

# Alexandria Gazette Packet

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JANUARY 9, 2025



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Pedestrians walk in the snow on the 100 block of King Street Jan. 6 during the city's first snowstorm of the season.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Vehicles are covered in snow on a residential city street.

## Winter Wonderland

### Region sees up to 10" of snow in season's first storm.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

It wasn't Snowmageddon but Alexandria saw its first significant snowfall as the city was blanketed with snow Jan. 6 when the first winter storm of the year dumped 2-10 inches of snow as it moved through the region.

Alexandria schools were closed as the National Weather Service predicted as much as a foot of snow in parts of the state. Gov. Glenn Youngkin declared a state of emergency in anticipation of the storm, which began in the early morning hours Monday and increased in intensity throughout the day.

Snow fell at a rate of 1-3" per hour and continued overnight before tapering off. In Alexandria, Rose Hill saw 9.0" of snow followed by Old Town with 8.0" and St. Stephen's & St. Agnes blanketed with 7.5".

In neighboring Arlington, Rosslyn received 7.8" of snow, National Airport reported 6.1", and East Falls Church 9.3".

In Fairfax County, Hybla Valley received 9.5" of snow, Newington 10.0", Lorton 9.5", Centreville 9.0", Oakton 8.0" and Huntsman Park 9.3".

Daily snowfall records were set at both

Dulles and BWI airports, with Dulles recording over 5 inches of snow on the ground and BWI seeing more than 6 inches. Previously, the records for a Jan. 6 snowfall were 4.2 inches in 2015 and 3.4 inches in 1989, respectively.

The precipitation didn't prevent residents from venturing out as some restaurants in Old Town and Carlyle, including Sweet Fire Donna's and Tequila and Taco, remained open.

Thousands of flights were disrupted Monday as the storm moved across the region. By 5:45 p.m. ET, more than 6,900 U.S. flights were delayed while more than 2,130 were canceled, according to flight tracker FlightAware.

More than 400 flights, or 80 percent of the day's schedule, were canceled at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, while about a third of the scheduled flights were canceled at both Washington Dulles International Airport and Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport.

As residents continue to dig out, below freezing temperatures and gusting winds will slow the melting of accumulated snow despite the sunny skies. Temperatures are expected to warm up over the weekend.

The city has cleared snow from 561 lane miles of roadways, 20 miles of publicly owned sidewalks, walkways and path-



PHOTO BY 'MANGO' MIKE ANDERSON

A pedestrian walks along a snowy John Carlyle Street.

ways, and 44 acres of municipal parking lots and publicly owned squares. Residents are required to clear the areas around their property within 48 hours of the end of a snowstorm.

To check on the status of road clearings, along with other snow emergency information, visit [www.alexandriava.gov/snow](http://www.alexandriava.gov/snow).

MORE WINTER WONDERLAND, PAGE 7



**THE CHAMBER ALX**

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

**NEWS**

# Age-Friendly Strategic Plan

BY MARY LEE ANDERSON  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
SENIOR SERVICES OF ALEXANDRIA

## Older Adults, Register Now

Event on Alexandria's Age-Friendly Strategic Plan

Jan. 17, 10 am – 11:30 am  
Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street, Alexandria

The Alexandria Commission on Aging and the Division of Aging & Adult Services are working together to update the City's Age-Friendly Strategic Plan. This critical update will be presented to the City Council and once approved, will guide future funding and services for Alexandria's older adult population.

We are reaching out to the older adult community to get your ideas for improving city services and policies. The draft plan will be presented by the Commission on Aging and City staff on Friday, Jan. 17 at 10 a.m. at the Lee Center's Exhibition Hall (lower Level), 1108 Jefferson Street in Alexandria.

If you are able, please complete a short survey online at <https://tinyurl.com/agefriendlyplan> before the event. Your feedback will help ensure the updated plan reflects the real needs of our older adult residents. Together, we can make Alexandria a more age-friendly community.

This event is free. Please RSVP by email at [events@seniorservicesalex.org](mailto:events@seniorservicesalex.org) or call 703.836.4414 ext. 110.

**BULLETIN BOARD**

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

**VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a

diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. [www.volunteeralexandria.org](http://www.volunteeralexandria.org)

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

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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Members of City Council take the oath of office Jan. 2 at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall.



Sarah Bagley is sworn in as vice mayor by Clerk of the Court Greg Parks as her parents Lee and Stephanie Bagley look on Jan. 2 at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall.

# Oh, What a Night

Gaskins makes history; new council is sworn in.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**A**lyia Gaskins made history when she was sworn in Jan. 2 as Mayor of Alexandria, becoming the first Black woman to hold that office.

Gaskins was sworn in at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall along with the Democratic slate of council members that included vice Mayor Sarah Bagley, John Taylor Chapman, Canek Aguirre, Kirk McPike, Jacinta Greene and Abdel Elnoubi.

“It is a serious but joyous thing we do tonight,” Bagley said in her remarks. “At a time when democracy can feel very fragile we come together to affirm our shared belief in democracy’s value. We take an oath to serve not only Alexandria and its citizens but the goals and vision of democracy.”

Clerk of the Court Greg Parks administered the oath of office in a ceremony that included the Joint Public Safety Honor Guard and a performance by members of the Samuel L. Tucker Elementary School choir.

“I am proud to stand before you tonight as Alexandria’s first Black female mayor,” said Gaskins to thunderous applause. “Tonight I feel a sense of joy, I feel humility but I also feel a deep responsibility to deliver on the dream and the faith of my ancestors because I am her because of them.”

Gaskins’s first official duty was to preside over the election of Bagley as vice mayor. Bagley received the most votes of council candidates in the November election, which garnered her the vice mayor position.

Gaskins succeeds Justin Wilson, who announced in 2023 that he would not seek a third term as mayor. He spoke at the installation, as did former vice mayor Amy Jackson, who was defeated by Gaskins in the Democratic primary.



Mayor Alyia Gaskins thanks supporters at The People’s Party Jan. 3 at The Garden.

**“I am here because in November, you chose hope and progress.”**

— Mayor Alyia Gaskins

“Every challenge that you will face is one that was created by a previous council, and there is a very fuzzy line between legacy and blame,” Wilson said. “And it requires courage and dedication to solve those challenges that are before this community, and I know this city council has it in them, and I look forward to sitting on the sidelines with popcorn and cheering you on as you take on these important issues.”

Gaskins was first elected to council in 2021. She is a graduate of Vanderbilt University with a degree in medicine, health, and society. She went on to earn a master’s degree in public health from the University of Pittsburgh and a master’s degree in urban planning from Georgetown University. She also obtained a professional certificate



Mayor Alyia Gaskins is joined by her family prior to taking the oath of office Jan. 2 at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall.

in municipal finance from the University of Chicago.

“I am here because in November, you chose hope and progress,” Gaskins said. “I am here because of our shared vision for an Alexandria that is safer and more affordable

and more accessible.”

Patsy Ticer was elected as Alexandria’s first female mayor in 1991, serving until 1996. In 2003, Bill Euille became the city’s first Black mayor, serving for a record 12 years.





LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

**E.J. Pepper, husband of former City Council member and vice Mayor Del Pepper, died Jan. 6 at the age of 89.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**E.J. Pepper was married to former City Council member Del Pepper.**

# F.J. Pepper Husband of former vice Mayor dies at 89.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**F**.J. Pepper, husband of former City Council member and vice mayor Del Pepper, died Jan. 6 at his West End home following a long illness. He was 89.

A longtime psychiatrist in Alexandria, Pepper along with his wife, enjoyed the playful moniker “Dr. Pepper,” often wearing merchandise with the soft drink brand logo as she enjoyed her record-setting political career as the longest serving member of council in the city’s history.

Originally from Nebraska, the couple met while Del Pepper was working a summer job at the Omaha library.

“In walks this guy with all these children, and I thought they were his,” Del Pepper recalled when interviewed as a Living Legend of Alexandria in 2023. “Then I found out he had made a bargain with his brother that he would take his nieces and nephews to the library in exchange for borrowing the car for a date that night.”

The two married in 1966 and moved to Alexandria in 1968. They settled in the West End, where

Pepper established his medical practice as Del Pepper embarked on a political career. She was first elected to City Council in 1985, retiring in 2022 after 36 years on council and three terms as vice mayor.

“While F.J. was an accomplished psychiatrist who

served our community, first and foremost he was a supportive husband and father,” said former Mayor Justin Wilson. “He approached every day with a zest for life, literally and figuratively bringing music to every room he was in.”

Born March 21, 1935, in Omaha, Nebraska, Franklin Jay Pepper was the eldest of four children born to Maurice L. Pepper and Ramona Slosburg Pepper. His father, a doctor of internal medicine and cardiology, inspired Pepper’s own career in medicine.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**E.J. Pepper graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical School in 1965.**

Pepper attended and graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1965 and spent more than 60 years in practice. A Vietnam veteran, he often treated patients who could not afford medical services.

An active member of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, Pepper was a Mason and member of Tall Cedars of Lebanon International. Among his other affiliations was membership in the NAACP and the Departmental Progressive Club.

Pepper is survived by his wife of 58 years, Del Pepper, son Murphy Pepper, daughter-in-law Soo Pepper, and five grandchildren.

A memorial service is planned for a later date in January with arrangements being handled by Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home. Call 703-998-9200 or visit [www.everlywheatley.com](http://www.everlywheatley.com) for more information.

Added Wilson, “I will miss F.J.’s presence in our city and I am keeping Del, Murphy and his grandchildren in my thoughts.”

**“While F.J. was an accomplished psychiatrist who served our community, first and foremost he was a supportive husband and father.”**

— Former mayor Justin Wilson

## City In Search of Poet Laureate

The City of Alexandria’s Office of the Arts is in search of a Poet Laureate to promote an appreciation of poetry as an art form, promote creative writing and reading of literature, and promote literacy through poetry. The individual will serve as Poet Laureate for three years and receive a very modest annual honorarium.

Eight Poet Laureates have served in the role which publicly confirms the value of literary art and enhances the quality of life in Alexandria. The Poet Laureate serves as an official resource available to commemorate for present enjoyment, as well as posterity, the City’s history and historic events, installations, groundbreaking, and public dedications, as well as many of the City’s annual celebrations, parades, and cultural events.

The Poet Laureate brings poetic art to the City’s libraries and schools and serves as a bridge to the City’s diverse communities who might not otherwise be exposed to this cultural experience. In difficult times, the Poet Laureate offers appropriate words of reflection, inspiration and healing.

Individuals can nominate themselves or be nominated by someone else. Nominees must distinguish themselves in the field of poetry through the body of work created; be a resident of the City for a minimum of one year and maintain residency through the three-year term of service; must accept the Poet Laureate post as a ceremonial role, which includes presentations of work appropriate for all audiences; and be 21 years of age or older.

The online submission deadline for the Poet Laureate is Jan. 10, 2025. To submit an application, click here. <https://www.research.net/r/AlexandriaVA-PoetLaureate25-28>

For additional information about the Poet Laureate and other literary programs, visit the Office of the Arts website: [alexandriava.gov/Arts](http://alexandriava.gov/Arts) or email the Poet Laureate: [poet@alexandriava.gov](mailto:poet@alexandriava.gov).

## Insights from Guaranteed Income Pilot Program

The City of Alexandria’s guaranteed income pilot, Alexandria’s Recurring Income for Success and Equity (ARISE), shows promising results after its first year of implementation, according to Dr. AshLee Smith Playfair, the lead evaluator from Abt Global. Dr. Playfair presented key insights at an event hosted by the Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) and ACT for Alexandria, attended by elected officials and residents.

In 2021, the Alexandria City Council allocated \$3 million dollars of American Rescue Plan Act funds for 170 Alexandria residents to receive \$500 a month of unconditional cash for 24 months. The pilot has a research component to gather information on the impacts of the \$500 on mental and physical health, housing, food, transportation, financial stability, labor market participation, and, when relevant, child outcomes. In the FY25 budget process, City Council approved an additional allocation of \$550,000 to extend payments to participants through June 2025 for an additional five months.

Dr. Playfair’s presentation highlighted the first-year results from a mixed-methods evaluation, which revealed several the following preliminary significant findings:

\* **Improved Mental Wellbeing:** Participants in the ARISE pilot reported significantly more peaceful and stable home environments than those in the control group. Additionally, they expressed feeling more hopeful about the future, and reduction of financial stress, which improved their mental wellbeing. Participants reported feeling more patient with their children and were able to spend more time with them than control group members.

\* **Increased Financial Stability:** The pilot demonstrated signs of improved financial stability for participants. Recipients noted greater control over their finances, reduced financial stress, and a greater ability to manage unexpected expenses, all contributing to their overall sense of security. Among ARISE participants, 1% reported living off their savings, compared to 6% of control group members.

\* **Empowerment:** A notable insight was the impact of guaranteed income on participants’ ability to balance their personal responsibilities. ARISE participants reported being able to work fewer hours, which allowed them to focus on family, education, and other important life activities. They also found time to focus

SEE HELPING, PAGE 5



## OBITUARY

# Donald M. Haddock

## Retired circuit court judge dies at 83.

By JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**R**etired Alexandria Circuit Court Judge Donald M. Haddock died Dec. 23, 2024, at his Alexandria home. He was 83.

A lifelong Alexandrian, Haddock served on the bench for 27 years prior to his retirement in 2012.

"This is the end of an era for so many of us," said Chief Judge Connie Frogale of the Alexandria Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. "I will truly miss Judge Haddock's long wisdom and his quick, gentle wit. I'm glad I appeared before him for so many years and learned so much from him. He was a great model to me of how to judge."

Born May 8, 1941, Haddock was the son of David Stanford Haddock and Alice May Haddock Gardiner. He was the grandson of Alva and Ada Haddock of Douglas, Georgia, and of Robert and Lula May of Rose Hill Farm, just outside of Alexandria.

Haddock attended Saint Stephen's & Saint Agnes School and graduated from Episcopal High School in 1959 where he was a member of the Missionary Society. He also played on the football, baseball and wrestling teams.

He went on to receive his undergraduate degree from Princeton University in 1963, his law degree from the University of Virginia in 1966, and his master of law from George Washington University in 1968.

After graduation from law school, he served in the United States Army as a Captain in the Army Materiel Command.

In 1965, he married his high school sweetheart, Joyce Elaine Rodgers. He began his legal career as a sole practitioner and part-time Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney. He next practiced law with the firm of Thomas, Kent, Haddock & Sewell and then again as a sole practitioner.

In 1984, he became a judge on the Alexandria Circuit Court where he served for 27 years, the last 14 as Chief Judge. After retirement, he continued to sit frequently as a substitute judge, totaling over 40 years of service on the bench.

Upon his retirement in 2012, State Del. Charniele Herring sponsored House Resolution 613 to honor Haddock and his years of commitment to justice and public service to the Commonwealth. The resolution noted Haddock's roles as Virginia Delegate to the National Conference of State Trial Judges of the American Bar Association, as a member of the Boyd-Graves Conference, and as a state judicial leader for the National Judicial College. Haddock also served as a board member for numerous civic, business and charitable organizations, including

the Alexandria Jaycees, local chamber of commerce, Alexandria Legal Aid Society, and Alexandria Bar Foundation. He was also a volunteer with the Boy Scouts of America. When not on the bench, he enjoyed hunting, fishing and farming.

Haddock is survived by his wife of 59 years, Joyce Rodgers Haddock;

son David Stanford Haddock II, grandsons Alex Haddock and Adam Haddock, and their mother Klara Matouskova; son Donald May Haddock Jr., daughter-in-law Cristina Barbudo and granddaughter Eva May Haddock-Barbudo.

He is also survived by his wife's sisters Joanne Rodgers Jenks and Florine Rodgers Graham as well as many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his wife's brother Joseph Winfield Rodgers and his wife's sister Betty Rodgers Sherrer.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at First Baptist Church, 2932 King Street, Alexandria, at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 25. Interment will be private at Ivy Hill Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to Episcopal High School, 1200 N.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Retired Circuit Court Judge Donald M. Haddock died Dec. 23, 2024, at his Alexandria home. He was 83.

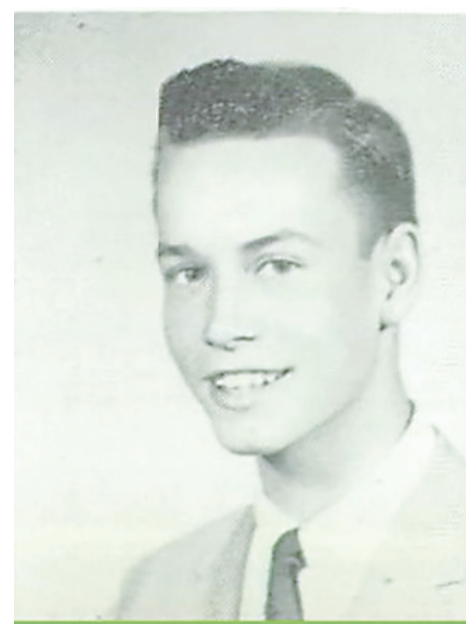


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Judge Donald Haddock is shown in the Episcopal High School yearbook during his junior year in 1958.

**"Judge Haddock was a great man. His indomitable spirit will always be in our courthouse."**

— Alexandria Chief JDR Judge Connie Frogale



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

Judge Donald Haddock, center, presides over a ceremony with then-Mayor Bill Euille honoring Judge Nolan Dawkins.

Quaker Lane, Alexandria, Virginia 22302, [www.ehsrollcall.org](http://www.ehsrollcall.org).

"Judge Haddock was a great man," said

Frogale. "His indomitable spirit will always be in our courthouse. I'm so sorry for his family and their loss."

### NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 4

on caregiving, entrepreneurship, and education.

As the ARISE pilot moves into its final six months, the City of Alexandria remains dedicated to exploring innovative solutions to reduce poverty and promote economic and racial equity for residents. The positive impact of the ARISE pilot on our community gives us hope for a brighter future.

Residents are encouraged to visit [alexandriava.gov/ARISE](http://alexandriava.gov/ARISE) to learn more about ARISE and access DCHS resources, see Abt Global's interim brief, and view videos featuring ARISE participant stories.

### Roanoke Avenue Shooting Investigation

Dec. 26 at approximately 9:05 a.m., Alexandria Police were called to the 5400 block of Roanoke Avenue for the report of an injured man. Once on scene, officers located a 19-year-old outside, suffering from gunshot wounds. He was transported to an area hospital and is now in stable non-life-threatening condition. While officers were responding, another male was admitted to an area hospital with a non-life-threatening gunshot wound. The two men are known to each other and APD is investigating the connection.

This is an active investigation. Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Riley of the Criminal Investigations Division at 703-746-6225.

### APD Makes Arrest in Wythe Street Shooting

At approximately 8:06 p.m. Dec. 22, Alexandria Police responded to the 300 block of Wythe Street for the report of a shooting that occurred inside a building. Officers located a 32-year-old man, an Alexandria resident, suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. He was transported to the hospital with life-threatening injuries.

The suspect, Davonte Lamar Keys, a 30-year-old man and resident of Alexandria was taken into custody and charged with felony malicious wounding. He is being held without bond.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the APD Det. Escobar at 703-746-6819.





The National Park Service sprayed the GW Memorial Parkway on Sunday, January 5, preparing for the anticipated snowstorm.



Trucks at Fort Hunt and Shenandoah Roads are ready to plow snow.

# When Snow and Ice Come, Be Salt Smart

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH  
THE GAZETTE

**T**his week's snowstorm not only brought a winter wonderland and slippery conditions, it also brought salt. Many homeowners and building, parking lot and highway managers apply salt to prevent ice from forming on pavement.

Winter salt is either rock salt (sodium chloride) or ice melt (a blend of sodium chloride, magnesium chloride and other salt) and bags were jumping off store shelves over the weekend.

## Salt Levels Rising

"Chloride concentrations in the Potomac River have risen substantially in recent decades," says the Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin, stressing that the river is a drinking water source for about 6.89 million people. Average winter concentrations have jumped almost ten-fold, the commission contends. Salt flowing off impervious surfaces is a major contributing factor. Over the past 30 years, salt has increased 104 percent in the Potomac River, reports the WSSC, the water utility for Maryland's Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

"Salt levels in the Potomac River and Occoquan Reservoir ... have risen noticeably over the past decades, with average concentrations more than doubling," reports the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. The reservoir is also a drinking water source for two million Northern Virginians.

"Deicing salt applied to areas such as roads, sidewalks and driveways is a major source of chloride in developed areas surrounding the upper Accotink Creek," a 2021 study by Wetland Studies and Solutions found, noting that "tracked concentrations spike in the winter months." Other Northern Virginia streams likely have similar conditions, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality officials maintained at that time.

## Safer Driving, but Some Harms

Highway managers apply salt to enhance driving safety. Salt can reduce vehicle crashes by 88 to 95 percent, reports the Northern Virginia Regional Commission. While modern mobility may require de-icing pavements, salt has some downsides.



A steady stream of customers were buying salt at the U.S. 1 Home Depot on Saturday.

## Information

Tips, [www.fairfaxwater.org/winter-salt](http://www.fairfaxwater.org/winter-salt) and <https://www.novaregion.org/1399/Northern-Virginia-Salt-Management-Strategy>  
Snow Plow Map, <https://plows.vdot.virginia.gov/public/map>  
Salt Webinars, Jan. 27 to 31, <https://wintersaltweek.org/>  
Fairfax County Guide to Snow, <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/snow/>

Salts do not biodegrade and can be washed into storm drains, streams, rivers and oceans.

Water treatment technologies typically cannot remove salt. Elevated salt in drinking water can create some health risks, especially for people on low-sodium diets.

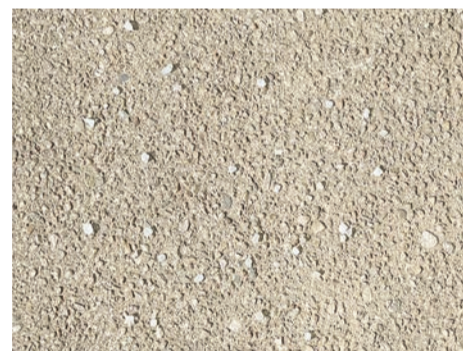
Because salt is corrosive, it can deteriorate plumbing and highway infrastructure like bridges. Salt accelerates metal corrosion in vehicles.

Animals attracted to road salt can create hazards. Birds can mistake road salt crystals for seeds or grit. There are approximately one million vehicle-animal crashes on roads each year, reports the American Automobile Association (AAA), killing 200 people and costing up to \$8 billion.

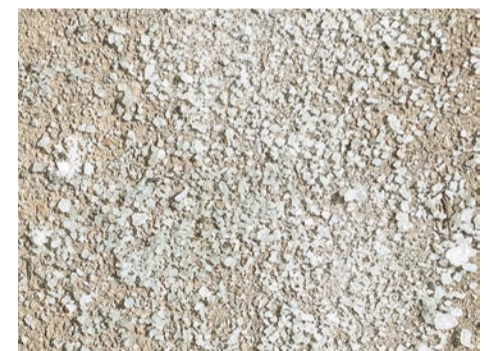
Excessive salt can also degrade soil and terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals. Salty sprays from vehicles, spreaders, the wind and runoff can kill trees and shrubs.

## Managing Icy Conditions

Several organizations have some "salt



Correct use of salt or ice-melt, with a few granules spread out.



INTERSTATE COMMISSION ON THE POTOMAC RIVER BASIN  
Incorrect use of salt or ice-melt

smart" tips. Here are some from Fairfax Water:

- ❖ Shovel early and often. Remove snow before it turns to ice.
- ❖ Use salt only after clearing snow and never to "burn off" snow. Spread it evenly.
- ❖ Clear and salt only in areas needed for safety.
- ❖ Use less. More salt does not mean more melting. A 12-ounce coffee mug of salt should be enough for a 20-foot driveway or about 10 sidewalk squares.
- ❖ If temperatures drop below 15 degrees, do not use salt. It will not work. Try sand or native bird seed.
- ❖ After the ice melts, sweep remaining salt into safe storage.
- ❖ Channel downspout water to drain onto ground areas rather than impervious walks and driveways where it will run off.

## Managing Roads

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is responsible for 14,238 miles of Northern Virginia roads and begins plowing when two inches of snow have fallen, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck told constituents in his Jan. 3 newsletter.

When problematic weather is predicted, VDOT pre-treats some roads with a salt and water mix called brine, "to help prevent a bond from forming between the pavement and icy precipitation, making it helpful for crews to make roads passable," says VDOT's website.

VDOT's snow removal priorities are as follows: first interstate highways and limited-access roadways; then, primary roads and major secondary roads; low-volume secondary roads.



# WINTER WONDERLAND



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

An emergency vehicle stands by along the George Washington Parkway in North Old Town.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

A snow plow clears Howard Street near Inova Alexandria Hospital.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

A snowy Founders Park overlooking the Potomac River.



PHOTO BY KEITH LAWSON MOORE

Old Town at night during the city's first snowstorm Jan. 6.



PHOTO BY 'MANGO' MIKE ANDERSON

John Carlyle Square Park after the Jan. 6 snowstorm.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Families play in the snow at the foot of King Street during the Jan. 6 snowstorm.

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ❖ JANUARY 9-22, 2025 ❖ 7





Past and current members of City Council gather for a photo at a roast of outgoing Mayor Justin Wilson Dec. 15, 2024.



Former Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson with his mother, Leslie Tourigny, at a fundraiser roast in his honor.



Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay, right, presents outgoing Mayor Justin Wilson with shirt from John R. Lewis High School.

# Toasts, Roasts and Gratitude

## Roast for outgoing mayor raises \$15k for local charities.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**F**ormer Mayor Justin Wilson was honored during his waning days in office as more than 200 elected officials, friends, family and community members gathered Dec. 15, 2024, at The Atrium for a comedic roast for the outgoing mayor.

The tribute served as a fundraiser for Carpenter's Shelter and ALIVE!, raising more than \$15,000 for the two local nonprofits.

Michelle Millben and Clark Mercer served as co-emcees for the evening, which featured speakers including U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8), Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jeff McKay and Councilwoman and now Mayor Alyia Gaskins.

Wilson's monthly and at times lengthy Council Connection newsletters were the topic of many jokes, as was Wilson's legendary social media presence.

"We thought it would be fitting to read from one of Justin's monthly newsletters," Mercer said to the crowd. "It goes on forever. When you get this thing, you have a decision to make. Do you read Justin's newsletter, or do you watch the trilogy of Lord of the Rings?"

Wilson first entered public office in 2007. He served eight years on city council with three as vice mayor before being elected mayor in 2018. Wilson did not seek re-election for a third term and has been succeeded by City Councilwoman Alyia Gaskins.

"Justin has given me a lot of advice during this transition," Gaskins deadpanned. "He told me it was important to have a signature style as mayor. While I appreciate Justin's style advice, khaki in rotating shades of tan will be left in 2024."

Beyer recalled meeting Wilson on the campaign trail in 1989 when the then



Rep. Don Beyer, right, congratulates Justin Wilson at a roast of the outgoing mayor Dec. 15, 2024.

**"Whether you are on this dais or not, we are going to feel your legacy and experience what you have left."**

— Mayor Alyia Gaskins on the retirement of Justin Wilson

13-year-old was handing out literature at a voting precinct.

Wilson's mother, Leslie Tourigny was on hand for the festivities and remembers that day.

"How quickly the time has gone from that first meeting," Tourigny said. "I wouldn't say that Justin always had political aspirations, but he did always have aspirations to serve. I'm not surprised he was successful but more importantly he is a wonderful husband, father and son."

McKay, a close friend of Wilson since college, read a tongue-in-cheek proclamation calling Wilson Alexandria's "resident data geek, ensuring every decision came with ample graphs, metrics, and pivot tables."

When Wilson took to the stage, he began with a nod towards McKay.

"Jeff, thanks for coming," Wilson said. "I appreciate that you wanted to get dinner at a place that has passable restaurants."

He then turned serious as he thanked those in attendance.

"It's been such an honor and incredible privilege to work with you on so many different things," Wilson said. "We have done incredible things in this community and it's not me, it's all of us together. We've worked together to do incredible things, to build schools, to make it easier to get around our community. To develop new parks, all the things that we've done together, it's been all of us working together and that's what

makes this job so much fun."

His highest praise was for his wife, Alex Crawford-Batt,

"I have been able to do this because I have an absolutely incredible family," Wilson said. "My wife is the reason I am here in Alexandria. She is an incredible partner and our kids are successful because of her and the sacrifices she has made."

Setting the jokes aside, Gaskins wrapped up comments saying, "Whether you are on this dais or not, we are going to feel your legacy and experience what you have left. We are grateful for your service."

Added Millben, "All of us in some way have been inspired to serve in different ways because of Justin."



Carpenter's Shelter executive director Shannon Steene, left, and ALIVE! executive director Jenn Ayers give remarks at the fundraiser roast for outgoing Mayor Justin Wilson Dec. 15, 2024, at The Atrium.



# ENTERTAINMENT

DEC. 12 TO JAN. 12

**A Gentle Unroot: A Latinx Perspective.** At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Curated by Claudina Hannon. Artist Reception: Sunday, Dec. 15, 4 - 6 p.m. Artist Talk: Sunday, Jan. 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.

JAN. 1 - FEB. 23, 2025

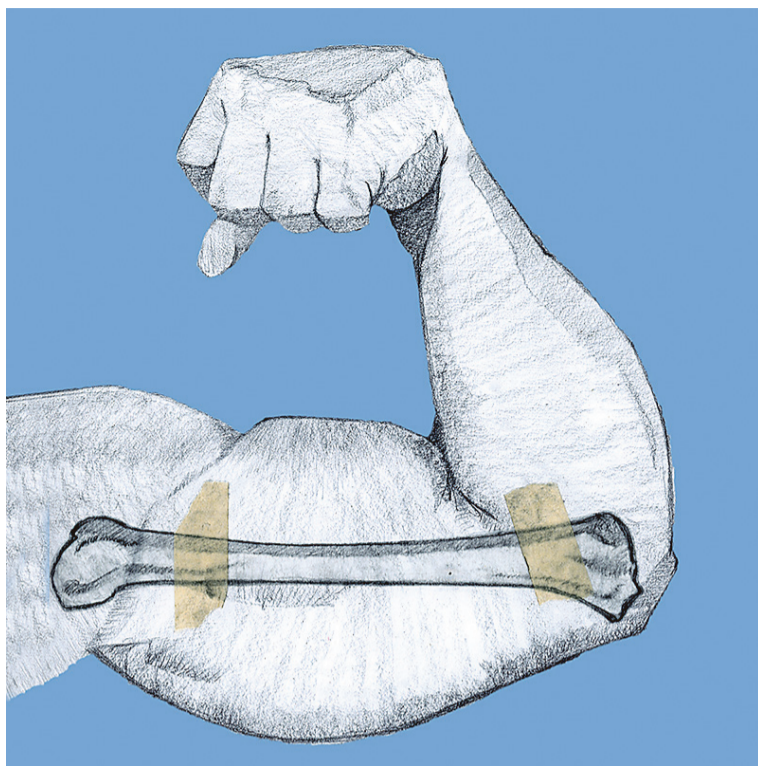
**Ice & Lights at Cameron Run** offers daytime ice skating on weekends/holidays throughout January and February.

JAN. 3 TO FEB. 1

**"Visual Humor."** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. A lighthearted art exhibit that explores how humor sparks the imagination. Opening Reception on Friday, January 3, 7-9 p.m. to meet curator Dr Erica Hughes and the artists. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at Del-RayArtisans.org/exhibits

THURSDAY, JAN. 13

**Art, Wine & Cheese.** 6-7:30 p.m. At the Nepenthene Gallery, 7918 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria. Featuring Dick Jemison's artwork, "Oracle 1987." Dick's artworks have been represented by the most well-known Southwestern U.S. art galleries: Elaine Horwitch



Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Alexandria presents "Visual Humor" from Jan. 3 to Feb. 1, 2025.

Galleries (Scottsdale, Santa Fe, Sedona, and Palm Springs), Carson-Shapiro Art Gallery (Vail and Denver), Joanne Lyon (Aspen), Siegal Gallery (New York) and Riva Yares. Dick's artwork and his African pot collection are a part of the permanent collection of the Birmingham Museum of Art.

THURSDAY, JAN. 20

**Art, Wine & Cheese.** 6-7:30 p.m. At the Nepenthene Gallery, 7918 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria. Featuring Winter Solstice Exhibit: Six Local Artists. The opening event will be Thursday January 23 and will feature original works by six local artists: Celia Chadwick, Lesley Clarke, Todd Key, Camille Kouyoumdjian, Nancy Ramsey, and Lori Welch.



A Gentle Unroot: A Latinx Perspective can be seen now through Jan. 12, 2025 at The Athenaeum in Alexandria.

THURSDAY/JAN. 30  
**Coffee & Connections.** 8:30-9:30 a.m. At Wegmans Carlyle, Alexan-

dria. The Chamber ALX's Profes-

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

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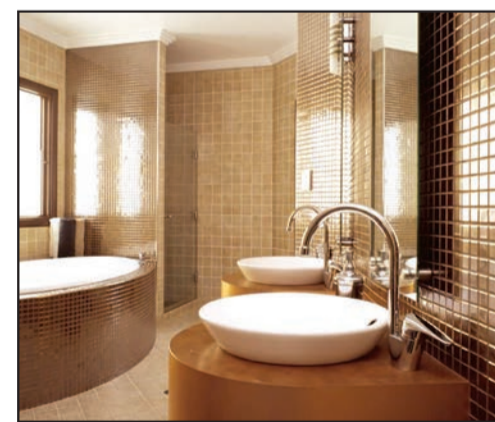
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# CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 11

sional Women's Network January Coffee & Connections. Kick off the new year by networking with the best and brightest women (and men) from around the region at the first Professional Women's Network Coffee & Connections of 2025.

## ALEXANDRIA RESTAURANT WEEK

**Alexandria Restaurant Week returns January 31 to February 9, 2025.** For 10 days and two weekends, nearly 100 restaurants will offer a \$30, \$40 or \$50 prix fixe dinner for one. Plus, find special fast casual offers.

[https://visitaalexandria.com/restaurants/restaurant-week/?mc\\_cid=6333e6a5dc&mc\\_eid=c8aed55232](https://visitaalexandria.com/restaurants/restaurant-week/?mc_cid=6333e6a5dc&mc_eid=c8aed55232)

## FEB. 7 TO MARCH 1

**The "MeWOW: Fabulous Felines" exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Celebrate the mysterious and fascinating world of cats with "feline forward" artwork. Opening Reception on Friday, February 7, 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6pm, Fridays 12-9pm, Saturdays & Sundays 12-6pm. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits](http://DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits)

## THE BIRCHMERE

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

## JANUARY

- Fri. 10: The Martin Sexton Abbey Road Show \$45.00
- Sat. 11: Last Train Home \$35.00
- Thu. 16: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone \$59.50
- Fri. 17: EagleMania – The World's Greatest Eagles Tribute Band \$45.00
- Sat. 18: Kindred The Family Soul \$75.00
- Sun. 19: Kindred The Family Soul \$75.00
- Mon. 20: OMAR \$45.00
- Tue. 21: All You Need Is Love: Celebrate The Beatles in John Lennon's 85th Year! \$55.00
- Wed. 22: Langhorne Slim & Oliver Wood \$39.50
- Thu. 23: Chante Moore \$85.00
- Fri. 24: Chante Moore \$85.00 SOLD OUT!
- Sat. 25: Dar Williams with special guest Pat Byrne \$45.00
- Thu. 30: Jarrod Lawson \$45.00
- Fri. 31: Will Downing \$79.50
- Sat. Feb. 1: Will Downing \$79.50

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

- for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).
- Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City's most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email [FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com](mailto:FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com).
- STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, [stemvolunteers.org](http://stemvolunteers.org), during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).
- RSVP a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email [Carly Hubicki at Carly Hubicki@chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org](mailto:CarlyHubicki@chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org) or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP visit [www.rsvpnova.org](http://www.rsvpnova.org).
- Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit [www.spaceofherown.org](http://www.spaceofherown.org) and [www.spaceofhisown.org](http://www.spaceofhisown.org). For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at [sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov](mailto:sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov) or phone at 703-746-4687.
- Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email [Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com](mailto:BrianMorreale@gmail.com)

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## Obituary

## Obituary

### Nancy Norwood (Nichols) Van Metre, (1938-2024)



Nancy was born on January 11, 1938, to Ruth Landers (Johnson) Nichols and William Hart Nichols in Weston, Massachusetts. A prankster, a girl scout, a camper, an athlete, an animal lover, a gardener, and an adventurer, she grew up outdoors, roughhousing with the family goats; playing practical jokes on her much older siblings, Bill and Betsy; palling around with her cousin Pete and best friend, Sue; and riding her industrialist grandfather's miniature train, the Ella Cinders. As a teen she cycled the Canadian Rockies and the Swiss Alps with a girl group. On the former trip, she was chased down a hill by a grizzly bear and, just as the road rose again, made her getaway when a red sports car heroically zipped between girl and bear.

She majored in math at Wheaton College in Norton, MA. She loved numbers and puzzles. Her college roommates and lifelong friends, Trudy and BJ, report that she got so frustrated writing English essays that when one called for footnotes, she threw the pages on the ground, took off her shoes, and hopped all over the papers, yelling "I'm making footnotes!"

She graduated in 1960 and married the love of her life, Lt. James "Jim" Merle Van Metre, that same year. She traded a bucolic New England childhood for decades of adventure as a Navy wife, organizing more than a dozen moves for a growing family, hosting countless dinners and parties, and supporting the wives and partners of the officers with whom Jim served. As a captain's wife she was known to check in on the ship's wives weekly when the submarine was at sea, typically for a two-month tour.

As busy as the Navy kept her, she made time to lead girl scout troops, plant gardens, sew clothes for her four kids (matching outfits!), sing in church choirs, plan backyard birthday parties, fundraise for her college, master crosswords and sudoku, and supervise math homework (sadly her math gene failed to activate in her children, lighting up instead in a few lucky grandchildren).

When her kids were older, she took a job as a college and career counselor at Mount Vernon High School in Virginia, creating the school's first career center. This work filled her with great pride and satisfaction. Nancy was a doer and a helper. Helping young people, either to find their path or navigate a difficult period of life, was her particular calling. She also trained to be a Stephen minister with this goal in mind.

Nancy retired in 1992 and the high school named the career center for her. She and Jim enjoyed a long retirement together, travelling with their beloved Pippa group and dear friends, Jack and Mary; serving as leaders in their church and in their colleges' alumni(ae) associations; and spending as much time as they could on Kezar Lake, in Maine, and at Capon Springs & Farms, a resort in West Virginia. They have many good friends in both places.

Nancy died of the effects of dementia on December 13, 2024, at Ginger Cove Retirement Community in Annapolis, Maryland, where she and Jim moved in 2017. With all she lost to the disease, she never lost her wonderful smile, a smile that could warm any heart, light any room. A smile so memorable that almost every kind condolence her family has received includes mention of it.

Her family thinks it is somehow fitting, though also impossibly sad, to lose Nancy at Christmastime. It was her favorite season. She seemingly owned an infinite number of Christmas sweaters, some of which she had knit herself and which she (eek!) sometimes wore seasonally inappropriately. She had a truly epic Christmas card list. She loved singing the Christmas cantata, in her very low alto, every year at her beloved Washington Farm United Methodist Church. She could bang out a mean Christmas carol on the piano. She needlepointed stockings for every family member and was famous for her Christmas Eve lasagna. (No one needs to know that she, a New Englander, made it with cottage cheese.)

Nancy was one of those great humans who accomplishes so much without ever seeking praise or fame. She believed in service but was no saint. She was rascally and silly and stubborn and reticent. She could even, occasionally, show her temper when Jim had been away at sea too long and their kids were reenacting scenes from Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom. (Beware the red-handled spatula!)

She was preceded in death by her parents, Ruth and Hart; her brother, Bill; and sister, Betsy. She is survived by her husband, Jim; her children, Lauren, Carolyn, Susan, and Steven; their spouses, Peter, Jon, Pete, and Bonnie. And ten (perfect!) grandchildren: Lindsay, Audrey, Analise, Sidney, Abigail, Nicola, Olivia, Gabriella, Jacob, and Perrin. Nancy adored her nieces and nephews: Nancy and Jeff Galvin, Judy Paul, Billy and Susie Nichols. Nancy G. and Nancy V. had a particularly close and loving friendship.

Her family would like to give special thanks to the staff and residents of Baxter Home Health Care Services and Ginger Cove for making her last days warm and comfortable. Family and friends are invited to celebrate Nancy's life on Saturday, January 11 at 11 am at Calvary United Methodist Church, 301 Rowe Boulevard, Annapolis, MD. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to the Girl Scouts of America.

## Point Taken



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Monday sometime, unbeknownst to me, I stepped on a spikey thing (not "a pop top"), but I did "cruise on back home." It wasn't until later when I took my right sneaker off and couldn't pull my foot out that I saw the rusty nail-ish thing that had penetrated the sole of my sneaker and then embedded itself in the ball of my foot, thereby preventing an easy removal (I was attached, sort of). However, after 15-plus years of miscellaneous chemotherapy, not only do I have neuropathy (as a side effect) in both feet, but I also have frozen/numb-ish feet (fortunately, no other extremities are affected). As a result, I didn't feel the penetration. Only later, as I've described, did I see what had gone in.

Naturally, being a blockhead and stubborn male, I did nothing about this intrusion. I don't even think I told my wife Dina about it. My theory and reasoning concerning this kind of possible medical event is not addressing it immediately and expecting/hoping that neglect will somehow lead to healing: wrong! And certainly not the smartest move by a long-term cancer patient who presumably has a compromised immune system, given that I'm still on chemotherapy/targeted therapy seven days a week, every week. That being said, and I hope I don't jinx myself by saying it, but, I am never sick; cold, flu, allergies, nothing. I do take a lot of supplements, less than before, but I can't say for sure whether they're contributing to my overall good health or not. I'll be naïve and say: I imagine they're helping. After all, I am 15 years, give or take, past the original "13 months to two years" prognosis I received back in Feb. 2009.

But when medical incidents, like this spikey, rusty nail occur/intrude in life, common sense must prevail. I have always been told by my previous oncologist and medical staff not to hesitate but rather always call/come in when anything/everything happens. Being a cancer patient is serious business and offers little advantage to those who wait. If one is ever to have a chance minimizing the effects of whatever is causing pain, et cetera, it is better to be safe than sorry – or worse. Still, human nature (or at least my nature) sometimes wins out and the smarter more prudent action is not taken. My incorrect assumption is somewhere between the less said the better and I'll be all right in a day or two. Hardly the right play when you have Papillary Thyroid cancer with a side of stage IV chronic kidney disease and have had meetings recently with a dialysis expert. I may be a cynic (may be?) but it's unlikely being slow on the uptick is going to keep me alive. I need to be Quick-draw McGraw if I'm going to defeat this enemy. And if cancer isn't the health enemy number one, I shudder to think who's vying for the title. Cancer doesn't need a competitor, it's scary as hell on its own.

And maybe it's that fear which haunts me, going into a hospital and never coming out. In fact, the end of this saga is, I finally went to Urgent Care after an appointment I had previously scheduled with and orthopedic doctor to address a chronic sore knee. The knee I knew to address, but the rusty spike I thought I should ignore. Good thinking, Ken. Hopefully, I've learned my lesson. I really don't suppose the longer I'm an active cancer patient, the more able I'll be to fend off whatever medical malady presents. It's probably the exact opposite. Da! I guess I'm afraid of the slippery slope.

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

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