



ARTS ♦ ENTERTAINMENT ♦ LEISURE

All About Peaches

Peaches are on display at this year's festival on Saturday, Aug. 16.

FESTIVAL, PAGE 3

Going Medieval

Performing troupe plans dinner-theater performances, public appearances and educational outings.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE

The year is 1420, and our duke has just returned from the battlefield victorious against the French and hungry for a good evening's feast. As the evening's guests arrive, the court magician entertains and a fair maiden sings. Yet just after the duke and duchess are heralded into the room, the court accountant explains that all the taxes have gone missing.

"They've got to be somewhere," exclaims Tom Booth, assuming the British intonation of his role as the duke. "Go find it!"

"Alexandria has really been a red carpet for us."

— Tom Booth, creator of Medieval Madness

Welcome to Medieval Madness, Old Town's newest dinner-theater sensation. Since the Sunday night performances began in the upstairs room at Murphy's Irish Pub last month, audience members have been treated to a bold night of very old-fashioned fun:

an evening of frolicking from the 15th century. For the cost of \$59 registration fee, viewers are treated to a four-course medieval meal, a singing maiden, a court magician, sword fighting knights and a royally amusing plot revolving around the mystery of a pilfered treasury.

"The customers eat and drink while the play is rolling along," said director Virginia Norton, one of the creators of "Captain John Smith: HiStory of McLean and Great Falls." "At one point, the audience members decide what kind of punishment one of the characters get."

THE WHIMSICAL nature and interactive elements of Medieval Madness date back to 1998, when Booth was asked to create a Me-



One of the staff serves food and drink reminiscent of 15th century. On left, a knight in armor.



dieval Madness, organizers hope to branch out to other performance halls, Alexandria parades and public-school demonstrations.

"We are a nonprofit organization," explained Booth, referring to the Foundation for the Preservation of Medieval Arts and History. "Saving history is an important part of what we are doing."

The knights don't actually end up hitting each other, they just score points when they get past the guard of their opponents. The rules are explained to the audience in advance, which allows them to keep score as the action moves along. This introduces yet another interactive element into the evening because the swordfight is unscripted, and a different knight could end up winning each time Medieval Madness is performed. In North Carolina, Booth founded a group known as the Academy of the European Martial Arts — an operation he hopes to

replicate in Northern Virginia as Medieval Madness takes root in Old Town.

"Alexandria has really been a red carpet for us," he said.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The Duke and Duchess are a part of the performance.

dieval themed restaurant in Winston Salem, N.C. Although he studied the Renaissance at Yale University, the Middle Ages were a distant mirror for him. So he hit the books and put together a smash success for a restaurant known as "Lady Jackie's Castle." Yet the two-year experiment ended abruptly when the restaurant unexpectedly changed management.

Booth went into commercial development and moved to Raleigh. But the Medieval bug had already bitten, and so Raleigh became the birthplace of the concept known as "Medieval Madness" — an interactive dinner theater performance that can take place at any venue large enough to seat 80 to 140 guests. The troupe has performed at vineyards, community group meeting halls, embassies and pubs. Although Murphy's Irish Pub is the current location of Me-

T H E SHOW is much more than light-hearted fun, with the highlight of the performance being a swordfight in which two knights using broadswords go at one another. But these knights are not acting. They are employing the 15th century sword fighting techniques of Hans Talhofer, a German fencing master whose illustrated treaties described methods of fighting with the long sword, long sword with spear, pole-axe, dueling shield, throated hooking shield, dagger, messer and the sword and buckler.

"This is something that basically disappeared with the advent of gunpowder," said Booth, who spent years doing primary research on Talhofer's work. "The knights in Medieval Madness are actually competing for points, and the audience keeps score."

How to Attend

The next performance of Medieval Madness will be on Sunday, Sept. 7 at Murphy's Irish Pub on King Street. Tickets are \$59. For reservations, call 703-778-4039.

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE

ON THE COVER: One of the peach dishes from last year's festival.

E Staff

Editor: Rebecca Halik
Photo Editor: Louise Krafft
Film: Matthew Razak
Staff Writers: Michael Lee Pope, Chuck Hagee, Rebecca Halik, David Schultz, Brad Hathaway, Mary Anne Weber, Greg Patton, Ben Geier, Kevin Donahue, Brittney Ferguson .

FESTIVAL

Peaches, Peaches Everywhere

Picnic tables under spreading trees
— a summer day to remember.

BY CHUCK HAGEE
GAZETTE

Anyone with a love for peaches has only one destination this coming Saturday, Aug. 16. That's when Wesley United Methodist Church, 8412 Richmond Avenue, just off Route 1, will hold its seventh annual Peach Festival from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

With lots of good food, entertainment, games, displays and educational session by Fairfax County police and fire personnel, health screening, karaoke competition, and model railroading exhibits, it's a day filled with family-friendly fun for all ages. And, its all free — including the hot dogs, hamburgers, and the stars of the day, a wide variety of peach deserts.

"It all got started by a church member couple who also owned an peach orchard. However, one year the peaches weren't ripe when the festival was held, which was ear-

lier in the summer at that time, so we had to get peaches from another source," said Nora Rudd, chair, Desert Committee. The couple who owned the orchard have since left the area, according to Rudd.

Each year volunteers prepare a variety of peach delicacies that include peach pie, peach cobbler, peach ice cream, and even peach salsa. "The peaches are distributed to the various volunteer cooks the day before the festival in our Fellowship Hall. They pick them up and decided what they want to prepare," Rudd said. For the past couple

of years the peaches have been purchased from Rohrer's Produce on Richmond Highway.

"Our crowds have been increasing. If the weather is good we get about 500 people over the course of the festival," said

Mary Pryor, chair, Peach Festival Publicity.

Three years ago the church produced a Peach Festival Cookbook. However, most attendees "prefer to eat the peach deserts rather than learn how to make them," according to Rudd. "Not very many people picked up a copy of the cookbook even though it was free," she said.

One of the big attractions is the dual model railroading display in Fellowship Hall. Crescent Model Railroaders creates a large display that includes multiple HO gauge trains traveling through a variety of venues. It consumes most of the hall's floor area.

Last year a new element was added to the model railroading display by the Washington Metropolitan Area Lego Train Club. This latest addition to model railroading, Lego Trains and accessories, will return this year, according to Pryor.

Other festival highlights include a moon bounce, crafts, a host of children's games, face painting, horseshoe pitching, and demonstrations by Terry's School of Dance and

Most "prefer to eat the peach deserts rather than learn how to make them."

—Nora Rudd, chair, Desert Committee



A patron blows a train whistle at last year's event.

Nichol's Defense Academy. Live music will be from The Peach Boys.

Beginning in 2001, the festival is part of the church's community outreach program. In 2004 the church celebrated its 50th Anniversary.

The essence of the festival is probably more meaningful this year than at any time since its initiation due to the overall economic picture. As Wesley UMC Minister Tony Forestall stated last year, "At every turn today, economics impacts our lives. We want those visiting the festival to be free from economic decisions and their impact for one day — to just enjoy an old fashioned community gathering."

For additional information about the festival as well as location and directions visit the church's Web site at www.wesleyva.org. Many of the peach recipes can also be found on that Web site.

RECIPES FROM 2007 FESTIVAL

Peach Salsa

RECIPE FROM SUSIE SHIMEK

6 ripe tomatoes
1 medium sweet onion (finely chopped)
6 sprigs fresh cilantro (finely chopped)
Half small green pepper (finely chopped)
3 ripe peaches peeled and diced
salt, pepper and chili powder to taste

Wash and dry peaches. Peel peaches over a large bowl to catch all juice. Cut tomatoes into small pieces in same bowl. Add onion, green peppers and cilantro. Add salt, pepper and chili powder to taste. Chill and serve with chips. Lasts in the refrigerator for about one week.

Peach Cobbler Crumb Cake

RECIPE FROM MARTI HAMMITTE

6 cups fresh sliced peaches
1 box yellow cake mix
1 stick of butter

1 TSB cornstarch
1 cup splenda

Cook the fresh peaches on medium heat with the splenda until juicy. Then add the cornstarch and stir until it thickens. Pour peaches in a 9X13 cake pan. Sprinkle cake mix over peaches. Add butter slices on top. Bake at 350 degrees until golden brown (about 40 minutes). Serve with cool whip or vanilla ice cream.

No Sugar Added Peach Pie

RECIPE FROM LOU DEVAUGHN

1 box pie crust in refrigerator case at store
1 9-inch deep dish pie plate
1 box minute brand tapioca
Lemon juice
Splenda

Follow directions on the tapioca box for making the peach pie. Substitute Splenda for the sugar called for-equal amount. Seal and flute the top and bottom crust to keep in the juice. For a golden crust, beat one egg and brush it on the crust before baking.

Peach Soup

RECIPE FROM FRAN WEST

6-7 cloves garlic
2 Tbsp olive oil
4 cups peaches, chopped
Three-fourths cup diced onion
° tsp. ground tumeric
2 Tbsp. curry powder
1/3 cup packed brown sugar
1/3 cup Chardonnay wine
1 □ cups vegetable broth or stock
æ cup coconut milk (or heavy cream)
salt and pepper to taste

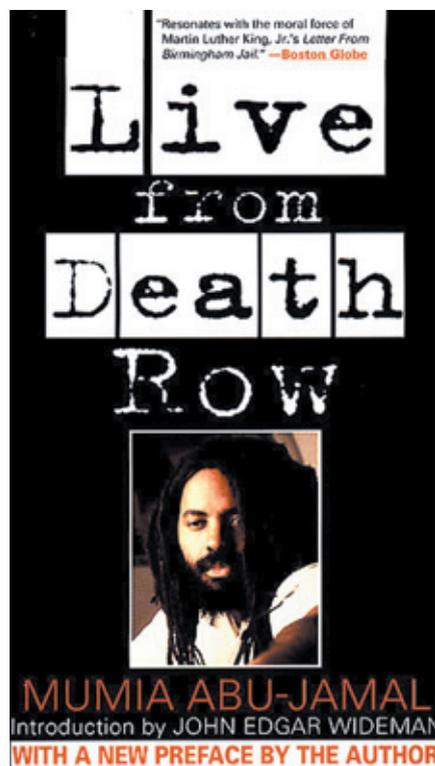
Preheat oven to 275 degrees-roast garlic cloves on a baking sheet for about 30 minutes or until golden brown. Heat oil in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Sweat the onions and peaches until softened. Season with curry powder, tumeric, roasted garlic and sugar. Cook over medium to low heat until caramelized (about 30 minutes). Deglaze the pan with the wine and stir in the vegetable stock. Remove from heat. Puree the soup in a blender or food processor. Strain through a fine sieve. Stir in coconut milk or heavy cream and season to taste with salt and pepper.



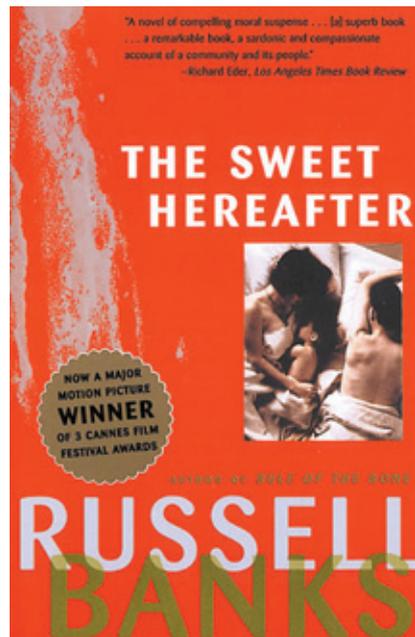
Other items at this year's festival include music, trains.

CALENDAR

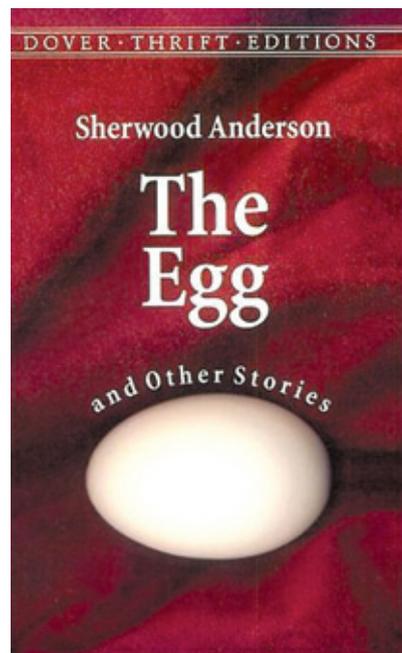
THIS WEEK IN LITERATURE



Discuss "Live From Death Row" on Saturday, Aug. 16 10:30 a.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane.



"The Sweet Hereafter" by Russell Banks, was recently made into a movie that was shown at the Cannes Film Festival. Discuss the book on Monday, Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. at Duncan Library.



Discuss "Death in the Woods" from the poetry collection "The Egg and Other Stories" by Sherwood Anderson on Thursday, Aug. 21 at 7 p.m. at Beatley Library.

E-mail announcements to the Gazette, gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos and artwork are encouraged. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week's paper. Call Rebecca Halik at 703-917-6407 with questions.

OTHER ITEMS

Studio Gold Dance will hold Youth Company auditions for intermediate and advanced youth dancers, ages 16 and under. Dancers are welcome to bring a prepared piece of choreography to demonstrate on Monday, Aug. 23 or Aug. 30 between 3 and 4:15 p.m. The required group class audition will be on Sept. 22 at 3:15 p.m. Auditions and rehearsals will take place at Gold's Gym, 7770 Richmond Highway. For further information, contact the Artistic Director, Dawn Meadows, at www.studiogolddance.com, or 703-627-4570.

Aldersgate Church Community Theater (ACCT) is holding auditions for "Dearly Departed," on Sunday, Aug. 24 and Monday, Aug. 25 from 7-9 p.m. at Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 1301 Collingwood Road. Questions should be directed to 703-660-2611 - please leave a message. Additional information at www.acctonline.org.

ONGOING

Every Monday and Friday through August from 10 a.m. -11 a.m. or 11 a.m. -noon Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria will be having **Harry Potter's Plants and Potions** for 6-12 year olds. The program teaches children how to craft a wizard's wand and make potions. \$6 for Students. Call 703-642-5173 to register. For more information visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gspg

Every Monday and Friday through Aug 11-15 and 18-22 Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria will be having **Butterfly Lab** to teach children ages 6-12 to raise their own butterflies. \$ 135 for students, includes supplies and light snacks. Call 703-642-5173 to register. For more information visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gspg

On Mondays, Sept. 8 through Dec. 1 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., the Green Spring Gardens located at 4603 Green Spring Road, will be having **Yoga for Gardeners** for adults. The program will offer a series of classes featuring the Vinyasa method to increase your flexibility, strength, and endurance for gardening. \$ 66/ six-class sessions. For more information and to register call 703-642-5173.

Visit **George Washington's Distillery & Gristmill** through Oct. 31 from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. See how whiskey got started. \$4/adult; \$2/child. Get discounts with admission to Mount Vernon Estate. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

Take a **seasonal walking tour** from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. This 30-minute tour explores a variety of contributions. Free. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

On **Sundays** take a Potomac River Sightseeing Cruise at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. \$9/adult; \$5/child in addition to Mount Vernon Estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org for schedules.

Every **Tuesday and Thursday** through October from 5- 8 p.m. at Hotel Monaco Alexandria, enjoy **Doggie Happy Hour**. Enjoy doggie treats and human treats.



PHOTO BY NINA TISARA

Tim Lutz started the All-City Elementary Band in 1972 and now continues as its director. He teaches at MacArthur and Maury elementary schools. He was nominated as a Living Legend in 2007.

Join City archaeologists and trained volunteers for an exciting program for kids of all ages at **Alexandria Archaeology Family Dig Days**. Be part of the fascinating archaeological investigation and discover firsthand the hidden clues left behind by the people who lived and worked there hundreds of years ago, by helping screen excavated soil. Monthly Family Dig Days will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. on the grounds of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, in Alexandria. The 2008 dates are on Saturdays: Aug. 16; Sept. 20 and Oct. 18. \$5/person and spots fill up fast. Call 703-838-4399 or visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org to reserve a spot.

On **Sundays** from noon-5 p.m., visit the Waterfront and see **history-inspired performances** near the Torpedo Factory; do a "meet and greet" of early Alexandria residents and travelers near the Waterfront and lower King Street. Free. Visit www.historicalexandria.org for more.

In celebration of the exhibition "**Setting the President's Table: American Presidential China**," visitors to Mount Vernon will have a chance every day from June 1 to Aug. 31 to win a piece of porcelain featuring the Martha Washington "States" pattern. Drawings occur daily at 3 p.m. in the Shops at Mount Vernon, and the grand prize will be drawn on Aug. 31. No purchase is required, and visitors do not have to be present to win. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

On Saturdays **through Aug. 16** from 1-3 p.m., children ages 8-12 years can learn how to **create a garden** with hands-on activities and will be able to grow a garden. \$10/student. At Green Spring Garden, 4603 Green Spring Road. To register, 703-642-5173.

See Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St., in a whole new light - **lantern light**. Tour the 1785 tavern and 1792 City Hotel during the summer season with costumed guides as you experience the tavern as patrons did more than 200 years ago before the advent of electricity. Tours are every Friday night, **June through August**, from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$5 per person ages 5 and up. Tours last approximately 30 minutes, with the last tour starting at 9:15 p.m. Call ahead to confirm tour

date. For more information, call 703-838-4242 or visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

On Mondays, Aug. 25, Sept. 29, Oct. 27, and Nov. 24 at 2 p.m. Green Spring Gardens will be having **Family Story Time** for children of all ages where there will be stories and activities. Free. For more information visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/gspg

On Mondays September 8 through October 27 from 2 to 4 p.m., the Green Spring Gardens will be having Let's Grow kid's Gardening Program where kids will enjoy sprouting seeds, growing vegetables, planting, flowers, exploring soil and other outdoor fun. \$ 70 /student. For more information and to register call 703-642-5173.

Children enter a world of fantasy and fables when costumed interpreters weave three tales together during **Mount Vernon's** outdoor storytelling session, "Once Upon a Time at Mount Vernon", held every Saturday and Sunday at 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. **through Sept. 27** at the George Washington: Pioneer Farmer site. "Once Upon a Time at Mount Vernon" is included in regular Estate admission: adults, \$13.00; youth ages 6-11, \$6.00; and children under 5 are admitted free. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

Historic Mount Vernon will have special commemorative whiskey sets available for sale beginning **Aug. 4!** The set includes a shot glass and a 50 mL bottle of whiskey consisting of 11 different whiskey brands blended and aged at Mount Vernon in 2005. The gift sets are \$25 and are available for purchase in person with a valid ID at the **Shops at Mount Vernon** or George Washington's Distillery. Visit www.mountvernon.org or 703-780-2000.

FRIDAY/AUG. 15

Mount Vernon Nights. Listen to a variety of music at 7:30 p.m. on Friday nights at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance for more.
Friday Flicks. Noon at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Children up to age 5 can bring lunch and enjoy a short movie and stories.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Photographs of 48 of **Alexandria's 2006-07 Living Legends** will move from the Lyceum to the third floor of City Hall on Sept. 9. The exhibition, which identifies, honors, and chronicles individuals who have made significant contributions to the quality of life in the City is a joint project of the Rotary Club of Alexandria and the Alexandria Gazette Packet. The public is invited to view the exhibition and learn about the project at a reception at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., on Thursday, Aug. 28 from 6:30-8 p.m. Autographed copies of the exhibition catalog will be available for sale at that time.

Free. 703-971-0010.

Lunch Bunnies. Noon at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Children ages 1-5 can bring lunch and enjoy stories. Free. 703-765-3645.

SATURDAY/AUG. 16

Yard Sale. The Alexandria Jaycees will hold a yard sale from 7 a.m.-2 p.m. at Anthony T. Lane Elementary School, 7137 Beulah St. Free. Browse a variety of items. Vendors may register online at www.alexjaycees.org/yardsales.htm. For updated rain date information call 703-866-7171.

Lee District Nights. 7:30 p.m. at Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road. Hear Ruthie and the Wranglers perform. Free. 703-324-SHOW (7469).

Opening Reception. 5-7 p.m. at the Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince St. See and meet artists of "Txt Msg." Free. www.nvfaa.org or 703-548-0035.

Book Discussion. 10:30 a.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Discuss "Live From Death Row" by Mumia Abu-Jamal. Free. 703-765-3645.

Insect Discovery. Watch a video at 10 a.m. and get questions answered by a naturalist and see the habitat at Huntley Meadows, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Free. 703-768-2525.

Opening Ceremony. 4-9 p.m., see work by Pridon Goisashvili at Blueberry Art Gallery, 3112A Mt. Vernon Ave., from Aug. 16 through Aug. 31. Free. 703-894-8854.

Peach Festival. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Wesley United Methodist Church, 8412 Richmond Ave. Enjoy desserts, hot dogs, games, music and more. Free www.wesleyva.org or 703-780-5019.

Art Exhibit. See works by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./ Gallery from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. See paintings on wood and canvas, sculpture and more. Free. 703-798-8686.

SUNDAY/AUG. 17

Family Movie Night. 6:30 p.m. at Del Ray United Methodist Church, 100 E. Windsor Ave. Free. Watch "Fantasia." Free. Visit www.delrayumc.org for more.

Music Performance. Tubist Michael Murry and pianist Laurie Vivona Bunn will perform with the Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic at 3 p.m. at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Free. Visit www.wmpa.us for more.

Flavored Vinegars Tea Program. 1-3 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Learn how to blend vinegar with herbs, fruits and more. Enjoy a tea after. \$25/person. 703-941-7987 to register.

Insect Discovery. Watch a video at 10 a.m. and get questions answered by a naturalist and see the habitat at Huntley Meadows, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Free. 703-768-2525.

Music Performance. 4 p.m. at Meade Memorial Episcopal Church, 322 N. Alfred St. Hear music by Vaughn Ambrose. \$15/donation. Visit www.meadechurch.org or 703-549-1334.

Art Exhibit. See works by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./ Gallery from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. See

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

paintings on wood and canvas, sculpture and more. Free. 703-798-8686.

MONDAY/AUG. 18

Discover Art. 2 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Children ages 6-12 can play bingo and more. Free. 703-971-0010.

Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Discuss "The Sweet Hereafter" by Russell Banks. Free. 703-838-4566.

TUESDAY/AUG. 19

Mother-Daughter Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Children ages 9-11 with adult can enjoy a discussion. Free. 703-971-0010.

It's A Colorful World. 10:30 a.m. at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre. Children ages 13-23 months can enjoy activities and more. Free. 703-339-4610.

Martha's Movie Madness. 2 p.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 6-12 can enjoy film and popcorn. Free. 703-768-6700.

Library Lullabies. 7 p.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Children ages 1-5 can enjoy bedtime stories and activities. Free. 703-765-3645.

WEDNESDAY/AUG. 20

Music Performance. 7:30 p.m. at Lee District Park Amphitheater, 6601 Telegraph Road. Hear Jennifer Cutting's Ocean Orchestra perform. Free. 703-922-9841.

Open House. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Landmark Mall. Come to the opening of JCA Senior Tech Computer Learning Center. Free. 703-941-1007.

Book Discussion. 7:15 p.m. at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Adults call for title. Free. 703-971-0010.

Natural Wonders. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 3-5 can go on a picnic with stories and more. Free. 703-768-6700.

Blog. 7 p.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Adults learn how to be a blogger. Free. 703-765-3645.

Pajama Story Time. 7 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. Children ages 3-6 can enjoy stories. Free. 703-838-4566.

THURSDAY /AUG. 21

Garden Sprouts: Pick a Peck of Peppers. 9:30 a.m. -10:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. -noon at Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Preschool children (3-5 years) with accompanying adults have fun picking, printing, and playing with colorful peppers and then make salsa. \$6 for participants. For more information visit www.faircounty.gov/parks/gsgp

Just Twos. 10:30 a.m. at Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Children ages 24-35 months can enjoy stories and more. Free. 703-768-6700.

Poetry Group. 7 p.m. at Martha

Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road. Discuss "Poems" by A.E. Housman. Free. 703-768-6700.

Discover Art. 2 p.m. at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Children ages 6-12 can play art bingo and more. Free. 703-765-3645.

Book Discussion. 7 p.m. at Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Discuss "Death in the Woods" by Sherwood Anderson, part of the collection of "The Egg and Other Stories." Free. 703-931-3559.

FRIDAY/AUG. 22

Mount Vernon Nights. Listen to a variety of music at 7:30 p.m. on Friday nights at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performance for more.

Friday Flicks. Noon at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive. Children up to age 5 can bring lunch and enjoy a short movie and stories. Free. 703-971-0010.

Lunch Bunnies. Noon at Sherwood Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Children ages 1-5 can bring lunch and enjoy stories. Free. 703-765-3645.

Music Performance. Rick Whitehead Jazz Trio will perform at 219 Restaurant, 219 King St. at 9 p.m. \$5/person. 703-549-1141 for reservations.

Art Exhibit. See works by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./ Gallery from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. See paintings on wood and canvas, sculpture and more. Free. 703-798-8686.

SATURDAY/AUG. 23

Lee District Nights. 7:30 p.m. at Hayfield Elementary School, 7633 Telegraph Road. Hear Daryl Davis perform. Free. 703-324-SHOW (7469).

Terrarium Workshop. 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m. at Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Create your own terrarium with Johanna Zinn. Terrarium, plants, and soil provided. \$20 for Adults. Visit www.faircounty.gov/parks/gsgp

Annual Begonia Shoe and Sale. 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Attend the Annual Begonia Show and Sale. Free. For more information visit www.faircounty.gov/parks/gsgp

Garden Sprouts: Pick a Peck of Peppers. 10 a.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Children ages 3-5 can pick a variety of peppers and make salsa. \$6/person. 703-642-5173 to register.

Pinewood Derby. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Good News Baptist Church. \$5/car. www.goodnewsbaptistchurch.org or 703-619-1121.

Summer Green Craft. 2-5 p.m. at Burke Library, 4701 Seminary Road. Children ages 5-12 can enjoy crafts and stories. Drop-in. Free. 703-519-6000.

Art Exhibit. See works by Yuri Kokoyanin at The von Braehler Ltd./ Gallery from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. See paintings on wood and canvas, sculpture and more. Free. 703-798-8686.

SUNDAY/AUG. 24

Music Performance. The Covington String Quartet will perform at 3 p.m. at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Free. Visit www.wmpa.us for more.

Annual Begonia Shoe and Sale. Noon -3:30 p.m. at Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Attend the Annual Begonia Show and Sale. Free. For more information visit www.faircounty.gov/parks/gsgp

End of Summer BBQ. 5-7:30 p.m. at Agudas Achim Congregation, 2908 Valley Drive. Free. Includes food, games, music and more. Free. 703-998-6460 to register.



Country Under The Stars

Join us for a free summer concert featuring country favorites performed by *Rough Draft*. Enjoy good music and good company surrounded by the serenity of our beautiful South Lawn.

Thursday, August 21 • 7:30 p.m.

Admission is free.
You are welcome to bring a blanket or lawn chair.

Call us today at **703-768-0234** for more information.

PAUL SPRING
RETIREMENT COMMUNITY

A Retirement Unlimited, Inc. Community
7116 Fort Hunt Road • Alexandria, VA 22307

www.paulspring.com



The New Game In Golf

TOP GOLF

- TopGolf is the revolutionary new game in golf that lets you compete or practice for points.
- Computer screens at each bay give you instant feedback on every shot.
- 78 heated and covered bays allow for all weather, year-round golf.
- Food & beverage service directly to your bay.
- Full service ProShop with equipment and apparel for the whole family.
- TopGolf Academy by Mitchell Spearman features private lessons and group clinics for all ages and skills.

TopGolf - Kingstowne
6625 S. Van Dorn St. Alexandria, VA 22315
703-924-2600 www.topgolfusa.com

THEATER

MetroStage Rocks With A Scottish Beat

Musical has premiere in Alexandria.

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
GAZETTE PACKET

You may be able to see tiny MetroStage on North Royal Street vibrating to the beat of a new rock musical that is getting its world premiere inside. It isn't that the music is all that loud – although it can reach a punk-rock-worthy peak at times – it is the intensity of the two performers backed by four musicians as they work their way through about one hundred minutes of strongly structured story and song.

"Rooms" by Scotland-born rocker/composer/playwright Paul Scott Goodman and his wife actor/director/playwright Miriam Gordon is a semi-autobiographical look back at their early days transitioning from Glasgow to London to New York and back again. (They have finally settled down in the Soho neighborhood of New York City where they both develop musicals.)

The play is fairly traditional in structure (boy and girl meet, fall in love, team up but break up only to get back together) but

with a unique mix of the Scottish blend of skepticism and romanticism and a score of punk rock and lyrical ballads.

Produced jointly by MetroStage and GEVA Theatre Center in Rochester, NY and the participation of New York based production companies, the resources devoted to the piece are all first rate.

Nataschia Diaz is the girl in question. She's fresh off the stage of Signature Theatre in Arlington where she had the title role in Kander and Ebb's "Kiss of the Spider Woman." Local audiences also know her for her work as Anita in West Side Story at Wolf Trap last summer and as Petra in the Sondheim Celebration revival of "A Little Night Music" at the Kennedy Center. She's a Broadway veteran, having been in the companies of "Carousel," "Capeman," "Seussical" and "Man of LaMancha."

Her co-star here is Doug Kreeger who is no stranger to a Broadway stage himself. He was in the company of the recent revival of "Les Misérables." Locally, he too is fresh from Arlington's Signature Theatre where he was in "The Visit," the final pro-

duction of their Kander and Ebb celebration.

Both hold the stage at MetroStage with uncommon intensity, creating in the short space of the one-act musical fully formed characters with a strong attraction to each other. The chemistry between them is superb. In addition, each handles solos with strength and style.

Well known director Scott Schwartz, who guided the development of "Tick, Tick ...

Boom!" is at the helm here and has polished the production nicely.

While the entire design team has

done sharp work here, most notable is the set design of Adam Koch. While the story takes place in multiple locations, he has devised a single set featuring a door on wheels which the cast members rotate into different positions to represent location changes. While the battered white door moves about, the brick back wall remains exposed with two platforms for the musicians, Jenny Cartney conducting from the

keyboard to the left and Jon Jester providing driving rock beats from the right. All of this is flanked by a proscenium of faux brick matching the rear wall. Herrick Goldman emphasizes the similarity between the proscenium and the rear wall by lighting all from below in steely, cold blue.

The show starts out at a surprisingly quiet level after a brief overture. This is because the couple's story hasn't taken them to London and into the punk-rock world yet. Their first encounters involve a more melodic, acoustic sound. Diaz and Kreeger bring just as much involvement and commitment to the delivery of the softer numbers as they do the hard driving rock which follows.

Throughout, the concentration on story telling never wavers. Each song has a narrative purpose and the story, brief as it is, is tellingly and satisfyingly delivered.

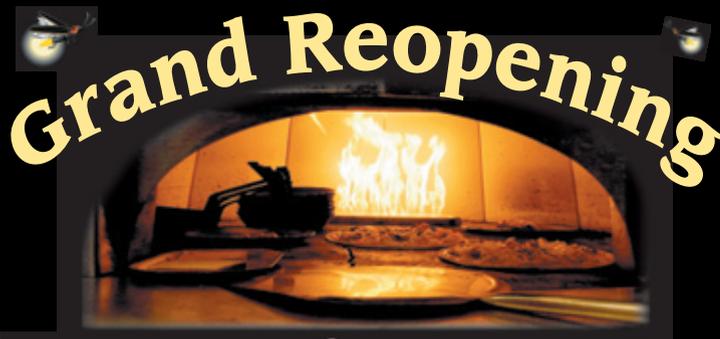
MetroStage has quite a winning production in "Rooms."

Brad Hathaway reviews theater in Virginia, Washington and Maryland as well as Broadway, and edits Potomac Stages, a website covering theater in the region (HYPERLINK www.PotomacStages.com). He can be reached at Brad@PotomacStages.com.

Where and When:

"Rooms" plays through Sept. 7 at MetroStage, 1201 North Royal Street. Performances are Thursday – Friday evenings at 8 p.m. Saturday at 5 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$40 - \$45. Call 703-548-9044 or visit www.metrostage.org.

Grand Reopening



FireFlies Restaurant Bar

AUGUST 14-17 • FEATURING LIVE MUSIC, SPECIALS ALL WEEKEND—IN HONOR OF THE NEW BAR AND NEW LOOK




New hours: Open 7 days a week until 11 p.m. • Live Music
1501 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301
703-548-7200
www.firefliesdelray.com
www.firefliesdelray.blogspot.com

Learn to play tennis **instantly!**

Now you can learn to play the sport of a lifetime **in just 3 weeks** with our **Instant Tennis Class!**

Session I: September 9 - 28 • Session II: October 7 - 26

Join today and you will also receive a **3 week VIP membership** to our **state-of-the-art fitness center!**

BONUS: Complimentary 1-on-1 session with one of our certified tennis pros.

Cost: \$120
 Register with a friend and **save \$20 each!**

Call today for class days and times.

7950 Audubon Avenue,
 Alexandria, VA
703-360-7300



Mount Vernon Athletic Club

www.mtvac.net

THEATER

Show Marks 75th Anniversary

LTA makes "1776" sing again.

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
GAZETTE

The Little Theatre of Alexandria has been putting on shows – either fully staged or simple readings – for three quarters of a century. They have learned how to do it. Often they do it very well indeed.

Over the years, one show keeps showing up on their schedule. The historical musical comedy/drama/romance of the founding of our country, "1776," has come to be their "signature show" and they take it up again in a solid, satisfying production directed by Frank Shutts II.

Of course, they haven't been mounting versions of this show for all 75 years. It was only written in the late 1960s (for the historically minded: it opened on Broadway on March 16, 1969) and it wasn't made available for production in community theaters for nearly a decade.

LTA's first mounting was in its 1975-76 season with a production considered a part of the nation's bicentennial celebration. That version was so successful, it was reprised as the opener of the 1976-77 season.

They returned to the piece ten years later with another production marking two seasons – it ended the 1985-86 season and then kicked off the 1986-87 set. In 1999 they took it up again as their way to celebrate Alexandria's 250th anniversary.

Now, with Mick Tinder in the central role of John Adams, the debates in "foul, fetid, fuming, filthy Philadelphia" over the cause of American independence come back to life again. Tinder makes the audience understand the frustrations and commitments of Adams, who may well be "obnoxious and disliked" but who is also passionate and an effective champion of his cause, while some of the performances of cast members playing other key members of the Continental Congress are less fully formed but nonetheless effective.

Jim Carmalt is a bit subdued as Benjamin Franklin, a role that still holds fond memories for long time LTA subscribers who recall the job Don Neal did with the part a decade ago. Carmalt's Franklin seems a bit tired as – at age seventy, he was the oldest member of the Congress. Keith Miller's work as Thomas

Where and When:

The "1776" plays through August 23 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St. Performances are Wednesday – Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. plus a Tuesday evening performance at 8 p.m. on Aug. 19. Tickets are \$18 - \$23. Call 703-683-0496 or visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

Jefferson takes a while to gather steam – perhaps as the real Jefferson might – but by the end of the first act, when his wife Martha joins him in Philadelphia, and early in the second when he bears the torment of many amendments to his draft of the Declaration of Independence, he takes on real passion.

With a cast of twenty-four men and two women, it is the voices of the women that often remain in memory after the show ends, and this production is no exception. Andrea Klores is Abigail Adams and her duets with Tindal include the most exquisite notes in the show, the lingering "Yours, Yours, Yours" that sealed their correspondence that bridged the 266 miles separating Philadelphia from the Adams farm in Quincy, Massachusetts. Liz Sabin as Martha Jefferson delivers a spirited description of the charms of her husband in "He Plays The Violin."

Standout performances as members of the Congress come from Jon Keeling as Richard Henry Lee, who is portrayed as something of an egotistical fop in "The Lees of Old Virginia," and Chris Gillespie, as Edward Rutledge of South Carolina, who gives strong voice in "Molasses to Rum" for the argument that all sections of the proposed new country bear some responsibility for the "peculiar institution" of slavery.

From the opening number when John Adams sings about the Congresses record ("piddle, twiddle and resolve, not one damn thing do we solve") while the rest of the members sing full throatedly "For God Sake, John, Sit Down!" to the final inspiring moment of the signing of the declaration, the show portrays the founding moments of our nation movingly with humor, passion and honesty.

Brad Hathaway reviews theater in Virginia, Washington and Maryland as well as Broadway, and edits Potomac Stages, a website covering theater in the region (www.PotomacStages.com). He can be reached at Brad@PotomacStages.com.



PHOTO BY PETER PIRANEO

From left to right: Jim Carmalt (Benjamin Franklin), Keith Miller (Thomas Jefferson), Christopher Guy Thorn (Robert Livingston), Mick Tinder (John Adams), and Marcus Fisk (Roger Sherman).

**Catch The Best At
The Village Wharf**

Ph: 703-765-0661 • Fax: 703-765-6761

Breakfast: Mon - Sat 7-12

Specials: Mon - Dinner 12oz Prime Rib \$14.95

Tues - "Burger Nite" 8oz Burger 1/2 Price

Wed: Ladies Nite - Red Hats Welcomed

Ample Free Parking
7966 Fort Hunt Road
Alexandria, VA 22308

Hours: Mon. - Thur. 7am - 10:30pm
Fri. - Sat. 7am - 1:30pm
Sun. 11am - 10:30pm

www.thevillagewharf.com

Enjoy a Cozy Candlelit Dinner

"The Finest Lebanese Cuisine"

Carryout, catering & delivering available
Family owned & operated

The Pita HOUSE
FAMILY RESTAURANT

407 Cameron St. Old Town Alexandria • 703-684-9194
www.thepitahouse.com • Open 7 days a week for lunch and dinner

William J. Kovatch, Jr.
Immigration Attorney

Over 8 years experience in international law related issues

(703) 837-8832

www.kovatchimmigrationlaw.com

Family Visas
Employment Issues
Asylum
Naturalization

717 King Street
Suite 205
Alexandria, VA 22314

Corporate Events

Don't let the weather ruin your company picnic!

- See if new hires and interns have what it takes!
- Pit departments, branches and divisions against each other

Call us to plan your event today!

Allsports
Grand Prix
Indoor Kart Racing

Allsports Grand Prix
45915 Maries Rd.
Dulles Va. 20166
571-434-9566
www.allsportsgp.com

WE WANT TO SEE YOU EXCEL!

Introducing...

from
Belvoir
Federal Credit Union

CUXcel
checkingSM
Powered by BancVue

earn BONUS RATES

5.01 % APY*
ON BALANCES UP TO \$50,000
1.01 % APY*
ON BALANCES OVER \$50,000

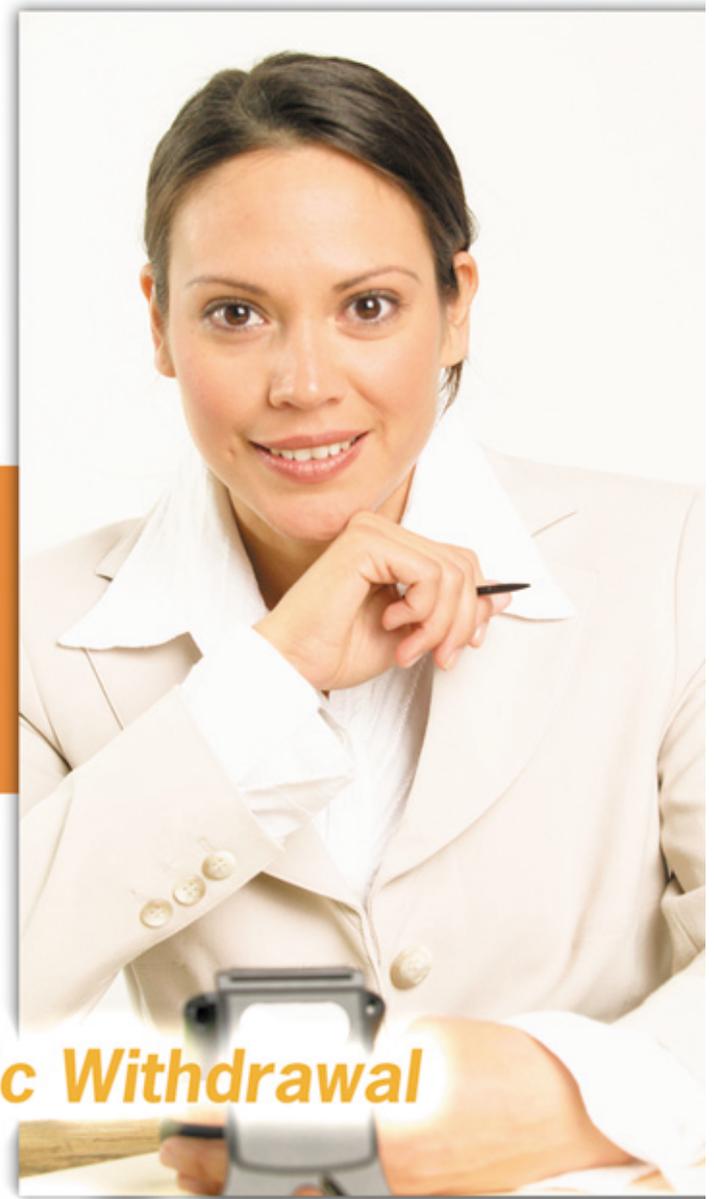
plus earn
ATM
Surcharge
Rebates
Nationwide!

or BASE RATE

0.10 % APY*
IF REQUIREMENTS ARE NOT MET

**TO RECEIVE THE BONUS RATES,
PERFORM THE FOLLOWING EACH CYCLE:**

- **15 Check Card Transactions**
- **One Direct Deposit or Electronic Withdrawal**
- **Receive e-Statements**
- **Access BOB (Belvoir Online Banking)**



WWW.BELVOIRCUXCEL.COM

*APY= ANNUAL PERCENTAGE YIELD. 5.01% APY PAID ON BALANCES BETWEEN ONE PENNY AND \$50,000, AND 1.01% APY PAID ON ALL AMOUNTS ABOVE \$50,000 EACH CYCLE THE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS ARE MET. IF YOU DO NOT MEET THE REQUIREMENTS PER CYCLE, YOUR ACCOUNT WILL STILL FUNCTION AS A FREE CHECKING ACCOUNT EARNING .10% APY; HOWEVER, IT WILL NOT RECEIVE ATM REFUNDS FOR THAT TIME PERIOD. FOR THIS ACCOUNT TYPE, THE QUALIFICATION PERIOD BEGINS ON THE LAST DAY OF THE MONTH AND CONTINUES THROUGH THE NEXT-TO-LAST DAY OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH. FOR EXAMPLE, THE RATE THAT APPLIES FOR APRIL ACTIVITY WILL BE BASED ON THE QUALIFICATION CYCLE BEGINNING MARCH 31 AND ENDING APRIL 29. ALL OTHER QUALIFICATION CYCLES FOLLOW THIS SAME PATTERN OF DATES. RATES AS OF JULY 1, 2008 AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE. NO MINIMUM BALANCE REQUIRED. AVAILABLE TO PERSONAL ACCOUNTS ONLY. FREE ONLINE BILLPAY. OVERDRAFT PROTECTION. NO MONTHLY SERVICE CHARGE. FEDERALLY INSURED BY NCUA.

Your savings federally insured to at least \$100,000
and backed by the full faith and credit of the United States Government

NCUA

National Credit Union Administration, a U.S. Government Agency