

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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APRIL 3, 2025

Take Down Tobacco

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Sheriff Sean Casey, left, is joined by ACHS students Laneis Abdelgawad and Khamille Muhammad and APD Captain Mike May at the Take Down Tobacco Day event April 1 at Alexandria City High School.



Student volunteers pose for a group photo prior to spreading out across the city to educate vendors on the dangers of tobacco use April 1 at ACHS.

Local students join national initiative to end tobacco use.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

A coalition of students at Alexandria City High School joined forces April 1 to participate in Take Down Tobacco Day, a national initiative to spread awareness about the dangers of nicotine use.

Take Down Tobacco is the signature platform of Tobacco-Free Kids, a campaign to empower young people to fight and ultimately end tobacco use.

"I am excited to be involved with Take Down Tobacco because it benefits kids' health and our future," said Jewel Harris, a freshman at ACHS. "We can help people from overdosing and dying at a young age. As a young person I hope I can lead by example by not doing drugs and that others will follow my lead."

The participating students, part of the school's JROTC program, gathered for an assembly before spreading out across the city to talk with vendors about the dangers of tobacco use. They also reminded vendors that it is illegal to sell any

tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21.

"I grew up in the city at a time when smoking was legal at 18," said Sheriff Sean Casey, a 2000 graduate of ACHS. "I saw people get addicted to cigarettes and the harm it causes. Please continue to educate each other on this. Please remember to tell each other it's not ok to smoke or vape. At the end of the day it's a detriment to you, to your friends and to your family."

Local participation in the national campaign, now in its second year, was coordinated by Alex Lomax, board chair of the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of

"As a young person I hope I can lead by example by not doing drugs and that others will follow my lead."

— ACHS freshman Jewel Harris

Alexandria. Mayor Alyia Gaskins commended the students for their participation in the event.

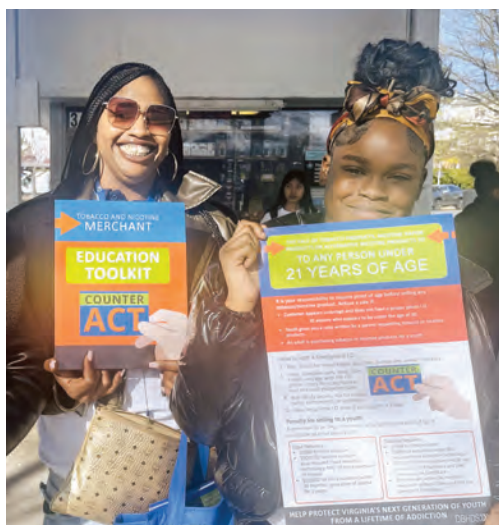
"Everything you are about to do today is critical to making Alexandria the type of community that I know each and every one of us wants to see," Gaskins said. "The mission is clear – to go out and raise awareness about the impact of tobacco use in our city, its effect

on young people, and why we want to see stores, advertising agencies and others stop promoting tobacco products to young people."

Following the brief assembly, students broke into groups with each given a tool kit that included a route list of vendors and retailers that sell tobacco products across the city.

"This is something we take seri-

ously in our community," Gaskins said. "Only 4 percent of teens here use tobacco products but the reality is it will never be good enough until we get to zero. We know that tobacco use is still one of the leading causes of preventable death and any action that we can take to save one of our friends, to save one of our neighbors, is essential to our health and wellbeing."



City Secondary School coordinator Jennifer Ford, left, and 10th grader Emari Chase hold information signs as part of Take Down Tobacco Day April 1 at ACHS.



A high school student talks to the attendant at a gas station at Bradlee Center as part of Take Down Tobacco Day April 1.



Mayor Alyia Gaskins, left, speaks to ACHS students as part of Take Down Tobacco Day April 1 at ACHS as senior Laneis Abdelgawad looks on.

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CHILDREN
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 Spring2Action
Alexandria's Spring Day
Presented by ACE for Alexandria

centerforalexandriaschildren.org



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

SUNRISE WALKS - Pediatric cancer survivor Bradley Olson, right, is joined by Sophia Bartrum to promote the upcoming April 27 Sunrise Walk to support the Sunrise Association, which operates summer day camps for children with cancer and their siblings free of charge. Olson, a graduate of Alexandria City High School, was diagnosed with Leukemia at the age of 12 and Bartrum's sister is a pediatric cancer survivor. The Walk will take place at National Harbor. Said Olson, "I'm doing my best to give back to the community that I feel I have benefitted from." For information or to register visit www.Sunrise-Walks.org

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Break Water Art Exhibit

Nekisha Durrett is latest in SiteSee public art installation.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The city unveiled its latest installation of public art with Break Water, seventh in the annual temporary SiteSee exhibits at Waterfront Park.

The sculpture by DC-based mixed media artist Nekisha Durrett will be on display through November 2025. It draws inspira-

tion from Alexandria's waterfront being a place where natural forces and human activity intersect. Break Water's centerpiece is crafted from blackened wood to evoke the sidewheel of the steamboat River Queen, a vessel that symbolized Black ownership and opportunity. The River Queen was mysteriously destroyed by fire in

1911 shortly after its purchase by Lewis Jefferson, a Black entrepreneur. Encircled by black sandbags, the piece honors the resilience and strength of Black communities, referencing both protection and endurance during crises.

According to the artist, "In Break Water, these black sandbags serve not only as mere barriers; they symbolize the ocean's breakwaters and connect to the American scholar Fred Moten's concept of the jazz 'break' as a site of Black resistance and innovation – a moment of disruption and possibility within the relentless flow of time and history."

Surrounding the sculpture is a ground mural of tangled taut ropes called "Life Lines," which tether

the artwork to the park's architectural elements, anchoring it against a symbolic undercurrent. The life lines are intended to represent events, people, places, rituals and traditions that are part of Alexandria's history. The sculpture and mural together were created as a tribute to Alexandria's Black community.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

A visitor admires the new exhibit Break Water by artist Nekisha Durrett, seventh in the series of SiteSee public art along the Alexandria waterfront.

"In Break Water, these black sandbags serve not only as mere barriers; they symbolize the ocean's breakwaters."

— Artist Nekisha Durrett

Health Survey Results

Alexandria Health Department (AHD) has released the results of the 2024 community-wide health survey, part of the City's ongoing Community Health Assessment. The Health Department recorded a 30-minute webinar describing the major takeaways and shared the full data online.

The survey, conducted in Fall 2024, asked residents to select Alexandria's biggest health issues, strengths, and opportunities for improvement.

More than 2,000 people responded to the survey on paper and online. The demographics of respondents such as their ZIP code, race/ethnicity, preferred language, household income, and age mir-

rored those of the Alexandria population. Highlights include:

- ❖ Alexandria's biggest health issues: Mental health; alcohol, drug, and opiate use; and obesity, physical activity, and nutrition.

- ❖ Alexandria's biggest strengths: Diversity; opportunities for involvement and belonging in the community; and educational opportunities.

- ❖ Factors that would most improve Alexandria's health: Safe, healthy and affordable housing; access to mental health and substance use services; and support for children, youth, and families.

- ❖ Answers varied across different populations. For instance, older adults and those

with higher education levels cited chronic health conditions as a top issue, while individuals with lower incomes selected dental health.

Visit the CHA/CHIP website to explore the full survey results and the recorded webinar. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/health-department/alexandrias-community-health-assessment-improvement-plan>

Alexandria Health Department will use the results of the survey in addition to a significant data analysis as part of the Community Health Assessment, a comprehensive review of the state of health in Alexandria. The Community Health Assessment will be released by the end of June 2025 and will

be used to help build the next 5-year Community Health Improvement Plan.

Alexandrians still have the opportunity to weigh in on the Community Health Assessment by submitting pictures related to health for a community photo album. More details will be shared soon. Residents can also join a Community Walk and Talk in the Landmark/Van Dorn area on Saturday, April 26 at 2 p.m. Find more details and RSVP online.

Questions about the survey, the CHA, what's next, and how to get involved? Visit the CHA website or email your questions to healthmatters@vdh.virginia.gov

Let the Music Play

James Bland music participants honored.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Participants in the James Bland Music Competition were celebrated at the Lyceum Feb. 23 as winners were named by the host Lions Club and Lions of Virginia Bland Foundation.

Chloe Lee, an 11th grade student at the National Cathedral School, placed first in the competition. She performed the Viola Concerto by William Walton. Second place went to violinist Satchit Mainali, an 11th grade student at Thomas Jefferson High School. Mainali played the Introduction et Rondo Capriccioso, Opus 28 by Camille Saint-Saens. Colleen Dugger Munoz, a senior at Thomas Jefferson High School, took third place with a performance of Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor.

"It takes a lot of courage and a lot of work to get to this point, to come here and play in front of a live audience," said Osman Kivrak, one of the judges of the competition. Other judges included Ronal Butler, a past board chair of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, and Teri Lazar, a violinist with the National Gallery of Art String Quartet.

The competition is traditionally held during Black History Month as a memorial to African American musician and composer James Bland, who wrote traditional tunes as "Oh Dem Golden Slippers" and "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny." The latter was the state song of Virginia from 1940-1997.

Under the sponsorship of the Lions organization, the Bland Foundation has been providing performing opportunities as well as scholarships to gifted music students, both vocal and instrumental, since 1948.

The purpose of the foundation is to promote cultural and educational opportunities



Lions of Virginia Bland Foundation members, Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria members, elected officials, judges and contestants gather at the Lyceum Feb. 23 for the annual James Bland music competition.

for the musically talented young people in Virginia.

The program is open to any vocalist or instrumentalist sponsored by a Virginia Lions Club. Any resident of Virginia (or within the club jurisdiction) and attending elementary, junior, or senior high school is eligible to participate. Awards are provided by the State

Bland Committee including over \$25,000 yearly in state, regional, district, and local scholarships and cash awards.

Local sponsors included the Concerned Citizens Network of Alexandria (CCNA), the Foundation for the Advancement of Music Education, State Farm agent Rodney M. Louis, the Page 1 Foundation and Greene

Funeral Home.

"I can feel a sense of community in this competition which I don't really find in other competitions," said Lee, who has been playing the viola for about two years. "I am really grateful to be able to be able to compete here."

www.blandfoundation.org



Winner in the James Bland music competition include: Satchit Mainali, second place, Chloe Lee, first place, and Colleen Dugger Munoz, third place.



Anjan Patel, grade 6, performs Beethoven's Ninth in the James Bland music competition Feb. 23 at the Lyceum.



Chloe Lee, left, is presented her first-place award in the James Bland music competition by judge Osman Kivrak as Sheriff Sean Casey and CCNA's Col. Jim Paige look on Feb. 23 at the Lyceum.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Student Athletes Honored

ASC to host Nationals vs. Mets outing April 27.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria Sportsman's Club honored the high school March Athletes of the Month at its March 19 meeting at the Old Dominion Boat Club. The meeting featured presentations on high school spring sports teams.

ASC president Ryan Fannon presented awards to the following high school scholar-athletes: Chloe Lambert, lacrosse, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School; Ella Stohs, swimming, Alexandria City High School; Kendra Harris, lacrosse, Bishop Ireton High School; Ella Nick, swimming, Bishop Ireton High School; Joe Bucca, wrestling, Bishop Ireton High School; Jarrel Long, basketball, Alexandria Youth Recreation Program; Jack Gans, ice hockey, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School; Tobias Damico-Lassman, swimming, Alexandria City High School; Desmond Damico-Lassman, diving, Alexandria City High School; Colin Pollock, basketball, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School;

and Vincent Scheivert, lacrosse, Bishop Ireton High School.

The public is invited to join the ASC for its annual Take Me Out to the Ballgame event April 27 at 1:35 p.m. as the Washington Nationals take on the New York Mets at Nationals Park. For Nationals game tickets and/or additional event information, contact Frank Fannon at frank.fannon@gmail.com or at (703) 861-1864.

In May, the organization will hold its 68th Annual ASC Awards Banquet May 28 at the Westin Alexandria Old Town. For the first time, the ASC will award a scholarship for students who want to pursue vocational or technical education after graduating from high school. The purpose of this scholarship is to make education more accessible for students who want to gain specific skills and certifications for a trade or technical career. Inspired by the late local philanthropist Marion Moon, one vocational scholarship of \$2,500 will be awarded this spring to a high school senior in the City of Alexandria. Visit alexandriavasports.org for more information.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Alexandria Sportsman's Club president Ryan Fannon, left, presented March Athlete of the Month award to (front): Chloe Lambert, lacrosse, SSSAS; Ella Stohs, swimming, ACHS; Kendra Harris, lacrosse, BI; Ella Nick, swimming, BI; Joe Bucca, wrestling, BI; Jarrel Long, basketball, Alexandria Youth Recreation Program; Jack Gans, ice hockey, SSSAS. In back: Tobias Damico-Lassman, swimming, ACHS; Desmond Damico-Lassman, diving, ACHS; Colin Pollock, basketball, SSSAS; Vincent Scheivert, lacrosse, BI.

THE CHAMBER ALX

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Senior Services Honors Community Service



Senior Service of Alexandria board chair Christine Friedberg, left, stands with the 2025 community service award honorees at the SSA Gala March 29 at the Westin Alexandria. Honored were Col. Jim Paige, Jane King, Jack Fannon and Lucelle O'Flaherty, who received the community spirit award.



SSA honoree and past board chair Jack Fannon, second from right, with his wife Kelly, sister Sarah Reeves and Debbie Sese.



Former City Councilwoman Del Pepper with Police Chief Tarrick McGuire and Mindy Lyle.



Susan Haskew, Karl Bach and Stephanie Spahlinger.



Staff of platinum sponsor Goodwin Living pose for a group photo at the 2025 SSA Gala March 29 at the Westin Alexandria.



Former City Councilman Frank Fannon and Marsha Dupree check out the silent auction.



Past SSA board chair Donnie Wintermute and Jon Miller.

Sellout crowd raises \$185k for SSA.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

A sellout crowd of more than 400 attendees filled the ballroom of the Westin Alexandria Old Town Hotel March 29 as Senior Services of Alexandria raised more

than \$185,000 at its annual gala celebrating 57 years of serving the City of Alexandria.

"The gala was a fantastic success," said SSA executive director Mary Lee Anderson, who for the first time missed the evening after suffering a broken ankle due to a fall. "Thank goodness my staff is fantastic. The gala went perfectly. They are always so well organized and do a great job but this year they went above and beyond."

The evening's program highlighted SSA's vital work in the city and honored individuals who have

made a lasting impact on the lives of Alexandria's older adults.

The 2025 honorees were Jack Fannon, Jane King and Col. Jim Paige (ret), who were recognized with the Community Service Award. Lucelle O'Flaherty was presented with the Community Spirit Award.

For the first time the annual silent auction was held virtually as bidders were able to bid either online or in person. A limited ticket raffle was held for tickets to see music icons Billy Joel and Sting perform at Nationals Park in Sep-

tember.

"Our virtual auction went smoothly," Anderson said. "I think people really enjoyed that."

Presenting sponsor of the event was Benchmark at Alexandria www.seniorservicesalx.org

"The gala was a fantastic success."

— SSA executive director Mary Lee Anderson

Chris Moore, Division Chief of Aging and Adult Services.



Lawrence "Lucky" Elliott, Brenda Elliott, Sedella Brooks, Donnie Wintermute and Marshall Hespe.



SSA board chair Christine Friedberg, right, with past board chairs Donna Shaw, Lynnwood Campbell, Donnie Wintermute, Jack Fannon, Maribeth Bersani, Carl Behnke, Mark Roth, and Barbara Anderson.



Susan Kellom, seated, with Alex Crawford-Batt, Joe Swartz, Councilwoman Sarah Bagley, Councilman Kirk McPike, and Cele Garrett.



Bettie Samuels, Maria Delpozzo, Irene Blair and Connie Cyre.



Sheriff Sean Casey with Kai Paige Williams and Carolyn Grimes.

‘Native Gardens’

DC-based comedy playing now through April 13 at ACCT.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Spring is in the air and flowers are blooming in “Native Gardens,” the Karen Zacarias play that shines a comedic light on the delicate dynamics between neighbors.

Set in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C., “Native Gardens” is especially timely as the script addresses privilege, class and racism through the metaphor of gardening.

“Native Gardens is a comedy with a point,” said producer Marg Soroos. “We all can laugh at our preconceived notions that are frequently not what we anticipated. Reality can be quite different.”

Directed by Kate Ives, “Native Gardens” follows Pablo (Eddie Perez-Reyes) and Tania (Odette Gutierrez del Arroyo), a young Latino couple who are expecting a baby as they move into a historic Georgetown rowhouse. Next door are Virginia (Judy Lewis) and Frank (Chuck Dluhy), an older white couple.

Pablo is a high-powered attorney while Tania is working on her PhD. Their dream home is a fixer-upper, but Tania, an avid gardener, has plans to transform their outdoor space into a beautiful native garden.

Next door are Virginia and Frank Butley. Frank is a former long-term government employee with the General Services Administration who also has a passion for gardening. He and Tania initially bond over their mutual love for horticulture but tensions rise as she prefers an unencumbered indigenous garden to Frank’s more traditional European displays.

While Frank is determined to finally win the elusive Horticultural Society Best Garden Award, Pablo and Tania begin building a



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

Odette Gutierrez del Arroyo (Tania), Chuck Dluhy (Frank), Eddie Perez-Reyes (Pablo), and Judy Lewis (Virginia) in Native Gardens, playing now through April 13 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater. www.acctonline.org

fence to showcase their garden while entertaining law firm clients. In the process they discover that their property line is two feet into Frank’s beloved garden.

As friction escalates, the two couples show their true colors. Zacarias asks the question, can such different people from totally different backgrounds find a way to compromise?

“This is a wonderfully relevant play about our perceptions and our prejudices, our hopes and dreams, our strengths and our fragilities, and at the bottom of it all, the human connection we all have,” said Ives. “All these characters are right and all of them are wrong, depending on which side of the fence they’re on. As the audience, we get to see and sympathize with both sides and learn to be neighbors along with the characters.”

“Native Gardens” is playing now through April 13 at Aldersgate Church Community Theatre, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308. For tickets or more information visit www.acctonline.org.

What begins as a property debate soon spirals into a comedic border dispute, exposing both couples’ notions of race, taste, entitlement and privilege.

“All of the characters in this play are good people,” said Chuck Dluhy, who plays Frank. “I classify ‘Native Gardens’ as a comedy with a message, similar to any Norman Lear sit-

com of the 1970s. Frank says some things that might be considered racist, ageist or privileged and portraying him as sincerely innocent and ignorant rather than coming off as mean-spirited was a challenge.”

Despite the neighborly drama, the audience is treated to inside jokes that only come from living in the region with references to DC locales or jabs at government job stereotypes.

As Virginia, Lewis said she was challenged by the role.

“It was a challenge being ‘that’ white woman,” Lewis said. “I’m very liberal at heart, so to play part of a couple that’s a bit more grounded in a conservative lifestyle forced me to break down my judgement and see the other side, learn where they’re coming from.”

While Perez-Reyes could relate to his character’s drive to succeed and prove himself to his colleagues, his challenge was a common one to anyone living in the area.

“It was difficult identifying with a character who can afford to buy a house and comfortably support a family.”

In “Native Gardens,” Zacarias deftly weaves timely societal issues into fast-paced, humorous dialogue.

“I want the audience to recognize these characters as neighbors and even friends,” director Ives said. “I want them to recognize themselves, too, and remember that we all need a little grace now and then. And to remember that laughter - of which there is a lot in this play - is what gets us all through the day.”

“Native Gardens” is playing now through April 13 at Aldersgate Church Community Theatre, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308. For tickets or more information visit www.acctonline.org.

Info on Extending Express Lanes

VDOT is holding public meetings on its 495 Southside Express Lanes widening project.

VDOT, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and other federal, state and local agencies in Virginia and Maryland, is conducting an environmental study to potentially extend the express lanes system on the southern section of I-95/I-495 (Capital Beltway), by approximately 11 miles from the Springfield Interchange (I-95/I-395/I-495) in Fairfax County, Virginia, across the Woodrow Wilson Memorial Bridge, to the MD 210 interchange in Prince George’s County, Maryland. This location was identified in Virginia’s Commonwealth Transportation Board’s adopted I-95 Corridor Improvement Plan as an area for additional study.

VDOT will provide information at upcoming public meetings on the three alternatives under study to address identified transportation needs within the study area. These needs include extending and providing continuity of the express lanes system on I-495, providing additional travel choices, reducing congestion and improving travel reliability, improving safety, and providing consistency with local and regional plans. VDOT will also provide preliminary traffic analysis data and updates on study progress and ongoing coordination.

<https://www.vdot.virginia.gov/projects/northern-virginia-district/i-495-southside-express-lanes-study/>

Meeting times: 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.
Meeting format: Open house with a presentation at 7 p.m.

❖ Tuesday, April 1, 2025
West Potomac High School (Cafeteria)



VDOT

495 Express Lanes Proposed Project.

6500 Quander Rd., Alexandria, VA 22307

❖ Wednesday, April 2, 2025
Oxon Hill High School (Auditorium)

6701 Leyte Dr., Oxon Hill, MD 20745

❖ Monday, April 7, 2025

Thomas A. Edison High School (Cafeteria)

5801 Franconia Rd., Alexandria, VA 22310

❖ Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Nannie J. Lee Memorial Recreation Center

1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria,

VA 22314

The in-person meetings will be held from 6:30-8:30 p.m. The meeting format will include an open house with a presentation at 7 p.m. VDOT representatives will be present at various stations to answer questions.

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU APRIL 6

Artist Jeff Bohlander. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Through the language of mixed-media, collage, assemblage, and found objects, Jeff's narrative reflects our collective journey through the complexities of our time — from climate change and social constructs to migration and technological advancements.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

The Silent Narrator Exhibit. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Studio 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. Featuring a solo exhibition of photographic work by Irina Dakhnovskaia-Lawton. The Silent Narrator explores the relationship between time and memory, storytelling, and the power of photographs and photo albums.

NOW THRU APRIL 9

"Faces of 1" -- Public Art by Michael Alfano. At Nepenthe Gallery, Hollin Hall, Alexandria. Michael is the artist and sculptor behind the sculptures in the "Faces of 1" public art project on Route One/Richmond Highway in Fairfax County.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

"Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing." At The Little Theatre of Alexandria. Set in the jazzy streets and of modern-day New Orleans, Shakespeare's timeless Rom-Com comes to life. "There is a merry war" between the sharp-tongued Beatrice and Benedick, whose playful banter masks their growing affection for each other while their friends conspire to bring them together. Meanwhile, the earnest Claudio and Hero's romance is put to the test by a series of deceptions. This romantic comedy promises an exhilarating ride from start to finish. Thursdays – Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sunday Matinees at 2 p.m. Opening Night Pre-Show Party is Saturday, March 29, from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m.

APRIL 4-26

The "Synchronous" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features artwork by Del Ray Artisans outstanding volunteers. These members help make Del Ray Artisans a thriving organization that fosters community and acceptance. Come celebrate their dedication and enjoy their artwork. Opening Reception on Friday, April 4, 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details: Del-RayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Little Hunting Creek Cleanup. 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Meet at Janna Lee Ave. Bridge. Join Scott Surovell and Delegate Paul Krizek on Saturday, April 5 to clean up Little Hunting Creek. Sign up at scottsuovell.org/2025cleanup.

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

First Saturday Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks,



"Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing" is playing at The Little Theatre of Alexandria now through April 19, 2025.

and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Garden Talk - Design a Deer Resistant Garden. 10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (Adults) Discover how to prevent uninvited deer from helping themselves to your garden by planting deer resistant trees, shrubs and perennials and by using a combination of fencing and repellents. Extension Master Gardeners will help you develop an effective strategy to protect your garden. \$12 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code KE6.EBFL

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Garden Artists - Spring Wildflowers. 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (5-Adult) The spring flowers are at peak bloom. Enjoy a walk through the gardens and native plant trail as we check out stunning spring flowers. Then we will make a spring flower craft. All attendees, including parents, must be registered for the program to control size. \$10 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code NP2.1OXI

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

"Byline Old Town: A Walking Tour of Early Journalism in Alexandria." 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Near City Hall/Market Square. Led by journalist and author Michael Pope, this engaging walking tour will explore Alexandria's long and diverse press history, from the city's first newspaper in 1784 to its pioneering television figures. Participants will visit key historical sites around Market Square and learn about the early days of Alexandria's newspapers—including partisan, Black, independent, and chain publications—and the journalists who shaped public dis-

course. Tickets: \$20 for Members | \$25 for Non-Members

SATURDAY/APRIL 5

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

SUNDAY/APRIL 6

Textile Treasures. 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (Adult) From flax and wool to silks and taffetas, textiles have figured in every society throughout history. Artist and collector Caroline Hottenstein reveals laborious past methods of textile care and demonstrates the art and science of it today. Learn how proper cleaning, handling and storage will preserve your heirloom textile treasures. \$48 (lecture + tea); \$23 (lecture only).

SUNDAY/APRIL 6

MEG Photo Critique. 10:30 a.m. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 312, Alexandria. Receive valuable feedback from fine art photographer Sarah Hood Salomon and connect with fellow artists. It's a great way to invest in your skills! Photographers at all levels are welcome, and there is no cost to attend. Printed images only, please.

APRIL 11-12

2025 Spring Garden Market. At River Farm, 7931 E. Boulevard Dr., Alexandria. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Presented by American Horticultural Society, celebrate the start of gardening season with the Spring Garden Market at River Farm, headquarters of the American Horticultural Society. This much-anticipated annual event brings together plant, seed and garden accessory retailers, nature-focused artists and authors, gardening experts,

food vendors, and fun activities for the whole family to enjoy. Proceeds benefit the operations, beautification and preservation of River Farm, part of George Washington's original farmland and the centerpiece where the AHS promotes the art, science, and joy of growing plants. Entry fee is \$5 per individual (walkers, cyclists) or \$20 per car which includes parking and entry for all passengers. Restrictions and exceptions apply. Tickets to attend Spring Garden Market will be available to purchase online at the beginning of March at www.ahsgardening.org/spring-garden-market-2025. Call (703) 768-5700 ext. 114.

MONDAY/APRIL 14

Garden Sprouts Spring - Nature Playgroup. 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road – Alexandria. (3-5 yrs.) Your preschooler will enjoy nature-themed activities and crafts while you meet other playgroup parents one Monday a month. Through games, songs, activities and a garden walk, we will explore seasonal topics. Kids must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who does not need to register for the program. \$12 per child. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code ZHJ.53KE

FRIDAY/APRIL 18

Wright at Twilight. 6:30 to 9 p.m. At Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Enjoy the iconic Pope-Leighey House, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, at twilight! Sit back with complimentary snacks and a glass of wine, as you watch the changing light bring out the beautiful architectural details of the house. Play games in the yard, listen to period music, and tour the house at your leisure as the sun slowly sets. Tickets are \$30, with one drink included in the price of your ticket. Questions? Call (703) 780-4000 or email woodlawn@savingplaces.org. Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

SATURDAY/APRIL 19

Lafayette at Woodlawn. 12-1 p.m. At

Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Learn about the Marquis de Lafayette, French Hero of the American Revolution, his 1824 return to America and his visit to Woodlawn, home of Eleanor Parke Custis and Lawrence Lewis. Cost \$25 per adult and \$12 per student (K-12). Visit the website: <https://www.woodlawnpopeleighey.org/upcomingevents>

THURSDAY/APRIL 24

Day of Remembrance for Victims of Holocaust. 12 p.m. At Market Square, 301 King Street, Alexandria. The City of Alexandria hosts the annual ceremony as part of the weeklong commemoration of the national Days of Remembrance, observed from April 20 through April 27. The event is free and open to the public. In case of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the City Council Chamber, located on the second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street. The guest speaker will be Richard Breitman, distinguished professor, writer, and a leading historian on the Holocaust. For more info, call 703-746-5565.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Northern Alexandria Native Plant Sale. 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In the parking lot of The Church of St. Clement, 1701 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Parking in Christ the King's parking lot, across the street on Oakcrest, will be allowed this spring. Find native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade! Ten or 11 vendors from Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania will be hosted at this event – the largest native plant sale in the D.C. metro region! Vendors are listed on the sale website at www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org. The sale is organized and run by volunteers. Contact Scott Knudsen at 571-232-0375 or cscottknudsen@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Big Flea Market. At Del Ray, Alexandria. The @mvsapta Big Flea is returning and they need your help! Clear out the clutter, reclaim your space, and give your stuff a second life and support the kids at Mount Vernon Community School. Needed items include small furniture, home goods, books, toys, tools, sporting goods, small appliances, and décor (note: no clothing, linens, or large furniture, please). Visit thebigflea.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Patrick O'Flaherty Performs. At Saint Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Rd., Alexandria. 7 p.m. Born to Irish parents in Minnesota, Patrick O'Flaherty was raised from the age of 2 in their native Galway, Ireland. Playing the harmonica as a young boy in Connemara started him on a path to a professional music career that has now spanned nearly four decades. As a dedicated promoter of the Celtic Arts, he performs as a singer and songwriter and a highly respected player of the harmonica, bouzouki, mandolin, button accordion, banjo, and mandola. Patrick is a native Gaelic speaker, and his performances include original and traditional songs in Gaelic. Info and tickets at

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 11



Amazing Seaside Compound \$1,250,000

3+ acre parcel located just 1 hour south of Ocean City on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Main house has 4 bedrooms & bathrooms, guest cottage w/garages, 3rd bldg has office w/garages & car lift. Boat, fish & crab from the deep water pier with floating dock. Safe, private and very low taxes.

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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 9

<https://focusmusic.org/shows#sat-4-26-patrick-o-flaherty>

SATURDAY/APRIL 26

Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Five of Old Town Alexandria's most beautiful and historic private homes and gardens will open to visitors as part of the 92nd annual Historic Garden Week in Virginia. This event invites visitors to experience the timeless beauty of Old Town's historic homes and gardens, showcased at the peak of spring bloom. The tour features stunning floral arrangements designed by garden club members. Advance purchase tickets are \$55 each and are available at www.vagardenweek.org or \$60 at the Alexandria Visitor's Center (221 King Street) on tour day. In addition to the featured five homes and gardens, tour tickets provide access to Carlyle House, Lee-Fendall House, River Farm, Gunston Hall, George Washington's Mount Vernon, Green Spring Gardens, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church on the same day.

SATURDAY/MAY 3

Wine & Art Night. 7 to 10 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden, 614 Oronoco Street, Alexandria.

This exciting evening will feature wine tastings from Virginia's top wineries, an art showcase, a silent auction, and gourmet food and desserts, all in support of preserving Alexandria's rich history.

Event Highlights:

- Wine tastings from Prince Michel Vineyard & Winery and Slater Run Vineyards;
- Artwork from Barbara Cooper

(paintings), Barbara Nowak (ceramics), Candace Stribling (jewelry), and Jenny Nordstrom (photography);

-Music provided by local band, DC Ambiance;

-Delicious food and dessert from Bittersweet Catering and Mari-beth's Bakery;

Tickets: \$75 General Admission | \$125 VIP Admission (includes exclusive early access and a special reception)

THE BIRCHMERE

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

APRIL

Wed. 2: Al Di Meola Electric Band 'Land Of The Midnight Sun 2025 Tour' \$59.50

Thu. 3: Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives \$76.00

Fri. 4: Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives \$76.00

Sat. 5: Tom Rush with Matt Nakoa & special guest Jeff Daniels \$49.50

Sun. 6: SOLAS "30th Anniversary Tour" \$35.00

Tue. 8: Damien Escobar "Gemini Tour" \$69.50

Wed. 9: An Evening with Cowboy Junkies - Celebrating 40 Years \$65.00

Thu. 10: An Evening with Cowboy Junkies - Celebrating 40 Years \$65.00 SOLD OUT!

Fri. 11: WAR \$85.00

Sat. 12: WAR \$85.00

Sun. 13: The Seldom Scene "Remains To Be Scene" Album Release Show! \$35.00

Wed. 16: Valerie June "Owls, Omens, and Oracles Tour" \$49.50

Thu. 17: The Aristocrats "The Duck



The Old Town Alexandria Home and Garden Tour takes place Saturday, April 26, 2025 in Alexandria.

Tour 2025" \$49.50
Fri. 18: Steep Canyon Rangers \$45.00
Sat. 19: Steep Canyon Rangers \$45.00
Wed. 23: OUR HOUSE: The Music of CSNY \$55.00
Thu. 24: 10,000 Maniacs \$59.50 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 25: 10,000 Maniacs \$59.50

SOLD OUT!
Sat. 26: SGGL \$39.50
Sun. 27: WMAL Presents Free Speech Forum -7pm- \$55.00 SOLD OUT!
Mon. 28: Leonid & Friends \$65.00 SOLD OUT!
Tue. 29: Leonid & Friends \$65.00 SOLD OUT!

IT TAKES A VILLAGE - Michele Calhoun, chair of Mount Vernon At Home, speaks to the Rotary Club of Alexandria about the services provided by a "village" senior organization Feb. 4 at Belle Haven Country Club. Mount Vernon At Home is part of the Village network, serving local residents aged 55 and over who are choosing to remain in their homes and communities as they age. For more information visit www.mountvernonathome.org.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE

From One Kenny to Another



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

It wasn't exactly earth-shattering. Nor was it heart-stopping (thank God!). But in its own way it was eye-catching. What was it, some of you may ask? It was the new/recent Dupixent television spot featuring "Kenny and Moseetta," identified as "actual patients." Kenny was into "martial arts," it was his "passion." Moseetta enjoyed "working out." Not that either of these users/spokespersons were known to me or were into routines with which I was familiar. But there was an interesting element of this ad that caught my attention. The male was named Kenny, "an actual patient." I am also named Kenny but not an "actual patient." But I took note of this commercial for two reasons: (1) My given name is shown front and center on Kenny's shirt (actually, it's more left of center) and (2) I am the son of a psoriasis (a condition for which Dupixent is offered up as a possible solution) sufferer: my mother, may she rest in peace.

I have childhood recollections of my mother's arms and legs covered red with psoriasis. I also remember, not in great detail, but enough to know that whatever she used to try and find any relief did not work (back in the 60s). And not that there's any possibility that any of the many psoriasis medications currently on the market could in any way have benefited my mother (she died early Dec. '08). Nevertheless, I find myself drawn to the psoriasis advertisements thinking of my late mother and wondering in arrears, if any of these new medications could have helped her. (I do the same for my father, deceased Dec. '06, when I see Claritin commercials. My father had allergies and was forever taking Claritin tablets. Still, I'm likewise wondering if today's medications/formulations could have offered him some relief.)

But the psoriasis advertisement really caught my attention because the first-person advocate for this product's (Dupixent) positive effect is someone named Kenny. And not that I knee-jerk/listen/believe what anybody named Kenny says but I will admit to sort of giving him the benefit of the doubt. Moreover, my thinking isn't that Kenny knows more than some other "actual patient" not named Kenny. It simply means that I'm more inclined to listen just to see what this Kenny is saying and whether this Kenny, meaning me, could ever see myself saying it. Almost as if there's some magic/positive effect in the words spoken because there being spoken by someone named Kenny. And yet again, nothing could be further from the truth. To invoke Sgt. Schultz from the long ago "Hogan's Heroes:" "I know nothing."

Not totally true. I know sports and chocolate, and after writing a weekly column for 27+ years, I know a thing or two about creating content (no comments from the peanut gallery, please?) And even though my columns are somewhat short on substance and long on "dribble," as my late brother, Richard (died Dec. '22) described them, I guess seeing my given name on a television spokesperson's shirt triggered some familial memories. For which I'm always grateful.

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

corcoran

MCENEARNEY



Old Town
510 Wolfe Street

\$10,800,000 | The most distinguished home in Old Town is available for the first time in 40 years! Built in 1854, this 14,000+ sq ft historic gem sits on a 1/2-acre lot. The stately brick façade, original iron fencing, and grand 3-story interior showcase timeless elegance. The home features 13 fireplaces, original pine floors, oversized windows, antique chandeliers, 4-car garage, and a lush private yard with a spacious patio and wisteria-covered pergola. The main level boasts an expansive great room, formal dining room, butler's pantry, and a sunroom with original brick floors. Upstairs, 7 bedrooms, including a serene primary suite, provide luxurious living. Additional highlights include a vast attic, widow's walk with stunning river views, and a historic beehive ice house. 2 private apartments on the ground level offer rental income or guest space. Own a piece of Alexandria history in this magnificent home, steps from the waterfront, shops, and dining.

Babs Beckwith : 703.627.5421 | OldTownAlexandriaLiving.com
Lauren Bishop : 202.361.5079 | LaurenBishopHomes.com



Old Town
13 Wilkes Street

\$1,665,000 | This elegant Harborside home offers hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces, custom millwork, and an updated stainless kitchen. Luxurious primary suite with a spa-like bath. 2 deeded garage parking spaces.

Babs Beckwith : 703.627.5421
OldTownAlexandriaLiving.com

Old Town
421 Oronoco Street

\$1,387,000 | Sophisticated 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath townhome features light-filled rooms, hardwood floors, eat-in kitchen, and lower-level family room with fireplace. Enjoy panoramic views on the rooftop deck. 2-car garage.

Babs Beckwith : 703.627.5421
OldTownAlexandriaLiving.com

Huntington at Mount Vernon
8821 La Faye Court

\$635,000 | Spacious, all brick end-unit townhome featuring 4-bedroom, 3.5-bath, 2 fireplaces, walk-out lower-level, fenced in yard with raised deck & firepit. Convenient, amenity-rich community with low HOA fees.

Heidi Burkhardt : 703.217.6009
RealtorHeidiB.com

River Towers
6621 Wakefield Drive #811

\$204,000 | Million dollar views from this lovely 8th floor, 1-bedroom, 1-bath condo with full of natural light! River Towers boasts roof-top decks, garden plots, exercise rooms, swimming pool, and so much more! Just south of Old Town.

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