

Mount Vernon Gazette

VOL. XXI, No. 7

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

FEBRUARY 18, 2010



Estate Celebrates George's 278th Birthday

General George Washington portrayed by Dean Malissa talks to visitors at the Mount Vernon Estate after a special birthday tribute on Sunday afternoon. He is describing the antics of one of his many hound dogs named Vulcan. Vulcan, a massive French hound was a gift along with six others to the General from the Marquis de Lafayette. Vulcan enjoyed a good meal and on at least one occasion found his way into the kitchen and onto the table where dinner was being prepared. Opening his jaws Vulcan grabbed a Virginia ham and carried it back to his kennel. The General recalled how Martha yelled at the servants to rescue the ham, but the General also recalled how Martha disliked Vulcan's affectionate licks from time to time, and now that the ham was in his mouth, surely Martha would not really want the ham retrieved.

Local Schools Have More To Lose

Specialized programs targeted.

BY JULIA O'DONOGHUE
THE GAZETTE

Last year, First Lady Michelle Obama invited Hollin Meadows Elementary School students to the White House to visit her vegetable garden. This November, the Mount Vernon area elementary school returned the favor, giving Obama and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack a high-profile tour of the 1,500 square feet of gardens that students maintain.

"I think we are still feeling the after glow from that visit even now," said principal Jon Gates, as he flipped through a glossy magazine to a picture of Obama standing outside Hollin Meadows surrounded by the students.

"This magazine came out this past weekend. Stuff like that seems to happen all the time. Photographs from her visit here pop up in all sorts of places," said Gates.

Hollin Meadows' extensive student gardening program is no doubt what caught Obama's attention. The First Lady, who recently launched a campaign to combat childhood obesity, has tried to promote healthier eating by drawing attention to her own vegetable garden at the White House.

BUT IF the First Lady had waited to visit Hollin Meadows next year, there is no guarantee that she would have seen any student gardening at all.

The Fairfax County School

Board took an initial vote Feb. 4 to cut its focus program, which funds Hollin Meadows gardening program, out of the school system's budget next year.

"With limited resources, this program would really be at risk," said Gates, pointing to the vegetable gardens.

In addition to Hollin Meadows, 13 other elementary schools around the county stand to lose funding for special focus academic programs, including three others located in Mount Vernon.

Riverside Elementary will lose its professional development academic center, which provides four extra "high quality" teachers at the school. Fort Hunt Elementary would lose funding and staffing

that supports its special fine arts program and Woodley Hills Elementary would lose funding and staffing for extra math and science work.

The focus program is mostly located in schools with large at-risk populations to provide extra resources and enrichment for needier students.

Approximately 22.5 percent of students across the school system are considered poor enough to qualify for free or reduced-priced meals at school. At three of the four elementary schools with focus programs, the percentage of students receiving discounts on meals is much higher.

Forty-four percent of Hollin Meadows students qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch because of their families' economic sta

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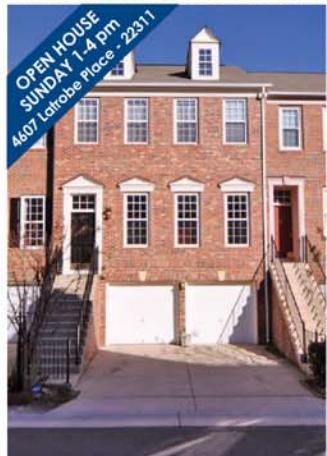
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HISTORY

Gum Springs: A Slave's Legacy, Part III

BY MICHAEL K. BOHN
THE GAZETTE

This is the third in a four-part series on the history and future of Gum Springs, a historically African-American community in the Mount Vernon area.

GROWING PAINS

The successes that the residents of Gum Springs achieved in improving their community have been substantial, even heroic in some cases. Their efforts, however, have not been a seamless flow of good news. Beginning in the late 1970s, there were instances of reported mismanagement or "accounting irregularities" involving the neighborhood's community improvement organizations.

Buoyed by the increasing national success of the civil rights movement, Gum Springs residents formed the Saunders B. Moon Community Action Association in 1965. Named for the deceased principal of Gum Springs' Drew-Smith School, the association acquired federal, state, and local funding to sponsor social programs on the former Drew-Smith campus (the school closed after desegregation). The association created its housing arm in 1977, the Housing Development Corporation, headed initially by Kay Holland.

In 1978, a Fairfax County audit discovered that the Moon Association had not paid tens of thousands of dollars in federal and state withholding taxes for county-funded employees. In response, the county board of supervisors installed themselves as trustees of the association, and in 1980, agreed to pay association debts of \$110,000.

The U.S. department of energy accused the Moon Association in 1980 of misusing federal funds awarded to winterize poorly insulated Gum Springs houses belonging to low-income residents. Twenty of the 57 upgraded houses reportedly belonged to ineligible residents — their income exceeded the maximum specified by the grant.

The Saunders B. Moon Community Action Association changed its name to the Gum Springs Community Development Corporation (GSCDC) in the mid-1980s.

In 1990, Fairfax County, citing mismanagement and other problems, took control of the county-funded day care center operated by GSCDC. The corporation accused the county of interference. "Fairfax County doesn't want us to have our freedom," said Sally Pullen, the GSCDC president. She also suggested that the county's actions were no different than the oppressive control of the Jim Crow days. Verdia L. Haywood, then deputy county executive for human services, denied the actions were racially motivated, "It has nothing to do with the past," he told the news media.

Fairfax County cancelled its \$580,000 social services contract with GSCDC in 1996. An audit had discovered \$155,400 in unpaid bills at the corporation. Since 1996, the county has directly funded and



New homes on Saint Elliott Court contrast sharply with not only the shanties of the 1960s but also many modest dwellings still scattered about Gum Springs.

operated all activities at the Gum Springs Community Center. The GSCDC has disappeared and no organization has taken its place.

TURNING POINT

In 1979, Fairfax County adopted a Neighborhood Improvement Program and Conservation Plan for Gum Springs, the goal of which was to preserve the area as a viable residential community. Both the county government and residents then seemed focused on the same objectives — maintain Gum Springs' historic place in the county and improve life for its residents.

Yet as both the housing and general conditions improved in Gum Springs, alert residents started noticing that outside builders were buying parcels in the community. Homeowners began to worry that the very fabric of their neighborhood was slipping away. "We as a black community are being swallowed everywhere," said Gladys Quander Tancil in 1987. "We are being displaced," continued Tancil, a descendant of a Mount Vernon slave. "Our land is being sold to developers. And pretty soon, we just won't exist."

Fairfax County carved out a segment of the Conservation Plan area in 1990 to pave the way for the construction of the Village at Gum Springs. Officials set aside 20 of the 158 units for low-income buyers, but distributed the rights to purchase those units by lottery. While the development was a step up from a motel and trailer park that occupied part of the land, this was the first major housing project not aimed directly at Gum Springs residents. Anyone could buy a house there, and the advertisements for the project never mentioned the history of Gum Springs, touting only the convenient location.

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE EDITOR STEVEN MAUREN
703-778-9415 OR GAZETTE@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL K. BOHN/THE GAZETTE



Ron Chase, president of the Gum Springs Historical Society and Museum, is worried that his community will lose its cultural identity.

one in 2007 asked \$900,000, an extraordinary shift in Gum Springs real estate values.

According to Queenie Cox, president of the Gum Springs Civic Association, regular participation in neighborhood activities now seems to be limited to a group of what she calls "seasoned" African-American residents, those with long family ties to the community. She noted that representatives of the Village and Mount Woodley Manor had initially attended the civic association meetings, but none do now.

"New residents aren't interested in the history of Gum Springs," Cox said. "They appear to be interested in living in a community that fits their lifestyle. Nothing more."

Both Cox and Chase believe that Gum Springs can keep its cultural identity only through a continuing struggle to educate new residents about the community's unique past. "If we don't keep trying," Chase said, "Gum Springs is headed for oblivion."

"The success in Gum Springs must be a mixed blessing," concluded John Vlatch in 2007. He is a professor of American Studies and Anthropology at George Washington University, and a long-time observer of Gum Springs. "They got what they wished for, but at a cost. Gum Springs is just blending into the larger population."

'The Canterville Ghost'



Mount Vernon Community Children's Theatre will present its annual Teen Show, this year featuring the satirical, farcical "The Canterville Ghost."
The show will be performed at Heritage Presbyterian Church Feb. 19, and 20 at 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 21 at 3 p.m. Tickets are available at the door and cost \$8 for students/seniors and \$10 for adults.
Visit www.MVCCT.org.

SNOW



Creating Safe Routes to School

Cub Scout Pack 1504, sponsored by the Waynewood Elementary School, shoveled snow from the approaches to Waynewood Elementary School last weekend. At least 24 Scouts turned out, along with parents and siblings, and at least one Boy Scout. The Saturday team shoveled over two blocks of sidewalks along Waynewood Boulevard, and cut through large piles of plowed snow to create crosswalks in several places. They also shoveled a path to Door 3 of the school. The Sunday team cut additional crosswalks across Waynewood Boulevard, and finished shoveling the sidewalk from the rear of the school to Potomac Lane. They also shoveled parts of the sidewalk along that street, and cut some crosswalks through piles of plowed snow.

Snowfall Measured in Gratitude

For Mount Vernon homeowner Linda Krieg, the forecast of a three-foot snow didn't pose a threat. A resident of Chicago and Milwaukee, the former Midwesterner was all too familiar with blizzard conditions. But an unexpected foot surgery three weeks ago left Krieg in a boot that wasn't meant for navigating the rough weather.

Krieg found herself stuck indoors. With her husband in Iraq, she had no company aside from her two Siberian Huskies. She previously prepared for her six weeks of recovery, stocking up on groceries and corresponding with coworkers to run errands. But when the Feb. 5 storm hit, messy roads and piles from snowplows left Krieg out of touch with the outside world.

"We're just not used to having snow storms of this volume here," said Krieg. "I'm stranded in the house."

But as the inches accumulated, so did Krieg's hope. She glanced out her window to see a neighboring family digging out her 100-foot driveway, after finishing four other surrounding homes. Since the storms have hit, Krieg says her neighbors have returned every night to check on her well being, walk her dogs and do other simple tasks that she cannot accomplish, like bringing in the newspaper.

Krieg acknowledges that she has come to depend on her neighbors during the incessant snow, but she says their generosity has

reaffirmed her belief that the storms can bring out the best in people.

"They're just wonderful," Krieg said. "I don't know what I would do without them."

— ANSLEY LABARRE



Building Blocks

Larry and Marina Dohm of Mount Vernon with an igloo that they built during this week's snow storm.



A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY

February 2010

Dear Community Members:

On behalf of Inova Mount Vernon Hospital's staff, physicians and patients, we thank you for your support during the historic blizzard of 2010.

It takes a special person to answer the call for help during one of the worst snowstorms this area has seen in the past decade. You are one of those special people. You put your own comfort aside to think of those in a vulnerable health situation who needed care and support during their hospital stay. We are fortunate to have people like you in our community, who answered that call last week and came to our aid. With your help, hundreds of our staff were transported to and from the hospital. Words cannot adequately express our gratitude.

Please accept our most sincere thanks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barbara Doyle".

Barbara Doyle, CEO, Inova Mount Vernon Hospital
Senior Vice President, Inova Health System

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NEWS

Time and Goodyear Honor Taylor

Jack Taylor, president of Alexandria Toyota, a Toyota and Scion dealership in Alexandria, has been honored for his nomination for the 2010 Time Magazine Dealer of the Year award.

Taylor was one of a select group of dealers from across the country honored at the 93rd annual National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) Convention & Exposition in Orlando this week. The announcement of this year's Dealer of the Year and finalists was made by Mark Ford, president and group publisher of Time Magazine, and Johann Finkelmeier, vice president and general manager, Original Equipment N.A. Consumer Tire, The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, at the formal opening of the convention, which is attended by more than 25,000 individuals involved in the automobile industry.

Recipients of the Time Magazine Dealer of the Year award are among the nation's most successful auto dealers, but they must also demonstrate a long-standing commitment to effective community service.

Taylor, 63, was chosen to represent both the Virginia Automobile Dealers Association and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association in the national competition; he is one of only 45 automobile dealers, from 17,000 nationwide, nominated for the 41st annual award.

Taylor graduated from Fork Union (VA) Military Academy in 1965, and went on to earn a bachelor of science degree in history at Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C., in 1969. Taylor then served in the United States Army in the Military Police Corp from



Jack Taylor

April 1970 to December 1971. He served in Vietnam, earning a Bronze Star for meritorious service and was honorably discharged. Upon his return from the Vietnam War, Taylor went to work for Bill Page Toyota in Falls Church in April 1972, starting in sales.

In October 1973, Taylor bought Hunter Motors with his partner Frank Page and

changed its name to Alexandria Toyota. Eleven years later, Taylor bought out Page and became sole owner of the dealership he has led ever since; a dealership that's earned the Toyota President's Award every year since the honor was instituted in 1986.

"I also enjoy supporting my community," said Taylor, who has a track record of supporting civic and charitable organizations with his time, money and effort. From 2006-08, Alexandria Toyota donated more than \$715,000 to local charities and non-profits, most of which benefited children and educational organizations.

For his good works, Taylor has won numerous awards, including the Alexandria Business Philanthropy Award, the Heart of the Community Award from the Hopkins House, the YMCA Strong Communities Award and the Passion for Caring Award presented by Capital Hospice.

Hyland's 'Virtual Tour' This Saturday

Supervisor Gerry Hyland is hosting his 23rd Annual Mount Vernon Town Meeting, this Saturday, Feb. 20, 7:45 a.m. – 1 p.m., in the Mount Vernon High School "Little Theatre."

The Exhibit area opens 7:45 a.m. County agencies and departments, non-profit organizations, and cultural, historical, and political organizations will be available to provide information and services. More than 40 exhibitors will be present to provide information and answer questions.

♦ The Fairfax County Department of Health will be offering free H1N1 immunizations.

♦ Fairfax County SACC (School Age Child Care Program) will be available to sign up children for before and after elementary school care.

♦ The Office of Elections will be available for voter registration or to assist with changes to registration.

♦ Find out more about organizations like the Southeast Fairfax Development Corporation, South Fairfax

Chamber of Commerce, Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce, South County Federation, and the Mount Vernon Council of Citizen's Associations.

♦ Find out more information about the County's Park programs, Independent Living Projects, Solid Waste & Recycling.

Food and other needed items will be collected to stock the United Community Ministries Food Pantry. The most urgently needed items are: Canned meat and tuna fish, canned soups, canned fruits and vegetables, canned beans, pasta, rice, tomato Sauce, cereal, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter & jelly, dry milk, baby food, diapers, small juice boxes, small individual serving boxes of cereal, pop-top or peel-off cans of meat, fruits and applesauce, small boxes of raisins, disposable utensils, small toiletries and paper & plastic grocery bags.

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Mount Vernon Gazette



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107293

OPINION

New Housing Blueprint

Ending homelessness, moving beyond preservation of affordable housing.

BY SHARON BULOVA



Several years ago, on a freezing February morning, I rode the VRE into Washington, D.C. for a Council of Governments meeting. As I was leaving Union Station, I noticed a middle-aged woman, with sacks of belongings and bedding gathered around her. She was clearly a person with mental illness, muttering to herself and batting the air at imaginary objects.

I remember thinking, "I'm so glad I live in Fairfax County. We have social services programs that would help someone like this woman." But later that week, while jogging down an old alignment of a road near my home, I spotted a tent tucked way back in the woods. It was a homeless person's encampment.

Fairfax County has established a "hypothermia program" to shelter homeless individuals during the cold winter months. The program is a partnership among county agencies, area houses of worship and nonprofit organizations. The hypothermia program has served to crystallize how inadequate our human services network is for dealing with homelessness.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Police Review Board Needed

To the Editor:

Recently I proposed that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appoint a Citizens Police Review Board to review citizens' complaints alleging police misconduct. I directed a letter to Mt. Vernon District Supervisor Gerald Hyland, Chair of the Board of

Supervisor's Public Safety Committee, who informed me "There is already sufficient review of police actions in the county," but he would bring this to the attention of the Mt. Vernon Council of Citizens Associations (NVCCA) I have recently learned the MVCCA also "felt there is already sufficient review of police actions in the county and a citizen review board is not necessary."

I believe the MVCCA should

have extended me an invitation to present my position regarding this matter. However, as the public safety representative for my community on the MVCCA for many years, I fully understand the MVCCA often makes its decisions with little input regarding issues that impact our community.

As a matter of interest, I find the FBI is conducting an investigation of the Nov. 13, 2009 police shooting death of David Masters, a

former Green Beret and Vietnam veteran who was unarmed and an alleged petty larceny suspect here in the Mt. Vernon district. Of concern to many Fairfax County residents is the WTOP report dated Jan. 30, 2010 which reports "Since 2005 nine people have been killed in

Fairfax County Police-involved shootings. Twelve people have

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

Blueprint Highlights

Resolved: End homelessness; provide affordable housing options to those with special needs; cut the waiting lists for affordable housing in half; produce workforce housing to accommodate projected job growth.

The Housing Blueprint is a strategy for addressing these priorities and represents a new direction compared to the previous policy of preservation. The new goals stated in the Blueprint are comprehensive: to end homelessness in 10 years, to provide affordable housing options to those with special needs, to cut the waiting lists for affordable housing in half over 10 years, and to produce workforce housing to accommodate projected job growth.

The Blueprint is the product of impressive collaboration by county agencies, concerned citizens, houses of worship and local non-profits. Because of the metrics it includes, the Blueprint sets short and long term goals and can be used to evaluate our programs.

TO VIEW the Housing Blueprint, please visit <http://www.effordable.org/>.

If you would like more information, or would like to volunteer in efforts to address homelessness, the County's Office to End Homelessness can be reached by going to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless>.

Sharon Bulova is chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

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Snapshot

A cardinal and a finch rest together on a ledge near Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway during last week's heavy snowfall.

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UNDER CONTRACT

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8253 DOCTOR CRAIK COURT
\$349,000 | Briary Farms
Charming 4 BR, 2.5 BA home, convenient location, assigned parking, hdwds, newer carpet. Bank approval.
Rachel Carter | 703.851.4207

UNDER CONTRACT

418 ORONOCO STREET
\$749,900 | Heart of Old Town
Like new! Stunning 4 lvl, 3 BR, 3.5 BA, 2 car gar. Gourmet kitch, HW floors, roof top deck, crown molding & more.
Joy Deevy | 703.930.5198

JUST LISTED

3101 N. HAMPTON DRIVE, UNIT 306
\$218,500 | Alexandria
Stylish 1 BR condo, updated kitchen with granite counters and fresh, neutral paint. Balcony, great amenities!
Yvonne S. Croft | 703.973.1540

OPEN SUNDAY, 1:00 - 4:00!

1317 EAST ABINGDON DRIVE, #5
\$434,900 | Old Town Alexandria
2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom. Top floor with loft. Granite, stainless, bamboo floors. Viking appliances.
Lynn Pina | 703.867.8587

OPEN SUNDAY 1:00 - 4:00!

4122 SCOTLAND ROAD
\$689,000 | www.4122Scotland.com
Gorgeous 5 BR, 2.5 BA brick home in Mt. Vernon. FP, eat-in kitch, hdwd. Flrs., updates thruout! 2 car garage
Doris Monticone | 703.888.9986

OPEN SUNDAY 1:00 - 4:00!

PORTO VECCHIO UNIT 824
\$668,000 | Old Town Alexandria
1582 sq ft 2BR 2.5 bath condo w/ river views, fireplace, balcony and reserved garage parking.
Denise Davis | 571.332.8531

OPEN SUNDAY, 1:00 - 4:00!

114 FRANKLIN STREET
\$1,099,000 | Old Town Alexandria
Absolutely gorgeous 3BR, 3.5BA solid Brk, 4lvl corner townhome w/huge kitchen, 2 firs, off street parking!
Ed Pagett | 703.518.6156

JUST LISTED!

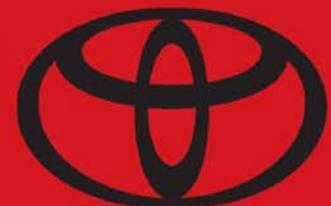
425-427 NORTH ST ASAPH STREET
\$1,375,000 | Old Town Alexandria
Charming 3 BR, 1.5 BA brick townhome, circa 1810, with beautiful English garden plus buildable lot!
Donnan C. Wintermute | 703.518.6156

310 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 703.518.8300 Main Office
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am - 6pm Saturday, 9am - 4pm Sunday, 10am - 4pm

Information is deemed reliable but is not guaranteed. Equal housing opportunity. Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage is owned and operated by NRT, LLC.

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OPINION

State Budget Crisis Looms

BY SCOTT A. SUROVELL
DELEGATE (D-44)



Last week we had a big victory in protecting funding for Fairfax County's Public Schools. Governor Bob McDonnell announced his opposition to former Governor Kaine's proposal to "freeze" the "rebenchmarking" or readjustment of the local composite index (LCI), part of the funding formula that determines state funding of local schools. If Kaine's decision goes into effect, it will cost us about \$61 million or \$438,000 per Fairfax County school. I am working to prevent these cuts and enact Governor McDonnell's proposal.

RICHMOND REPORT
I have been consistently clear in opposing freezing the LCI. Hundreds of Fairfax County residents, including a particularly dedicated group of parents from the Stratford Landing area, have lobbied the Governor and state legislators to prevent these cuts. While the existing formula does not benefit Fairfax County, it does avoid biennial regional warfare and provides some measure of predictability. Governor McDonnell's decision was the right decision for Virginia and I applaud him.

However, preliminary reports are that budget negotiators are discussing a \$700 million cut from elementary-secondary education. These cuts could generate opposition from other localities that are more dependent on the state's money (really mostly Northern Virginia's money) and these jurisdictions will start to face the same kind of pain Fairfax County has been discussing recently. Do not be surprised if the rebenchmarking issue gets put back on the table.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 9

been wounded." More recently on Feb. 11, 2010 the Washington Post reported "Fairfax Police Knew That Man Shot by Officer is Mentally Ill."

Many cities across our nation, including Washington D.C., have established an "Office of Police Complaints" which affords its citizens an effective, efficient, and a fair and unbiased system for citizens to file complaints against police officers where there is an allegation of misconduct.

The nationwide trend to afford citizens the opportunity to seek redress for alleged police misconduct cases is headed by the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE), which is a non-profit organization that brings together individuals and agencies working to establish or improve oversight of law enforcement in the United States.

As a retired law enforcement officer, I firmly believe most police officers perform their duties with diligence, devotion and sensitivity. However, from time to time, some police officers do not

act in accordance with the high standards of conduct that the people in every community have a right to expect.

Hopefully, the citizens of Fairfax County will support my efforts to establish a Citizens Police Review Board.

I firmly believe "We need the police and the police need us."

Nicholas R. Beltrante
Mt. Vernon resident

Lazy and Inconsiderate

To the Editor:

First, I'd like to express my appreciation for the vast majority of neighbors who have stepped up to shovel their driveways and sidewalks in a very timely manner. These individuals, young and old, fit and physically challenged, represent the American ideal of community, true citizens working for the greater good. These are good people coming from all walks of life. On the other hand, I am absolutely amazed by the small number of individuals I know who have not shoveled their sidewalks (none

The Fairfax County schools' budget hole is still massive — over \$100 million — with more state budget cuts about to hit. Nearly 60 percent of the Mount Vernon families who responded to my survey said that their number one priority is protecting elementary-secondary education funding. I will fight any effort to reduce our public school funds and continue to look for ways to fund our schools and do so without relying so heavily on residential real estate taxes.

This week, we start work on the Senate's bills and the state budget. This budget is the worst we have seen since the Great Depression and the 44th District has some of the highest concentrations of people most likely to be affected. I expect proposals like massive "cuts" in Medicaid, the federal-state program providing health care to disabled and low-income people, and even more proposals to cut college funding.

These changes are not "cuts" but are simply shifts of government responsibilities to Mount Vernon's middle-class families in the form of higher tuition, higher insurance costs and a raft of fees for students' tests, sports and activities. I will fight as hard as I can against these efforts to dismantle what have traditionally been community responsibilities.

Finally, please visit my blog, The Dixie Pig, at scotturovelli.blogspot.com for three to four more articles per week and many of my floor speeches. You can also comment on legislation, set up a meeting or request a Capitol tour at www.scotturovelli.org. Good government requires your input so please communicate with me so I can best represent your concerns in the General Assembly. It is an honor to serve as your state delegate.

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20% Winter discount on jobs performed between January and March 2010! Call now for a free estimate and mention this ad!

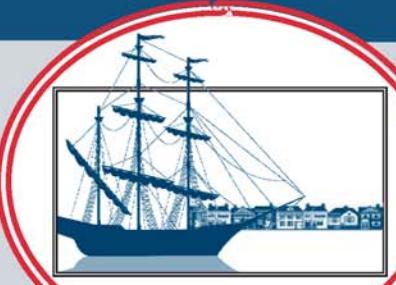
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Planning to sell in 2010? Now is the time to call Chris & Peggy White!



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8313 Mount Vernon Hwy
\$735,900

*1.5 Acre Estate Site!
\$12,000 in Free Options!*

Just listed—special pre-construction opportunity! Fabulous new Wakefield Home on 3/4 acre site. Spacious custom residence with bright, open floor plan loaded with special features. Prime location combining large lot privacy with the convenience of being in the center of everything! Pre-construction pricing! Model Open Sunday 1-4pm. South GW Pkwy, Right Rte 235 N/Mt. Vernon Hwy to 8311.



1208
Tatum Drive
\$850,000
Villamay!

Magnificent Colonial in exceptional condition on one of prestigious Villamay's nicest streets! Three finished levels, large room sizes, updated kitchen and baths. MBR suite has private balcony which provides panoramic vistas of the area with seasonal river views. Elevated grounds afford the ultimate privacy with gorgeous custom pool. Open Sunday 1-4. Pky S; R Tulane; L Park Terr; R Tatum to 1208.



3906
Riv Drive
\$998,500

Stunning Property!
The most spectacular property you will ever find has been completely updated with breathtaking results! Bright & open floor plan, 3 finished levels including full walkout lower level, 4/BR, 3.5BA, updated gourmet kitchen, stunning MBR suite and custom river view screened porch house with deck. Expansive glass window walls capture river views and natural beauty of almost full acre site.



605 NORTH OWEN
STREET
Alexandria City
\$515,000

CLOSE IN LOCATION. Brick single family, 3BR/3FB, Frpl-renovation incl; new gourmet kit, w/ granite, SS GE appliances, new cabinetry, ceramic floors. Fresh custom paint, refinished hardwoods, 3 new spectacular custom baths. Must see to appreciate - nice front/rear yards, patio off street driveway parking.

Louise Devers 703.795.9944



269 S PICKETT ST,
Unit 201
Alexandria City
\$335,000

LARGE, light-filled meticulously maintained, 2BR/2BA, 2-level condo backing to trees. Updated kit appliances, disposal, sink, W/D, double pane thermal tilt-in windows & major systems replaced (2006). Priv balcony, double-sided FP. Mins to 395/Landmark, I-95 to Metro, 20 min to airport, DC & Pentagon.

Sheryl Lambson 703.217.7012



5903 MT EAGLE
DRIVE #II10
Alex / Montebello
\$375,000

RARELY AVAILABLE "E" unit at Alexandria's premiere gated community, Montebello. 2BR, 2 baths, gorgeous updated kitchen, spectacular skyline and river views.

susanseells@longandfoster.com
Susan Haughton & Mindy Brubaker
571.242.9913



9324
Old Mansion Rd
\$2,249,990
Breathtaking River Views!

Unique opportunity, brand new luxury home in exclusive enclave featuring the most spectacular views in area! Stunning new estate by Keswick Homes features spectacular floor plan and virtually every upgrade and modern amenity. Pre-construction sale allows maximum customization. Model Home and design center available.



4401
Jackson Place
\$475,000
Special Value!

Spacious brick home on gorgeous half acre lot with open floor plan, hardwood floors, family room with fireplace, covered parking and extra driveway space. Fabulous custom deck overlooks magnificent level grounds. Rare opportunity to find a well maintained Mount Vernon home for under \$500,000!



322 WESMOND DR
Alexandria
\$274,900

GREAT LOCATION & GREAT OPPORTUNITY for 1st TIME HOME-BUYERS, who meet eligibility requirements for City of Alexandria Homeownership Assistance Program. Buyers can receive up to \$50K in down payment assistance. Great 3 lvl row house in move in condition with 2BR/1FB and priced to sell. Call...

Maria Matthews 202.258.0391



1250 SOUTH
WASHINGTON ST
#III - \$500,000
UNIQUE WATER-FRONT PROPERTY!

Delightful, sunny 1 BR/ Den residence has a panoramic river and garden view. Huge great room, tiled 136 sqft sunroom, breakfast room w/ direct access to gardens & new, neutral carpet in BR. Garage prkg, 24-hr desk, pool, tennis, kayak dock, limo service & elegant party rooms.

Pat Tierney 703.850.5630



6309 POTOMAC
AVENUE
New Alexandria
\$524,900

PERFECT LOCATION - CHARM INCLUDED! Just 2 mins So of OT, this adorable 4BR/Ba renovated cape cod will steal your heart. Convenient for bus, METRO, car/bike commuting. The neighborhood has shopping, restaurants & marina. Call for more information...

Margaret Keagle 571.332.5264



3614
Old Vernon Ct
\$865,000
Stunning Value!

Wakefield Custom Home. Special home on gorgeous level lot in Pettit's Landing in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Custom built as "Dream Home" for owners this home features exceptionally bright, open floor plan and is loaded with costly options and upgrades. Unique opportunity to acquire Wakefield's most popular model in prime location at thousands less than the cost of building it today!



4816
Stillwell Avenue
\$525,000
Renovated!

Unique opportunity! Exceptionally large 5/6 BR home is located in a gorgeous setting on a 1/2 acre lot bordering acres of county parkland. Renovated throughout, it features an updated kitchen, refinished hardwood floors, finished lower level, in-law suite and large deck. A recently remodeled home of this size in a premier setting creates a truly one of a kind value!



4413
Ferry Landing Road
\$559,900
Yacht Haven!

Recently installed top quality gourmet kitchen with custom cabinets & granite counters, hardwood floors, large deck & covered parking. Bright, open floor plan overlooks gorgeous half acre grounds in one of the area's leading waterfront communities! Less than 5 minutes from Ft Belvoir, GW Pkwy, Mt Vernon Yacht Club & Mansion House Club. Home warranty!



828 SLATERS LA
#104 Alexandria
\$699,000

NEVER SHOVEL SNOW! Spectacular city views from rooftop! Best of city living, w/access to METRO, restaurants & shops. 1 stop light to DC! 1,763 sqft! 3BR/2.5BA, 2 Master suites, gour. kit, 9' ceilings, Gas frpl, HWs thru-out, handicap accessible + 2 inside prkg.

Mary Bourke 703.906.5825
Shane Canny 703.346.2067



4712 NEPTUNE DR
Alexandria
\$1,425,000

STUNNING WATER FRONT property with dock on Douge Creek Lagoon. Elevator and two-car garage, in-ground pool on half acre lot. 5,501 sq ft of living space with great views. 6BR, 4.5 BA

Betty Quirk 703.851.3447
Suzanne Backus 703.338.3594



400 CAMERON STA
BLVD - Unit # 427
Alexandria -
\$369,900

JUST LISTED! Excellent 2BR/2BA condo features a gourmet kit w/SSA, granite & lg brkfst bar. Upgraded, luxurious & large baths. W/D in unit. Carpet thru-out plus tile. Courtyard views from balcony. 2 garage spaces. Shuttle to Van Dorn METRO, EZ drive to OT/DC.

www.brianandjerry.com
Brian Hong & Jerry Beamer 703.929.5764



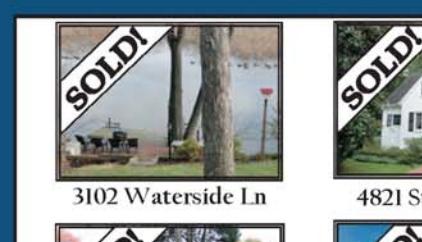
7501
Park Terrace Drive
\$1,150,000
Stunning!

Inspired by Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie style, this 1.1 acre property sits on a bluff overlooking acres of parkland with seasonal river views! Heart of redwood features, large room sizes, high ceilings and expansive glass window walls capture the natural beauty of the grounds. Off GW Pkwy just 3 miles from Old Town. (Adjoining 1.18 acre available for \$975,000.)



9316
Allwood Drive
\$540,000
Stunning!

Home features bright, open floor plan with soaring cathedral ceilings in the main living area. This fabulous property has been substantially updated and is in absolutely impeccable condition. Gleaming hardwood floors, track lighting, finished lower level, garage and much more. Gorgeous setting on half acre tract fronting a quiet street in the heart of Mount Vernon.



3102 Waterside Ln
4821 Stillwell Ave
1810 Hollindale Dr
8311 Mt Vernon Hwy



7532
HOLLINDALE CT
Alex / Hollindale
\$579,000

MUST SEE! Newly painted & staged by HGTV 3BR/3BA rambler features gourmet kit w/ cherry cabs, granite & stainless appliances. Other highlights incl: HW flrs, remodeled BAs, custom closets, 2FPs, rear patio, landscaped yard & more!

Dayna Blumel / Kerry Adams
703.597.2252



555 SOUTH
WASHINGTON
STREET
Old Town / Alex
\$1,775,000 - #101 &
\$1,975,000 - #102

Circa 1790 - 3 finished levels, 3,812sqft or 4,123sqft - wood floors - 4 FP or 3 FP - 9' ceilings - gracious outdoor space - 2 car detached garage - 3BR, 2.5BA or 3BR, 3.5BA General Washington Club Condos. Call for an appointment with...

Michael Manuel 703.615.6317



7800 ELBA ROAD
Hollin Hills
\$830,000

BEST OF HOLLIN HILLS! Totally renovated 2-level w/best quality design, materials, lots of light, backs to natural reserve - park-like setting seating, pond/fountain - deluxe eat-in kit - MstrBR/BA suite - Den/Office - 2 frpls - 4/5BRs/4BAs - vaulted ceilings - Thermopane windows - Stunning don't miss this one!

Franki Roberts 703.898.0840



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SNOW

Shoveling for Students' Safety

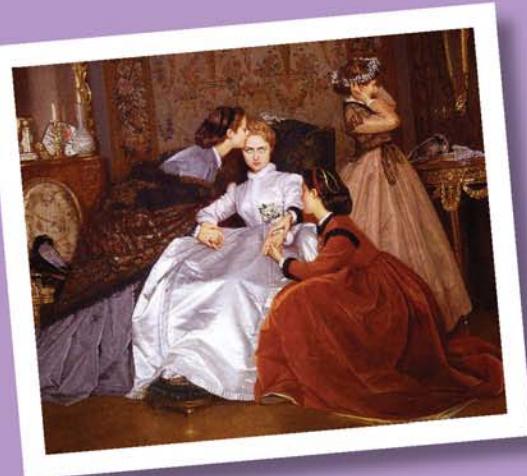


Dr. Tish Howard, principal at Washington Mill Elementary, and school staff shovel bus stops and sidewalks in the Sacramento area of Richmond Highway to help with snow removal efforts for Fairfax County Public Schools. Washington Mill PTA took care of the east side of Route 1 in the Mount Vernon area.



Beware

Sue Lord and Jim Whittaker of Justin Road hope their mail carrier won't be scared off by this "alligator" sculpture created by Peter Whittaker.



**“Life is my college.
May I graduate well, and
earn some honors! ”**

• Louisa May Alcott

THE MADEIRA SCHOOL FINE ARTS DEPARTMENT PROUDLY PRESENTS

Little Women

The Broadway Musical

Book by Allan Knee • Music by Jason Howland
Lyrics by Mindi Dickstein • Based on the novel by Louisa May Alcott

**February 18 and 19 at 7:30 pm
February 20 at 1:00 pm**

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Director Krista Cowan
Music Director Stacie Steinke
Choreography Michelle Sarson
Set Design A.J. Guban
Lighting Design Elaine Randolph
Costume Design Heather Lockard
Props Design Pamela Weiner

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to say **”**



From left: Nicholas Rodriguez as Fabrizio and Margaret Anne Florence as Clara in the upcoming Arena Stage musical "The Light in the Piazza" March 5 - April 11, 2010.

MARCH 5-APRIL 11

"The Light in the Piazza." Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Tickets range from \$25 to \$74. Tickets may be purchased online at ArenaStage.org, by phone at 202-488-3300. At Arena Stage in Crystal City, 1800 S. Bell St., Arlington.

The NRG Olympic Passport Challenge

6 restaurants. 6 countries. Visit them all and let the games begin.

Now that the Olympic Games have begun, Old Town is seized by a serious case of Olympic fever. To celebrate the spirit and since we can't be in Canada, the Neighborhood Restaurant Group has created a fun crawl around town.

Here's how it works: From now through the closing ceremonies, each of these restaurants will adopt a country during the games and offer both food and drink inspired by that country.

Patrons need only visit any one of the restaurants, ask for a passport, then dine around at the others gathering a stamp at each along the way. Collect all six, and patrons will receive a \$50 gift certificate.

From there, three medalists will be selected at random from all completed passports. The Gold Medalist will be awarded a \$150 gift certificate, the Silver Medalist a \$100 gift certificate, and the Bronze Medalist a \$75 gift certificate.

All three medalists will be announced during the "closing ceremonies" in Del Ray. On Sunday, Feb. 28, an outdoor block party featuring an Olympic oyster roast complete with heated tents will be held at the Evening Star Café from 1 to 6 p.m.

Expect a day's worth of good food, fine wine, craft beers, good friends and neighbors and plenty of fun. There's no fee to attend — oysters, red apron hot dogs, beer, wine, coffee and much more will all be priced individually anywhere from \$3 to \$12.

THE EVENING STAR CAFE TEAM UNITED STATES

2000 Mt. Vernon Ave. Alexandria
www.eveningstarcafe.net

Featuring: Will's All-American Waffle Burger, The Five B



Vermilion Restaurant is representing Team Italy, at 1120 King Street, Alexandria.

Stinger (Black Angus Beef Burger with Blue, Bacon and Buffalo Sauce on Jalapeno and Cheddar Biscuit), Barnard Griffin Merlot from Washington State, Pale Ale from Philadelphia's Yard's Brewing Company.

COLUMBIA FIREHOUSE TEAM RUSSIA

109 South St. Asaph, Alexandria
www.columbiafirehouse.com

Featuring: Shortrib Beef Stroganoff with Housemade Egg Noodles, Moscow Mule Cocktail (Vodka, Ginger Beer and Lime), House Infused Pepper Vodka.

VERMILION TEAM ITALY

1120 King Street, Alexandria
www.vermillionrestaurant.com

Featuring: Four Cheese Ravioli with Path Valley Farms' Red & Orange Beets and Walnut Froth, Blood Orange Negroni (Gin Campari & Sweet Vermouth), Fernando Canavase Rosso "La Torazza" from Piedmont, Italy.

CHURCHKEY TEAM CANADA

1337 14th Street NW, Washington, D.C.
www.birchandbarley.com

Featuring: Poutine (ChurchKey's Handcut Fries topped with Cheddar Curds and Sausage Gravy, A selection of Canadian draft beers from a trio of great Quebecois brewers including Trou de Diable's Imperatrice Stout. ChurchKey is the only establishment in the USA offering this rare beer!

RUSTICO TEAM GERMANY

827 Slaters Lane, Alexandria
www.rusticorestaurant.com

Featuring: Pork Schnitzel with Wild Mushroom Spaetzle, Selection of German beers including Ettaler Curator Doppelbock, Augustine Brau Lager and more.

TALLULA / EATBAR TEAM POLAND

2761 Washington Blvd. Arlington
www.tallularestaurant.com

Featuring: Housemade Potato Pierogi stuffed with Potatoes, Kielbasa and Cheese, Polish Beers by Zwiec, The Polish Hat Trick (A Pierogi, Zwiec Lager and shot of Belvedere vodka).

Neighborhood Restaurant Group

2000 Mt. Vernon Avenue

Alexandria

www.neighborhoodrestaurantgroup.com

2009 WAMMIE Awards on Sunday, Feb. 28

The 24th Annual Wammies Award Show is Sunday, Feb. 28 at 8 p.m. at The State Theatre in Falls Church. Tickets are \$35/non-WAMA Member, \$20/WAMA Members, and \$15/nominees.

To purchase tickets or for more information on sponsor/patron tables go to: www.wamadc.com, or call 703-368-3300.

This year's WAMA performers include: Afro Bop Alliance, Bela Dona, Tabi Bonney, Martí Brom, Elikeh, Hotspur, Patty Reese Band, Rosslyn Mountain Boys, and The Dede Wyland Band. Seth Kibel & the DC Time Machine will be the pit band.

The pre-Wammie VIP Reception with The Esther Haynes Group, sponsored by the Falls Church News-Press, will be held at Argia's, Falls Church.

An After-Event Party with Jr. Cline and the Recliners will be held at Bangkok Blues, Falls Church, starting at 11:30 p.m.

Awards will be given in the following categories: A Cappella, Big Band/ Swing, Bluegrass, Blues / Traditional R & B, Cabaret / Musical Theater, Children's Music, Choral, Classical, Country, Electronica, Folk - Contemporary, Folk - Traditional, Go Go, Gospel / Inspirational, Jazz, Latin, Rap / Hip Hop, Reggae, Modern Rock, Pop Rock, Roots Rock, Urban Contemporary, and World Music.

For a full list of the nominees, go to: <http://wamadc.com/wama/wammies/wnoms24.htm>.

◆ MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

Brian Simms
Chris Watling
Danny Knicely
Frédéric Yonnet
Jon Carroll
Mike Woods
Yuliya Gorenman

NOMINATIONS

◆ ARTIST OF THE YEAR (Solo/Duo/Group)

Afro Bop Alliance
Billy Coulter
Fools & Horses
Honky Tonk Confidential
Margot MacDonald
Patty Reese
Raheem DeVaughn
Tabi Bonney
Wale

◆ NEW ARTIST OF THE YEAR (Solo/Duo/Group)

Be'l'A Dona
Diamond District
Hotspur
L'Tanya Mari'
Monako
The Sweater Set

◆ ALBUM OF THE YEAR

Ake Doni Doni - Take it Slow / Cheick Hamala Diabate Americana Express / Ruthie & the Wranglers The Caribbean Jazz Project / Afro Bop Alliance Gold Rush / Crash Boom Bang Keep the Light On / Dede Wyland Peace, Love and Coffee / The Alexandria Klezter Putty and Paint / Tommy Lepson Strong Medicine / Patty Reese Walls / Margot MacDonald You Should Know Better By Now / Hotspur

◆ WAMA/SAW SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR

Billy Coulter
Cheick Hamala Diabate
Joe Mach
Karl Straub
Lori Kelley
Luke Brindley
Massama Dogo
Matt Hutchison
Patty Reese

ECLIPSE CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Sylvia Alimena, Music Director



Sunday, Feb. 21, 2010 at 3 P.M.

SCHUMANN: Ov, Scherzo & Finale
TEIE: Flute Concerto
(WORLD PREMIERE)
Alice Kogan Weinreb, flute
SCHUBERT: Symphony #4

George Washington Masonic Memorial
101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria, VA
Tickets: \$25; \$20 seniors; \$5 students
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CALENDAR

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 Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

Tea Dances. 1-3:15 p.m. Group class from 1-1:30 p.m. Ballroom, Latin and Swing music. \$11/person. At the Dance Studio Lioudmila, 18 Roth Street, 2nd Floor (off Duke Street), Alexandria. Call 703-751-8868.

THURSDAY/FEB. 18

Heart Art. 6-9 p.m. Rescheduled. Free. Flowers and Candy, Printmaking Demonstration, Target Gallery Reception from 6-8 p.m. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org; 703-838-4565.

FRIDAY/FEB. 19

Music for Brass. 8 p.m. Free. Presented by the U.S. Air Force Band Chamber Players. At the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Call 202-767-5658 or visit www.usafband.af.mil.

FEB. 19-20

"Cinderella." Friday, Feb. 19 and Saturday, Feb. 20 at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5. At Carl Sandburg Middle School. Call 703-799-6204.

SATURDAY, FEB. 20

Hike to Find Wetland Waterfowl. 2-4 p.m. Walk the boardwalk to the observation tower at Huntley Meadows Park in search of green-winged teal, pintails, swamp sparrows and winter wrens. Cost is \$6 per person. At Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., in Alexandria. Call 703-768-2525.

All A-Buzz About Bees. 5-6:30 p.m. Discover what you can do to attract bees to your garden. Fee is \$6 per person. Huntley Meadows Visitor Center is located at 3701 Lockheed Blvd., in Alexandria. Call 703-768-2525.

Gift of Giving Benefit. 7:30 p.m. Sponsored by the Alexandria Choral Society. Tickets are \$125/person or \$1,000 per 8-person table. All net proceeds from the 1st Annual Gift of Giving benefit will be donated to The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center at Duke University in Durham, NC, and designated for children's brain cancer research. At Belle Haven Country Club, Alexandria. Email ACS President Donna Kamm at dmbk99@gmail.com.

Multicultural Showcase to Celebrate Black History Month. 5-9 p.m. Free. Special guests and performers: Mayor William Euille, D.C. Step Team, Unique Praise Dance, gospel singers, rappers, and other artists. At the Charles Houston Rec Center, 901 Wythe Street, Alexandria.

Tapas Tasting. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. You may never serve cheese and crackers again! These delicious and varied little dishes are a centuries-old tradition in Spain and gaining in popularity here. \$22. At Green Springs Gardens. Call 703-941-7987 to register.

Swordsmen's Rendezvous. 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Re-enactment of 18th-century swordplay and a display and discussion of 18th-century weapons. Swordsmen tours are scheduled every half hour between 11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., with each tour lasting one hour. Admission is \$6/person. Call 703-746-4242. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St., Alexandria. Visit www.gadsbytavern.org.



FEB. 19, 20, 21

"The Canterville Ghost." Showtimes are Feb. 19 and 20 at 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 21 at 3 p.m. Presented by the Mount Vernon Community Children's Theater. At Heritage Presbyterian Church. Tickets are \$8/students and seniors, \$10/adults. Call 703-360-0686 or www.MVCCT.org.

SUNDAY, FEB. 21

Separated? Divorced? Widowed?

5:30-8 p.m. The Rebuilding Program helps people who are separated, divorced or widowed and want to move on with their lives. \$45 registration fee. Meets at St. Martin De Porres Center, Alexandria. Call Carie Schaffer at 703-519-1751.

St. Patrick's Day Parade Fund-Raiser

4 p.m. At Pat Troy's Ireland's Own to support Alexandria's March 6 St. Patrick's Day Parade. Will include two pipe bands, a variety of entertainers, silent and loud auctions and a raffle.

A Celebration of African-American Art

3 p.m. With Youtha Hardman-Cromwell and Friends, Joe Burden and Company, Alfred Street Baptist Church Voices of Triumph, Trinity Chancel Choir. At Trinity United Methodist Church, 2911 Cameron Mill Road, Alexandria. Call 703-549-5500 x103. Visit www.trinityalexandria.org.

Eclipse Chamber Orchestra

3 p.m. David Teie's Flute Concerto, featuring soloist Alice Kogan Weinreb. Conducted by Music Director Sylvia Alimena and also features Schumann's Overture, Scherzo and Finale and Schubert's Symphony #4 in C Minor, D 47 "Tragic". General admission is \$25, seniors \$20, students \$5. At the George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Call 703-635-2770.

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic

7:30 p.m. Free admissions, donations accepted. (Rescheduled) Pre-concert lecture at 6:45 p.m. Ulysses S. James, Music Director. At T.C. Williams High School, 3330 King Street, Alexandria.

Marine Chamber Orchestra

2 p.m. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, NVCC, 3001 North Beauregard St., Alexandria. Call 703-845-6156 or www.schlesingercenter.com.

Bulbs as Companion Plants

1:30-3pm. Whether starting a new garden or adding to an existing one, Brent Heath teaches you how to combine bulbs, perennials, annuals, ground covers and flowering shrubs to create just the feeling you want for four seasons in your garden. \$10. At Green Springs Gardens. Call 703-642-5173 to register.

Jazz Jam

7 p.m. Featuring the Rick Whitehead Trio. \$10 admission, musicians \$5. At the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria. Call 703-768-5821.

MONDAY/FEB. 22

Tavern Toddlers. 10:30 a.m. to noon. Open playtime in Gadsby's historic ballroom. For toddlers (walkers

through 36 months) and their caregivers. Cost is \$7 for a group of three, which must include one adult, or purchase a 5-week pass for \$30. Call 703-746-4242. Or visit www.gadsbytavern.org.

TUESDAY/FEB. 23

Introduction to Figure Drawing. 2-5 p.m. At the Del Ray Artisans gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. \$12/DRA members, \$16/nonmembers. Space is limited; register by Feb. 19 at https://secure.delrayartisans.org/ssl/figuredraw.htm. Question? Katherine Rand at 703-836-1468 or katherine@katherinerand.com.

What is Classical Education? 7 p.m. Join Alexandria's Jr. K - 8th Classical Academy, Immanuel Lutheran School, for a program on Classical Education, featuring Dr. Gene Edward Veith Jr. Immanuel is located at 1801 Russell Road. Contact Peg Zensinger at margaret.zensinger@immanuelalexandria.org or 703-549-7323.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 24

The Rite of Calligraphy. 7 p.m. Lecture and demonstration with noted author and calligrapher Cecil H. Uyehara, who has lectured, demonstrated and exhibited his works at premier art galleries around the United States. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565, www.torpedofactory.org.

The Amazing Journey of the Red Knot. 7:30 p.m. Free. The speaker, Darin Schroeder of the American Bird Conservancy, will discuss the shorebird, the Red Knot, which makes one of the longest migrations in the world. Presented by The Friends of Dyke Marsh. At Huntley Meadows Park Visitors' Center, 3701 Lockheed Blvd., Alexandria. Call 703-768-2525.

THURSDAY/FEB. 25

Life on Death Row. 7-9 p.m. Free. Mr. Shujaa Graham will speak on his experience on death row for a crime he did not commit. Terri Steinberg, mother of a boy on death row in Virginia, will also speak. At Epiphany Lutheran Church, 5521 Old Mill Road, Alexandria. Call 703-768-2380.

Oscar Night Gala. 7-10 p.m. First annual gala benefitting the Center for Alexandria's Children, a public private partnership dedicated to the elimination of child abuse in the City of Alexandria. At Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Tickets are \$125. Call 703-746-6008. Visit www.centerforalexandriaschildren.org.

www.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

DINING

Winning the Cherry Challenge



Winning the Drinks Category was this Cherry-Mint Mojito from Tempo Restaurant.

The George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee has announced the winners of its second annual "Cherry Challenge."

The Cherry Challenge took place during the week of Feb. 1-7, in 12 Alexandria restaurants, and featured cherry-inspired dishes created by the restaurant chefs.

"Even though the snow forced us to cancel many of our other major events, this event was able to go on as scheduled, and provide a fun event for both the participating restaurants and their patrons," said Sharon Sobel, committee vice-chair.

Participating in this year's contest were Brabo, Fontaine Caffe and Creperie, Indigo Landing, King Street Blues in Old Town, Layla's Lebanese Restaurant, Murphy's Grand Irish Pub, Rampart's Tavern and Grill, Seagar's (Hilton Old Town), Shooter McGee's, St. Elmo's Coffee Pub, Union Street Public House and Tempo.

Two of the restaurants are two-time winners. Murphy's duck entrée also took best entrée last year, and Tempo also won last year in the drinks category, for their dirty cherry martini. Ramparts and Fontaine are new entrants this year.

Each person who ordered the dish or menu item was supplied with a ballot so that they could judge the menu item on taste, presentation and creativity. Scoring was done by rating both the number of ballots submitted, and how each dish rated in the palates of the citizens who ordered the items. This helped even the playing field when some restaurants didn't get as much business during the Cherry Challenge week as they expected, due to the snow.



Winning the Entree Category was this Duck a la Cherry dish from Murphy's Irish Pub and Restaurant.

However, Tempo Restaurant had far and away more ballots submitted than any of the other restaurants, with at least 20 ballots submitted per item. They featured items in three of the categories available. Wendy Albert on her Cherry-Mint Mojito said: "I think that it will become a permanent cocktail in our restaurant as the Dirty Cherry Martini from last year did. People loved it."

And the winners are...

- ❖ **Starters Category:** BBQ Cherry Wings from Ramparts Tavern and Grill
- ❖ **Entree Category:** Duck a la Cherry from Murphy's Irish Pub and Restaurant
- ❖ **Drinks Category:** Cherry-Mint Mojito from Tempo Restaurant
- ❖ **Dessert Category:** Black Forest Crepe from Fontaine Caffe and Creperie

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SPORTS

MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE SPORTS EDITOR JON ROETMAN
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Storm Damages Mount Vernon Crew Equipment

Majors seeking community assistance for repairs.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

Community support has played a significant role in the growth and success of the Mount Vernon crew team, which enters its ninth season of competition. But after a recent winter storm damaged an estimated five figures worth of team equipment, the Majors are in need of assistance more than ever.

Fallen trees, including a pine estimated at 100 feet, caused the damage. Among the affected equipment were two eight-person shells, two six-person shells and two singles. An oar rack, boat rack and a shed were also damaged.

Mount Vernon coaches gained access to their equipment at Fort Belvoir marina on Monday after snow was plowed. They arrived to an unpleasant surprise.

"The coaches that were there seemed devastated," team manager Robin Jones said.

"Right now, it's kind of a disbelief position," girls head coach Paul Phillips said. "It's pretty devastating to look at."

While coaches were able to get close enough to see the equipment, some of the boats are still trapped under trees. Not all of the damage has been assessed and Jones said they couldn't haul equipment anyway because they can't get to the team trailer. Phillips said Forest Park High School agreed to let Mount Vernon use its crew trailer.

Jones said some of the equipment is insured, but the Mount Vernon program, which is not supported by Mount Vernon High School or Fairfax County, will have to raise money for repairs.

The Majors will take part in their annual "tag day," going door to door to raise money, on Feb. 27. The Majors have also taken part in garage sales and car washes, among other events, to raise money.

"This community has been very supportive of our program," Phillips, in his sixth year with the Majors, said. "I don't want to use the word 'begging,' but we need help from the Mount Vernon community to get us back on the water. ... Without a lot of help from the community, we're going to have a difficult time."

The Majors are scheduled to begin practicing Monday, but that is unlikely to happen. Jones said while cold temperatures might cancel practice anyway, the Majors won't be able to do much until debris is cleared. Mount Vernon's first regatta, the Polar Bear Regatta, is scheduled for March 27.

"If the weather was 80 degrees on Monday," she said, "we still could not go on the water because of the tree and debris."

Phillips said it will likely take the team two weeks to get out on the water, and possibly longer for the girls team. Each boat that was damaged belonged to the girls team. He said the damaged boats were the team's top racing shells, not practice shells. While the Majors purchase their equipment used, an eight-person shell can cost more than \$10,000 - \$25,000 if bought new, Jones said.

Donations can be made to Mount Vernon Crew Boosters, P.O. Box 205, Mount Vernon, VA 22121-0205.



COURTESY PHOTO

Some Mount Vernon racing shells, among other equipment, were damaged by fallen trees.

SPORTS BRIEFS

West Potomac's Dona, Moffitt, States Bound

West Potomac swimmers Reanna Dona and Hellen Moffitt qualified for states during the Northern Region meet earlier this month. Dona qualified in the 50-yard freestyle (first, 24.49 seconds) and the 100 backstroke (second, 58.71). Moffitt qualified in the 50 freestyle (second, 24.54) and 100 butterfly (fourth, 57.89).

The girls 400 freestyle relay team of Julia Bolger, Maddy Bolger, Moffitt and Dona also qualified (eighth, 3:43.13).

The West Potomac girls finished 12th out of 24 teams with 105 points. Mount Vernon was 23rd with five points. Robinson won the meet with 268. The West Potomac boys were 20th out of 25 teams with 20 points. Mount Vernon was 24th with six points. Oakton won the meet with 244.

before the Gazette's deadline.

The West Potomac girls lost to Annandale 59-33 on Tuesday. Results of the Wolverines Wednesday contest against West Springfield were not available.

The district tournament begins Friday with the top four seeds hosting. Saturday's semifinal round and Monday's championship game will be played at T.C. Williams.

National District Basketball Regular Season Cancelled

The National District cancelled regular season basketball games which were postponed due to inclement weather. Mount Vernon and the rest of the National District will start the district tournament tonight.

The Mount Vernon girls host Stuart at 6 p.m. and the boys host Edison at 8 p.m.

T.C. Williams Crew New Rower Registration

New rower registration for all new T.C. Williams rowers (including eighth- and ninth-graders) will be held at 8 a.m. Saturday at the Dee Campbell Rowing Facility. The Dee Campbell Rowing Facility (also known as the T.C. boathouse) is located at 1 Madison Street, Alexandria.

Five questions with West Potomac freshman gymnast Nicole Marinello.

Q: What is your favorite food?

A: I really like seafood, so probably linguini with clam sauce.

Q: What location is the farthest you have traveled from the Washington, D.C. metro area?

A: Hawaii. My mom's from Hawaii. I'm half Japanese. We're going there this summer. We used to go a lot.

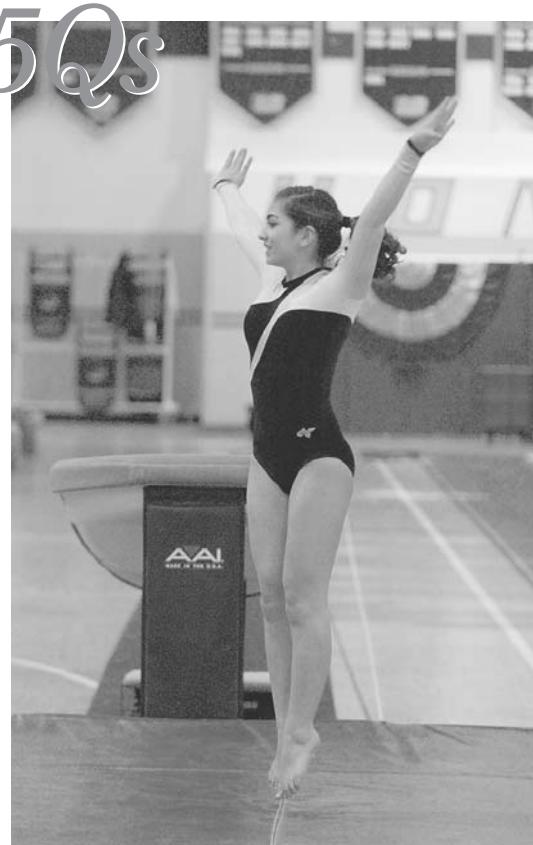
Q: What are you doing when you're not participating in gymnastics?

A: I would say doing my schoolwork, but that would probably be a lie. So most likely hanging out with my friend Karley. That's my other house. I'm always at her house.

Q: You're also a cheerleader. Which do you prefer, cheer or gymnastics?

A: I think I would have to go with gymnastics if I had to choose. I like the cheerleading team too, but [the gymnastics] team, we actually hang out and we're really close. I've been doing gymnastics a lot longer than cheer so it's like a comfort zone for me.

Q: You're 14. What's one of the first places you will want to go once you get



your driver's license?

A: I'll probably go to Chipotle, because I always beg everyone who can drive to bring me Chipotle and there always like, 'No.' I love Chipotle, so that would probably be it.

— JON ROETMAN

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 9

sons to drive, yet I witnessed an amazing amount of local traffic after the big snow.

My kids are now in college or high school, so I do not have a need to clear sidewalks for them, but my neighbors have young children who do need sidewalks cleared. People who walk dogs do need cleared sidewalks, and elderly individuals need cleared sidewalks to get their daily exercise. I have absolutely no trouble clearing my sidewalks for those who need them cleared, and I would willingly pay to have others do the job if I could not, but why is that not the case for the few in my neighborhood who haven't done so? Community is what makes us great in the U.S., yet in this area I see that there is a small proportion of our population that knows nothing other than "me." I truly worry about us in the case of a real emergency given the reaction of the selfish few to this trivial inconvenience. Yes, the snow was not a big deal compared to other things that could happen to us all.

If this snowfall was a test of our grit and devotion to the betterment of all versus the selfish needs of the individual, I think we largely passed, but there are many individuals who need to rethink their priorities lest they bring the rest of the community down in a true emergency. Contributing to the community good is very easy when we all do our share, and most did in our neighbor-

hood, but the majority cannot always compensate for the self-absorbed individuals who cannot see beyond their own noses.

Steve Dressing

Alexandria

Bottle Deposit Loses Money

To the Editor:

I write to immediately respond to Elizabeth Martin's rebuttal ["Not Tidal Litter," The Gazette, Feb. 11-17] of my earlier letter in opposition to her suggestion to add an additional layer of government regulation and business inconvenience through enactment of a bottle deposit law.

In my earlier letter, I advocated letting Fairfax County's recycling program work and strictly enforcing laws against littering. In her rebuttal, Ms. Martin stated that I mischaracterized a Michigan law "as not benefiting the environment" and she supported that argument by quoting from an MSNBC article that "Michigan's recycling rate for cans and bottles is 97 percent." What does this recycling rate mean? Apparently, for every 100 bottles sold, 97 are returned. However, as subsequently made clear in the article, what appears to be an acceptable rate of return has not resulted in the financial benefit, to be used for envi-

ronmental cleanup, that was a premise for the Michigan law which is found at Chapter 445 of the Michigan Code.

Quoting from the same article, "Michigan would have at least \$10 million a year more for environmental cleanup if not for people redeeming containers that were bought in other states." What accounts for this deficit? Obviously, the \$10 million deficit is calculated by adding up all the deposit revenue from sales of bottled beverages in Michigan and then subtracting the money paid out for bottles returned in Michigan regardless of whether they were purchased within Michigan. If a \$10 million annual deficit isn't an environmental deficit, where Michigan expected in vain that its bottle deposit law would result in a positive revenue stream benefiting the environment, I don't know what would be. As pointed out in a 2007 Michigan publication concerning its bottle deposit law found at

<http://www.deq.state.mi.us/documents/deq-wmd-swp-mibottleddepositlawFAQ1.pdf>, "Each fraudulently returned container reduces the amount of escheat money going into the Community Pollution Prevention Fund, the Cleanup and Redevelopment Fund, and the [Cleanup and Redevelopment] Trust Fund."

Ms. Martin alleges that bottles she found upstream of a beaver dam in Little Hunting Creek are necessarily "beyond the reach of the tide" and as such couldn't have come from the Potomac River in Maryland. Even

if this is true (and it may not be), the fact remains that the tidal portion of the Creek extends for over a mile and a half upstream of the Creek's mouth. The tidal region of the Creek is by far the region of greatest length and surface area and has the longest shoreline. That is where litter floating in from Maryland is "deposited." Ms. Martin owns a portion of that tidal shoreline and surely finds litter on her shoreline that originated in Maryland.

Of course, irresponsible people do litter and some of that litter finds its way into our local creeks. Ms. Martin doesn't want to acknowledge that significant litter floats in from out of state. Perhaps, this is because that incontrovertible and inconvenient truth undercuts a premise for her desire for a bottle deposit law.

Adding a layer of regulation, bookkeeping and expense to our local businesses and state and local governments would be inappropriate under the circumstances. Again, Fairfax County has a sophisticated recycling program and laws on the books forbidding littering. Let them work.

Finally, I note Ms. Martin's invitation for me to join her one day a year Creek cleanup. As a responsible waterfront property owner, I clean the Creek on a weekly basis year round. I invite Ms. Martin to do the same.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon



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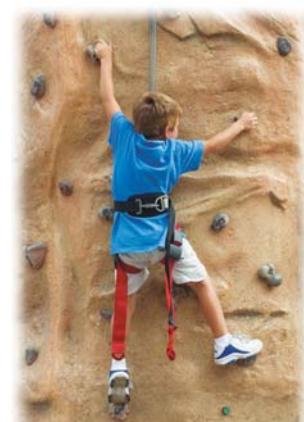
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MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE ♦ FEBRUARY 18-24, 2010 ♦ 17

NEWS

More To Lose

FROM PAGE 1

tuses, along 60 percent of Riverside students and 62 percent of Woodley Hills students.

"Many of our kids don't have the opportunity to grow things at home. This can be a real 'aha' moment for them," said Gates, who said several of his students live in apartment buildings with no free yard space.

FOCUS funding isn't the only extra financial help Hollin Meadows, Riverside and Woodley Hills and other Mount Vernon schools with large low-income populations will lose next year.

The school board also voted Feb. 4 to cut Project Excel, which adds more instruction time to the day at 22 county elementary schools with high-risk populations.

Mount Vernon has seven schools that benefit from Project Excel, more than any other community in Fairfax. In addition to Hollin Meadows, Riverside and Woodley Hills, local elementary schools Bucknell, Mount Vernon Woods, Woodlawn and Fort Belvoir also get extra financial support through the program that provides a longer school day once a week and extra staff support.

Sixty-nine percent of Bucknell students qualify for free or reduced-priced meals, along with 79 percent of Mount Vernon Woods students, 59 percent of Woodlawn students and 30 percent of Fort Belvoir students.

The school system specifically started Project Excel several years to help boost test scores at schools that have been identified as struggling with achievement.

School Board member Dan Storck (Mount Vernon) fought to keep the funding for the focus and excel programs in the school system's budget for next year but lost in two lopsided 3-8 votes.

Storck as well as School Board members Tina Hone (At-large) and Liz Bradsher (Springfield) voted to include \$1.2 million for the focus program in next year's budget. Storck, Hone and School Board member Brad Center (Lee) favored adding \$1.3 million for Project Excel back into the budget as well. Neither measure passed.

The Mount Vernon school board member will attempt to add both programs back into the budget again, where the school board makes its final spending decisions about the 2010-2011 school year later this spring. But a lack of support from board members now makes it unlikely the vote will swing in favor of focus and excel later this year.

"I think it will be very difficult to try and keep this funding and this support at the neediest schools," said Storck.

Hone said she is particularly concerned about schools like Hollin Meadows that are achieving despite their challenging populations. She said it is difficult to tell what part of those schools' academic program — including focus and excel — has allowed them to beat the odds.

"Those schools are doing so well and this is like Jenga. We don't know what piece of puzzle is doing that or if taking something out could cause the whole thing to topple," said Hone.

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