the Scottish Walk and to meet people."

Added Alexandrian Jimmie McClellan, "We've established a link now between their schools, Alexandria City public schools and

Saint Stephen's & Saint Agnes and they will be doing collaborative educational activities together."

Pipes and drums from the East coast joined Scottish clans, reenactment groups, Scottie dogs and classic cars.

Serving as the unofficial start of the holiday season, the Scottish Walk Weekend celebrates the Scottish heritage of Old Town Alexandria while benefiting Campagna Center programs that serve more than 2,000 children and families

daily across the city.

Said Mann, "It's bittersweet but the Campagna Center is in a great place and I can't wait to see what it will accomplish in the years ahead."

[www.campagnacenter.org](http://www.campagnacenter.org)  
[www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)





Past Men of Courage honorees gather for a photo to honor the 2024 awardees Dec. 7 at the Oswald Durant Center.



Men of Courage 2024 Lifetime Achievement honorees pose for a group photo Dec. 7 at the Oswald Durant Center. From left: Don Hayes, Mac Slover, Harold Hughes, Kevin Harris and Gregory Baldwin.

# Men of Courage

Five honored for community mentorship and service.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a full house at the Oswald Durant Center as five individuals were honored Dec. 7 with the Men of Courage Lifetime Achievement Award.

Founded in 2013 by local boxer Anthony Suggs Sr., the annual event celebrates service and mentorship to the youth of the City of Alexandria.

"Today means so much to me," Suggs said. "It is recognizing new men that have become a part of the village of reaching back, helping out the community and honoring the important work they are doing."

The 2024 honorees include Don Hayes, Mac Slover, Harold Hughes, Kevin Harris and Gregory Baldwin. Keynote speaker was Living Legend of Alexandria Col. James Paige, U.S. Army (retired) and senior executive director of the Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria. Also on hand were numerous past honorees.

Suggs, a local boxing legend, was on track to make the 1988 U.S. Olympic team before drugs and jail torpedoed his career in the ring. In 1987, Suggs was a five time Golden-Gloves Champion, National Golden Glove Finalist, Golden Gloves Outstanding Boxer of the year and Olympic Festival Gold Medalist Amateur boxer

which ranked him #1 in the country and #4 in the world by the USA Amateur Boxing Federation.

As an amateur, Suggs won 138 matches, 116 of which were knockouts. He lost only 12 times. He shares his life story as a cautionary tale in his book "Da Beast Within -- Still the Champ."

In recent years he has devoted his work to the community, which includes honoring the Men of Courage who have been positive youth role models.

His efforts throughout the region were recognized last year when he received the Presidential Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award presented at Harvest Assembly Baptist Church.



Boxing champion Anthony Suggs Sr. founded the Men of Courage awards in 2013.

The Men of Courage Lifetime Achievement Awards Program, now in its 9th year, honors outstanding community members who have dedicated their time and years to volunteer, coach and mentor Alexandria's youth. The event is a partnership of Suggs' Dream

Work TDS, LLC, and the City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities.

"I am excited to see these men continue," Suggs said. "That's what Men of Courage is all about. Achieving the award is not the end, it is the beginning of what we do."

# Chief McGuire Sworn In

The City of Alexandria's new Police Chief, Tarrick McGuire was officially sworn in by the City of Alexandria Chief Circuit Court Judge, Lisa B. Kemler, on Dec. 10, 2024.

Alexandria City Manager James Parajon appointed Tarrick McGuire as the new Police Chief for the City of Alexandria in November. McGuire came from the Arlington Police Department in Texas, where most recently he held the position of Assistant Chief of Police.

"Chief McGuire is a proven leader with more than two decades of experience who is realistic about today and optimistic about tomorrow," said City Manager James Parajon. "While we know Chief McGuire is nationally recognized for his commitment to reducing crime through community relations. What I know is that he will take those skills and apply them in www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Alexandria, today, right now – and set us up for a better tomorrow."

Parajon came to Alexandria in 2022 after serving as City Manager in Arlington, Texas, and announced the selection of McGuire following a nationwide search.

McGuire now oversees a dedicated department of 322 sworn and 114 professional employees in Alexandria.

"I am honored and grateful to accept the position of Police Chief of the Alexandria Police Department," McGuire said. "I believe in a community-oriented approach to policing, building public trust through transparency, and emphasizing communication and collaboration."

McGuire announced his 100-day action plan, four pillars of focus including goals such as hosting community town hall conversations with residents, establishing an employee community relations board,



PHOTO COURTESY APD

Tarrick McGuire.

assessing organizational wellness, and communicating key outcomes to the plan. See the plan at alexandriava.gov/go/6425.

# Most Fatal Roads For Pedestrian

FROM PAGE 2

crashes than Arlington and Alexandria combined.

❖ However, on a 100,000 per capita basis, Arlington has twice as many casualties as Fairfax County; Alexandria has about 70% more than Fairfax County.

Each pedestrian fatality and serious injury is preventable. Our local and state elected leaders along with transportation and enforcement officials need to demonstrate a greater level of commitment and urgency in implementing comprehensive and effective solutions. Making greater investment today will save lives

tomorrow.

Northern Virginia Families for Safe Streets' goal is to bring communities together to create streets that are safe for people of all ages, abilities, and modes of travel by sharing impact stories to increase public awareness and understanding, educating people driving, walking and biking on safe behavior, educating public policymakers, and advocating for measures to make our streets safer. NoVA FSS has chapters in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax counties.

For information email: contact@novafss.org or call: 703 946-8401



# ENTERTAINMENT



The 30th Annual First Night Alexandria takes place on Dec. 31, 2024 throughout Old Town Alexandria.

## ANNUAL OLD TOWN HOLIDAY OUTDOOR DECORATING CONTEST

### The Old Town Walled Garden Club announces the annual holiday outdoor decorating contest.

Founded in 1959, this will be the 55th year the Old Town Walled Garden Club has sponsored this contest. From traditional greens to more contemporary designs, Alexandria's decorations make Old Town a holiday destination. The contest recognizes the most striking holiday exterior decorations in the Historic District. In keeping with Old Town's historic provenance, contest rules require that - except for festive bows and ribbons - the decorations should feature only natural materials. For the residential contest, the decorations must all be made by the homeowners themselves. Professionally-made decorations are not eligible for the residential contest. For the commercial contest, decorations can be professionally created, however decorations should only feature natural materials. Judging criteria include originality of design, scale, color, contrast, and attractiveness from the street. The first, second, and third place winners for the residential contest will receive gift certificates from local area restaurants or businesses. Judges will consist of Old Town Walled Garden Club members and judging will take place Wednesday, December 11th., so they encourage everyone to start planning today. The contest is free to enter. If you're interested in participating in the contest, send an email to OT-WGClub@gmail.com and provide your name, address, email address and telephone contact, and our judges will be sure to come by and check out your décor.

### THROUGH DEC. 21

**"A Focus on Nature."** At Coldwell Banker Realty, 310 King Street, Alexandria. Art exhibit featuring the nature-themed photographs of Steven Halperson and mosaics of Nina Tisara. Steven Halperson, Tisara Photography, has over 30 years' experience in portrait and event photography. For this exhibit, he is returning to his roots in fine art photography and making use of digital camera software to create

strikingly beautiful images. Nina Tisara retired from the photography studio in 2007 and began creating intricate mosaics which are now widely exhibited and collected. Nina is the founder of Living Legends of Alexandria. A portion of all sales will be donated to the Coldwell Banker Realty Cares Foundation, a program that helps support selected nonprofits in Alexandria and throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. For additional information, contact Rachel Carter, RCarter@cbmove.com or Nina Tisara, Ninat@ninatisara.com.

### FREE HOLIDAY LYFT RIDES

**A local nonprofit organization announced that free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this holiday season.** Offered by the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2024 Holiday SoberRide program will be in operation nightly from 10:00 p.m. until 4:00 a.m. from Friday, December 13, 2024 until Wednesday, January 1, 2025 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers. Each evening during this six-hour period, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide code in the app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's separate 2024 Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 9:00 p.m. on December 13, 20 and 31 on www.SoberRide.com.

### THROUGH DEC. 21

**"A Christmas Carol"**. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria. Wednesdays - Fridays at 8 p.m. / Saturdays & Sundays at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. Alexandria's favorite yuletide tradition continues - from the first "bah humbug" to the final "wassail," this timeless classic is sure to rekindle your holiday spirit. Join all your favorite Dickens characters - Tiny Tim and the Cratchit family; the Fezziwigs; the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Yet to Come; and, of course, everyone's favorite curmudgeon, Ebenezer Scrooge - as they transport us to Victorian

England and remind everyone of the meaning of Christmas.

### DEC. 6-21

**Holiday Tours.** 5-7:30 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Tour the Pope-Leighey House during special evening tours and see the home decorated for a mid-century holiday. Tours are offered Dec. 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, with tours every half hour between 5 and 7 p.m. Space is limited, advance registration is recommended. Cost: \$20. Visit the website <https://www.woodlawn-popeleighey.org>

### DEC. 6-22

**29th Annual Holiday Market.** At 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans 29th Annual Holiday Market offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus 2025 wall calendars support Del Ray Artisans nonprofit. Free admission. Holiday Market is the first three weekends in December (Dec 6-8, Dec 13-15, Dec 20-22). Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Details: [DelRayArtisans.org/holiday-market-2024](http://DelRayArtisans.org/holiday-market-2024)

### BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Joe Theismann's Restaurant.** 8 a.m. Located at 1800A Diagonal Road, Alexandria. Dates: Saturday, Dec. 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 15, 22. This holiday season, create unforgettable memories with Breakfast with Santa in the enchanting Old Town Alexandria at Joe Theismann's Restaurant. Start with a festive family-style breakfast featuring delectable options like french toast, smoked salmon, and tater tots. Children will love the take-home treats and a magical moment meeting Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo. Adults can indulge in bottomless Prosecco bellinis or classic mimosas for \$15. Babies join for free, while kids are \$29.50 plus tax and adults are \$53 plus tax.

### BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Mia's Italian Kitchen.** 8 a.m.



The Nutcracker Ballet will be presented by the Metropolitan School for the Arts on Dec. 14-15, 2024 in Alexandria.

Located at 100 King Street, Alexandria. Dates are Saturday, Dec. 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 15, 22. At Mia's Italian Kitchen, children will enjoy take-home treats and a magical visit with Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo that captures the Christmas spirit. Adults can enjoy bottomless classic mimosas and Prosecco bellinis for \$18. Babies join for free, while kids are \$34 plus tax and adults are \$57 plus tax.

### BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

**At Ada's on the River.** 8 a.m. Located at 3 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria. Dates are: Saturday, Dec. 14, 21; Sunday, Dec. 15, 22. Join Ada's on the River for a delicious family-style spread including breakfast pastries, pancakes, yogurt parfait, and tater tots. Children will receive take-home treats and a magical visit with Santa Claus, complete with a keepsake photo. Adults can indulge in bottomless Prosecco bellinis or classic mimosas for \$15. Babies join for free, while kids are \$29.50 plus tax and adults are \$53 plus tax.

### THURSDAY/DEC. 12

**Del Ray Holiday Sip & Shop.** Special promotions and complimentary wine and refreshments.

### THURSDAY/DEC. 12

**Joe Jamaldinian "Us" Exhibit.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. At Principle Gallery, Alexandria. "Us" is a 12' x 4' piece by Virginia artist Joe Jamaldinian executed in acrylic paints on raw canvas, and depicts 15 human qualities through the ages that enrich and plague humanity, driving both progress and conflict. The Dec. 12 event will include a talk by

the artist at 7:15 p.m. and feature other selections from Jamaldinian's work, including his series, Androgyny; his "Women" collection; and his signature piece, In Search of One's Self; as well as a collection of his drawings.

### DEC. 12 TO JAN. 12, 2025

**A Gentle Unroot: A Latinx Perspective.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Curated by Claudina Hannon. Artist Reception: Sunday, December 15, 4 - 6 p.m. Artist Talk: Sunday, January 12, 2:30 p.m. A Gentle Unroot: A Latinx Perspective uncovers the possibilities for what happens when someone leaves their native Latin American land to reside elsewhere, and what they choose to keep with them physically and mentally throughout their daily lives.

### DEC. 13-15

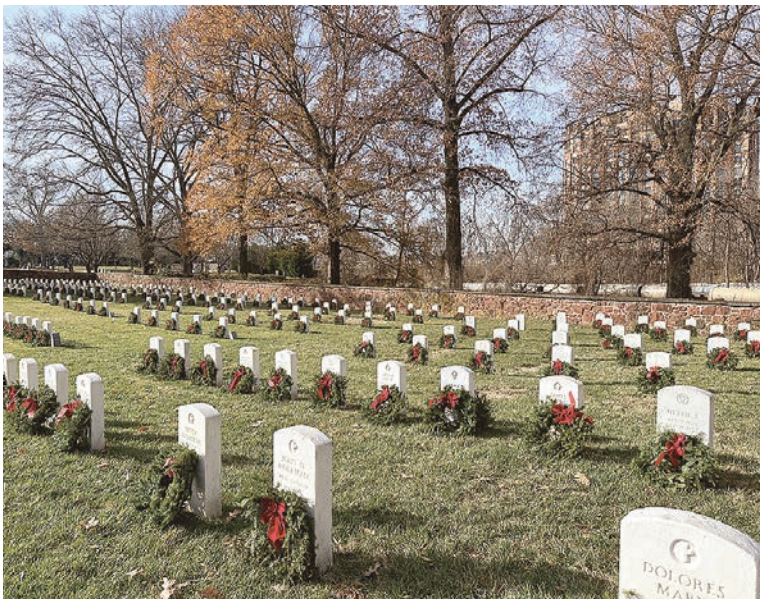
**Gustave Marche de Noel Gift Market.** New this year, be immersed in a magical new European Christmas market experience in Del Ray during the inaugural Gustave Marché de Noël Gift Market, a weekend chock-full of holiday happenings including the Old Town North Holiday Market & Farmers Market, Christmas Market & Holiday Craft Show at John Carlyle Square and more.

### DEC 13-15

**Capital Art & Craft Festival.** Join 300+ artists and vendors, and thousands of attendees at the Winter Capital Art and Craft Festival. Enjoy shopping for beautiful one-of-a-kind art, jewelry, clothing, furnishings, pottery, décor, and more. [www.capitalartandcraftfestivals.com](http://www.capitalartandcraftfestivals.com)



# ENTERTAINMENT



Veterans' Remembrance Wreaths posted on over 4,000 Veterans' graves at Alexandria National Cemetery, December 2023.



"A Focus on Nature" can be seen Oct. 24 to Dec. 21, 2024 at Coldwell Banker Realty in Alexandria.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 14

### Wreaths Across America-Alexandria.

9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. At Alexandria National Cemetery, 1450 Wilkes Street, Alexandria. The 9:30 a.m. kickoff ceremony commences with a 10-minute tribute, including Civil Air Patrol Cadets escorting eight military service representatives (active duty or retirees) carrying ceremonial wreaths to hang at the Alexandria Cemetery American Flag Pole. Come early for a free parking spot, on the streets local to the Wilkes Street Cemetery Complex. About 250 cars will be admitted into the Bethel Cemetery access roads and parking spots as well. VFW parking attendants will assist. Then the public volunteers who show up are admitted to the cemetery and are normally issued two wreaths each to respectfully place on the 4,229 veterans' graves within the cemetery bounds. For the past three years, over 60 active duty military attaché officers from foreign embassies joined us wearing their respective country's uniforms, in paying their respects.

## SATURDAY/DEC. 14

### Fine Art Photography, Food and Merriment.

2-4 p.m. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Studio 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Enjoy light refreshments, the Capital Perspectives exhibition that decks the walls, and an abundance of holiday cheer. This Holiday Open House is also a special chance to wish MEG member Tim Hyde a fond farewell as he gets ready to leave at the end of the year. (Special bonus — you might also meet the two talented artists who'll be joining us in 2025.)

## DEC. 14-15

### Nutcracker Ballet.

At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Drive, Alexandria. At 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. both days. Presented by the Metropolitan School of the Arts. Veronica Quezada, MSA alumnus and part of the International Tour of West Side Story, will play the part of Sugar Plum Fairy, joining a cast of 150 MSA students. Tickets are \$21 to \$35. Visit [www.metropolitanschoolofthearts.org](http://www.metropolitanschoolofthearts.org)

## SATURDAY/DEC. 21

### The Gift of Music.

7:30 p.m. At [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com)

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Alexandria. Join the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra with this holiday musical tradition. Celebrate the season with family and friends. Join Conductor James Ross and the Alexandria Symphony for carols, classics, and sparkling holiday favorites. Plus, special guest violinist, Chelsey Green and The Green Project, fuse classical and contemporary, jazz and R&B.

## TUESDAY/DEC. 24

### Waterskiing Santa Show.

1 p.m. Begins at BARCA Pier, 2 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria. For a sight you have to see to believe, head to the waterfront between BARCA Pier and Founders Park to witness the Waterskiing Santa Show, featuring Santa and his friends gliding along the Potomac River. There is also a rumor the Grinch will try and steal the show at 12:45 p.m. before the show starts. Santa and his pals begin at BARCA Pier at 1 p.m. and ski north to Founders Park before circling back south and finishing at Ford's Landing.

## CHRISTMAS EVE DINING, DEC. 24

### Ada's On the River, 3 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria.

Open from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Ada's will be serving two delicious Christmas Eve specials, the Chilean Seabass made with cherry tomatoes, asparagus, fingerling potatoes, herbs, and miso brown butter for \$45 or the Prime Kansas City Strip 24 Oz for \$89.

### BARCA Pier & Wine Bar, 2 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria.

BARCA Pier is inviting guests to enjoy two festive specials in addition to their regular menu on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Featured specials include the Catalan Lamb Kebab for \$26 or the Crab Stuffed Jumbo Shrimp for \$27. BARCA Pier will open on Christmas Eve from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; and 12 to 9 p.m. on Christmas Day.

### The Majestic, 911 King Street, Alexandria.

Open from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m., Majestic will offer two special additions to their regular menu on Christmas eve. Guests can enjoy Pan Seared Duck Breast made with butternut squash purée,

honey glazed parsnips, and orange sauce for \$35 or Oven Roasted Rockfish made with zucchini, eggplant, red peppers, onions, tomato-caper sauce, and herb oil for \$32.

### Mia's Italian Kitchen, 100 King Street, Alexandria.

On Christmas Eve, Mia's will be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., offering two special dishes. Guests can enjoy Veal Chop Parmigiana, made with a pounded and breaded bone-in veal chop, spicy rigatoni pomodoro, melted mozzarella, and saba for \$39, or Lobster Ravioli, featuring Maine lobster, pecorino, lobster sauce, ricotta, and sherry cream sauce for \$29.

### Vola's Dockside Grill, 101 North Union Street, Old Town Alexandria.

On Christmas Eve, Vola's will be open during regular hours, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., ensuring a smooth and festive transition into the holiday spirit. For \$35 each dish, guests can enjoy two special dishes: Lobster & Spinach Ravioli with asparagus, tomato cream sauce, pecorino romano, and fried sage, or King Salmon with quinoa, confit pearl onions, roasted butternut squash, watercress, and salsa verde. The regular menu will also be available.

## CHRISTMAS DAY DINING, DEC. 25

### Ada's On The River, 3 Pioneer Mill

Way, Alexandria. Ada's will be open from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Christmas Day, offering a three-course prix fixe menu for \$79 per person. The menu features dishes like Preserved Root Vegetable Tartare, Shrimp-Stuffed Halibut, Coal-Roasted Rack of Lamb, and more. For \$29, kids can enjoy options such as White Cheddar Mac & Cheese and Petite Filet Mignon.

### Joe Theismann's Restaurant, 1800A Diagonal Road, Alexandria.

Indulge in a sumptuous Christmas Day Buffet, available from 11:30am to 9pm. The buffet features a Carving Station, a Salad Table, a Bread and Dessert Table, and a Hot Table. Priced at \$59 per person and \$19 for kids, this festive buffet promises a delectable spread to satisfy every palate with dishes like Praline-Sweet Potato Casserole, Spiral Ham, Brioche Stuffing and more.

### The Majestic, 911 King Street, Alexandria.

On Christmas Day from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Majestic will offer a Christmas dinner for \$79 per person, featuring a four-course prix fixe menu with a variety of delicious options. Dishes include Butternut Squash Soup, Crab Croquettes, Roasted Turkey, Truffle Mash Potatoes, and more. The Majestic will also offer a Thanksgiving Bar Menu with an array of starters, main dishes, sides, and desserts. Children ages 12 and

under can enjoy the Kids Menu, which includes three delicious courses.

**Mia's Italian Kitchen, 100 King Street, Alexandria.** Mia's Italian Kitchen, the beloved traditional Italian eatery located at the riverside end of King Street in Old Town Alexandria, is offering a three-course Christmas feast for \$49 per person. The menu includes dishes like Shrimp Fra Diavolo Bruschetta, Lobster Ravioli, Braised Lamb Shank, and more. The restaurant will be open from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Christmas Day.

**Royal Restaurant, 730 North Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria.** Royal will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., offering its regular menu, along with a new breakfast, lunch, and dinner menu, plus two Christmas specials. Guests can choose between Prime Rib with garlic mashed potatoes, honey-glazed carrots, horseradish cream, and au jus for \$35, or Spiral Ham with mashed sweet potatoes, candied pecans, garlic green beans, and pineapple glaze for \$25.

**Vola's Dockside Grill, 101 North Union Street, Old Town Alexandria.** Spend Christmas Day at Vola's Dockside Grill and enjoy a special three-course prix fixe menu for \$49 per person. The menu includes dishes like Charred Octopus, Pork Shank Osso Buco, Lobster & Spinach Ravioli, and more. Vola's will be open from 11:30am to 10 pm, offering plenty of time for friends and family to gather and savor a festive holiday meal with a beautiful waterfront view.

## DEC. 31, 2024

### 30th Annual First Night Alexandria.

2 p.m. - 12 a.m. Throughout Old Town Alexandria. Experience the region's signature family-friendly New Year's Eve festival of music and more. A community celebration of the performing arts, First Night Alexandria rings in the new year with music, comedy, and dance. This year's celebration will feature a twilight fireworks display at 6 p.m. on Alexandria's waterfront geared to families who want to enjoy the show with their kids and loved ones. First Night Alexandria will also still host an abbreviated encore display of the New Year's fireworks at midnight on the waterfront. Visit <https://visitalexandria.com/events/30th-annual-first-night-alexandria>

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**Obituary** **Obituary**

**Stephen P. Vermillion**



Stephen Patrick Vermillion departed peacefully for Heaven on November 25, 2024 at the age of 81.

Steve was born on December 29, 1942 in Alexandria, VA, to Margaret Worden Vermillion and William H. Vermillion, and was a lifelong resident of Alexandria.

He graduated from George Washington High School in the class of 1961 where he was a standout athlete in both football and basketball, earning the nickname "Shoot a Million Vermillion" in basketball.

He coached many Alexandria city youth sports teams, and was one of the pioneer coaches for the Alexandria Soccer Association when it was founded in the 1970's.

He served over 30 years as a mail carrier for the U.S. Postal Service, where he was well-loved by the residents and business owners he served on his Old Town route.

In his retirement years he enjoyed spending time with family, attending church, catching up with friends, and following NBA and NFL games. He was a familiar face and voice on the sidelines coaching and cheering on his grandchildren at their many sporting events and activities.

He is survived by sons Stephen Jr. (Nancye) of Fenwick Island, Delaware, Sean (Helen) of Alexandria, Brent (Cindy) of Alexandria, daughters Ameri (Dave) of Cresco, Pennsylvania, Leslie Terrazas (Louie) of Huntington Beach, California, and brother James Vermillion of Tampa Florida.

He leaves behind nine grandchildren who adored him; Catherine, Claire, Allison, Sarah, David, Emily, Charlie, Mary Grace, and Zachary, and many cousins, nieces, nephews, in-laws, and friends. He was preceded in death by wife Donna and grandchild Koda.

A memorial service will be held on December 14, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at Reality Church, 5937 Franconia Road, Alexandria, VA 22310. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to a charity of your choice in Steve's honor.

**CALENDAR**

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28	29	30	31		

**Let us know about an upcoming event**

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar

**Legals**

**ABC LICENSE**

Umiya Alexandria, Inc. trading as Umiya Sushi, 3000 Duke Street, Alexandria, Alexandria City, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Mixed Beverage Restaurant; beer, wine, mixed beverages; on and off-premises consumption license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Fanghuang Lin, President. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

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The dining area is now a space where residents are more apt to interact.



A new look for the lounge area.

PHOTOS BY MIKE SALMON/CONNECTION

# Inviting Atmosphere Unveiled

BY MIKE SALMON  
THE GAZETTE

It was a show of extreme home makeovers at the Alexandria Community Shelter as a redesign team came in and “redesigned the nonprofit beyond the blueprint,” to make it a more comfortable atmosphere for residents.

“It makes a noticeable difference for the residents,” said Michiko Yoon at Carpenter’s Shelter.

The shelter partnered with “Beyond the Blueprint,” to change the look of the shelter with brighter paints, new flooring and furniture which in turn, changes the perception of shelter. The once sterile-looking office environment now is colorful and inviting with deep greens, yellows and plants to enhance the environment.

“Beyond the Blueprint’s shelter makeover project goes beyond redesigning spaces —

it’s about fostering environments where survivors of trauma can find hope and begin to heal.” said Tianna M. Spratley, Founder & Executive Director of Beyond the Blueprint Foundation.

One of the residents agreed. “The ambiance, the color, the walls, the brightness and the vividness of the colors and atmosphere, it inspires you,” he said.

The Carpenter’s Shelter team worked with the City of Alexandria to operate the Alexandria Community Shelter, and that agreement with the city will go on for three years, said Yoon. This makeover came by partnering with local sponsoring businesses such as All Green Pros, Amazing Listing Photos, Monarch Paint Benjamin Moore Paint Store Alexandria, Bob’s Discount Furniture, Charles Graves Painting Company, Floor & Decor (Alexandria Store), Professional Floor Installer, Revival Rugs, Williams Professional Painting and WoodUpp.

The Carpenter’s Shelter has been operating in Alexandria since 1988, helping more than 700 temporarily unhoused individuals last year alone.

The goal is to transition those they serve to permanent housing. Carpenter’s Shelter has evolved into a leader in finding solutions that permanently end and prevent homelessness.

Beyond the Blueprint is a Northern Virginia nonprofit that inspires needy individuals and families through interior design. They do shelter makeovers, training and a program called “Moving It Forward,” to help those that have already been placed in housing find the skills to convert it to a place they can call their own.

“From selecting furniture to arranging decor, our team supports survivors every step of the way, ensuring each space reflects their strength, resilience, and newfound hope,” BTB said on their website.

# Beveridge Brings Out the Best

FROM PAGE 5

He comments that the group has really become a community who like to gather and talk at the rehearsals. Dave McCord, a resident of Arlington who has been singing with the New Dominion Chorale for 10 years says, “We talk about everything from fashion to sports. The breaks are probably the most fun.”

The New Dominion Chorale is a non-audition group. Beveridge says after Covid the participation has diminished a little and he has had difficulty finding bass voices. And also after Covid he no longer requires attendance at all weekly rehearsals. But it works. Beveridge says, “I find if people want to sing, they generally know how to sing.” He remembers with a smile that he did have to get rid of a couple of people.

“I had an enormous man with a big voice but he was a dyslexic



SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET  
**Thomas Beveridge,**  
Artistic Director of  
New Dominion Chorale

singer. Whenever the note went up, he sang down. Finally the other members of the Chorale came to Beveridge and told him he had to do something about it. “I pulled him aside and offered to give him free private

lessons but when I explained the dyslexia to him, he never came back.” And he remembers a woman who was a totally deaf soprano. “I would see her singing standing to the side of the group, and finally the group told me it just wasn’t working.”

Susan Dawson, an Alexandrian who sings with the group, says she has been singing in the area for 50 years. “We really needed a non-audition group like this in the area; so many people are competing with each other. This is just perfect.”

McCord says, “Having Tom as a composer himself is a plus. I am singing things I never dreamed I could sing. In all my dreams I never thought I would be able to sing Beethoven’s 5th. But it was great.”

AD Reilly, another longtime Chorale member from Arlington adds, “It’s extraordinary what dedicated non-professional singers can do with this kind of leadership.”

Beveridge says of all his compositions over the years, he hopes his legacy will be Yizkor Requiem, the oratorio which he wrote in 1993 as a memorial to his parents. It is a juxtaposition and intermingling of the Jewish and the Christian memorial traditions which are combined throughout the piece. The oratorio has been performed many times but perhaps the most prestigious is the recording by St. Neville’s Academy in the Fields in London conducted by Sir Neville Mariner.

Roudebush adds, “I really appreciate it is such a gift to work with Tom who does it all as a singer, composer and conductor. His pieces are challenging but so creative in emotional heart.” Rodebush says she joined in 2012 after her husband died, “and I wanted to sing again. A handful of people have been singing with the Choral since it began 34 years ago. That shows the level of commitment.”

## Open “Saysawho?”



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Everybody, it seems, but not me. My name is not Damian Clark - from Humana. Nor is my name Cham - from eHEALTH.COM. Nor is it any number/variety of spokespersons representing any number/variety of insuring entities: “Medicare Advantage Partners,” “Reliance,” “Aetna,” “United Healthcare,” (Humana, eHEALTH) attempting to get my Medicare Advantage/“Open Season”/“Annual Enrollment” period (Oct. 15 - Dec. 7) dollars. That joyous occasion which precedes Christmas every year and can potentially bring all of us “additional benefits and cost savings” will soon be over. Not to mention peace of mind that we’re paying the least amount of dollars for the maximum amount of health insurance. Then, if the proper decisions have been made, we can live out our Medicare-covered years in relative insurance-coverage calm. And if the advertisements are any indication, as well as my own 20 years’ experience selling insurance, there are plenty of dollars being misspent and families being unnecessarily burdened by higher-than-necessary premiums and below average coverage. But thankfully, for any of you regular readers who watch as much television as I do - and who have been besieged by the repeated attempts to grab our Medicare-related dollars - and sense, the “Season” is coming to an end. By the time this column publishes (Dec. 11, 2024) your televisions will be returning to their regular advertising and nary a Medicare ad will be seen or heard. Now if that’s not a recipe for a merry Christmas than I don’t know what is? Because I must admit, I’ve just about reached my limit. I’m not exactly Robert Di Niro shooting the television in “Taxi Driver,” but I’m certainly swearing at it a lot.

In all sincerity, I feel sorry for all the seniors who don’t have the insurance and/or finance background that I have. This Medicare insurance business is like a minefield. One wrong step and your finances for the year you incur the cost (or however long it takes to pay off your unexpected medical/hospital expenses) could blow up your bank account and sever any hopes one has for a manageable retirement, money wise. I’ve made all these calls - years ago for my parents. Daunting doesn’t begin to explain my experience. If the language/jargon isn’t confusing enough, and the arithmetic isn’t overwhelming, the long waits over the phone may be the tipping point. I learned my lesson though. Before I would call, I would make sure I visited the bathroom and then got myself something to eat and drink as I waited. And maybe even sat in front of the television to occupy my time while did I wait. Because the last thing the recorded message advises over the phone is about that damn queue: your place in this hypothetical line of callers who called before you. If you decide to hang up, you lose your place in the queue. And if you thought waiting once was tedious, waiting twice as long or multiple times because you were ill-prepared/impatient for the ordeal is exponentially worse. Your patience can only endure so much. Very important, before you call one of these entities, clear your schedule. If you have another commitment, cancel it. Nothing is more important than resolving this Medicare insurance business. If you plan your wait, the process of waiting - or waiting for a call back, which takes just as long with no guarantee of a future contact (the system isn’t perfect) can be tolerable. However, if you don’t plan accordingly, you may suffer accordingly. Been there. Done that. Don’t want to do it again.

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



live who you are

OPEN SUN 12/15, 1-3



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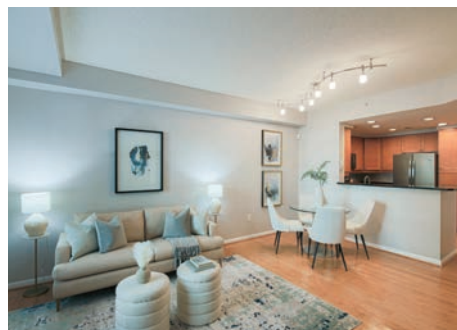
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