Suffragist Mrs. Robert Walker came to life again Saturday morning, March 13, as reenactor Lynne Garvey-Hodge told her story to the AAUW meeting group at the Sherwood Hall Library. In 1917, Mrs. Robert Walker was president of the Baltimore Chapter of the National Women's Party. She picketed the White House with fellow suffragists that year carrying banners among them “How long must women wait for liberty?” Walker was arrested on July 14, 1917 and found guilty of obstructing traffic. A fine of $25. was levied against Walker and the other protesters. The women refused to pay the fine and were sent to the Occoquan Workhouse in the Lorton prison. The sentence for Walker was 60 days. 123 women served time at the workhouse for demanding suffrage. The 19th Amendment passage was finally proclaimed on Aug. 26, 1920 after Tennessee voted in favor of women’s right to vote. In 1952, Virginia ratified the amendment. Garvey-Hodge is the owner of The Canary Cottage Bed & Breakfast in Clifton.

Poorest Air Quality In Region? Here

And state is reducing monitoring stations.

By Gerald A. Fill
The Gazette

Declaring Fairfax County’s four air quality monitors redundant, the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) plans to eliminate using them, relying on its own single site in the Lee District. DEQ issued an air quality siting report last week announcing that the four sites managed by Fairfax County — located in Mount Vernon, McLean, Chantilly, and Mason — will no longer be needed as of June 30. Responding to the state’s decision, Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland said, “Discontinuing the use of the air quality monitors by the State DEQ is unacceptable. This is particularly true of plans to shut down the Mt. Vernon air quality monitor which has reported the highest ozone values in the region.”

“After years of the state using our data along with theirs and others to report air quality results to the federal EPA in accord with the federal Clean Air Act standard, it makes no sense to all of a sudden...”

See Air Quality, Page 24

Transparency Blackout

Police departments in No. Virginia refuse to release public documents.

By Michael Lee Pope
Gazette Packet

The cop cruiser patrolling your neighborhood is operating in secret. And don’t bother asking for documents detailing their activities because police departments in Northern Virginia routinely deny requests for incident reports. Police officials in Arlington won’t even answer questions about their lack of transparency. It’s all legal under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, which includes broad exemptions for police agencies. Local jurisdictions use their exemption in all cases, regardless of what the case is about or whether the case is open or closed.

“I don’t think we have to justify it,” said Alexandria Police Chief Earl Cook in an interview about access to public documents. “A lot of things can be said about transparency, that doesn’t make it effective.”

In a series of Freedom of Information Act requests to three Northern Virginia jurisdictions, police officials denied access to a wide range of public information. Alexandria police issued a press release including a mug shot when they arrested a burglar in Old Town last year, yet they won’t release the incident reports leading to his prosecution or Fowler’s arrest report. In Fairfax County, police officials said they were concerned sharing public information...
Behind the Platters

Mount Vernon restaurants receive mixed reviews from health inspectors.

By Michael Lee Pope
The Gazette

When a state health-code inspector arrived at the Mount Vernon Inn back in December, he compiled a list of eight critical violations. Several of the violations were for a chlorine solution used to sanitize pots and pans, which the inspector said was too strong. One was for an empty paper coffee cup that had been left on a bottom shelf in the production area. Manager Bud Robertson described most of the violations as technical in nature, not the kind of thing that makes regular diners at the restaurant at the edge of George Washington's plantation estate.

"It's true that we had eight critical violations in December, but that's misleading in a way," said Robertson. "My concern is that people will see this and assume we have some kind of problem with vermin when we don't.

The only violation that caused some concern to Robertson was the one involving temperature of a sauce that was to be used with turkey. The health-code rules say the temperature needs to drop to a certain temperature by a certain time in order to prevent the growth of bacteria. Robertson said that the Mount Vernon Inn missed the goal by a few degrees, and that the restaurant has now changed its policy to prevent that kind of problem from happening in the future.

"This is something we take very seriously," he said, adding that the kitchen recently received a $150,000 remodel.

Since 1948, Restaurants across Virginia have been subjected to health-code inspections. The documents are readily available online, including detailed information about specific violations and results of follow-up visits. The Consumer Affairs Committee Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Association recently selected a handful of restaurants and reviewed recent inspections. Chairwoman Queenie Cox said the violations noted in the reports might not represent the violations noted in the reports might not represent the experience taught her to pay more attention to what her waiters and waitresses are doing now," said Cox. "I don't know what they're doing in the back, but at least I can keep an eye on them when they're out front.

According to the Virginia Department of Health, the most common violation is the improper handling of potentially hazardous foods, which must be kept in holding at specific temperatures. State officials say this is one of the most important aspects to the work of restaurant inspections because catching violators can save lives.

"Basically, we're looking for anything that might contribute to food-borne illness," said Cassandra Mitchell, an environmental supervisor with the Fairfax County Department of Health. "It's true that we had eight violations in December, but that's misleading. The violations noted in the reports might not represent the experience taught her to pay more attention to what her waiters and waitresses are doing now," said Cox. "I don't know what they're doing in the back, but at least I can keep an eye on them when they're out front.

As with many states, Virginia evaluates restaurants on critical violations and non-critical violations, with the more serious designation reserved for those that pose a direct or immediate threat to the safety of the food being served. Non-critical violations represent a failure of cleaning or maintenance. Reports from all inspections are available on the Health Department's Web site, but officials warn that the violations noted in the reports might not be as bad as they seem.

"It's a snapshot," said Mitchell. "Our bigger concern is catching the violators that make the same mistakes over and over again.

Health officials warn the inspection reports are merely a snapshot of the day and time of the inspection. On any given day, they say, a restaurant could have fewer or more violations than noted in the report. Other times, violations that are noted in the report are corrected during the inspection. In many cases, restaurants can acquire a large amount of violations when follow-up inspections are conducted after routine inspections, sometimes occurring after a day or two.

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Local children and teenagers launch their show business careers early in life.

**By Julia O’Donoghue**
**The Gazette**

Think of the Helen Hayes Awards as the Washington D.C. professional theater community’s local version of the Tony Awards. To be nominated for the honor means an actor gave one of the best performances or was part of one the best shows of the year in this region.

So the fact that Rachel Boyd was part of the Signature Theatre “Les Miserables” cast that won the Helen Hayes Award for outstanding musical ensemble last year is a big deal. And Rachel is now part of the “Show Boat” ensemble at Signature, nominated for the same award again.

The Fairfax resident has had the type of critical and professional success that many actors have to wait years to accumulate. But at only eight years old, she hasn’t exactly been toiling away at her craft as a starving artist for years.

While another child might talk about joining the local soccer game, Rachel said she participates in professional shows because it is “cool.” She doesn’t get nervous when it is “cool.” She doesn’t get nervous when it helps with the scheduling. If she on stage, she goes to bed after a rehearsal or a show at midnight or later. If she isn’t on stage, she hangs out with her friends. She doesn’t know that many high school students who would be willing to give up time with their friends to do anything,” said Weichbrodt.

Still, some parents, particularly those with younger children, said they had a few reservations about getting their child involved in professional productions, which require being out late on several school nights.

When Kent Jenkins III, now 13 years old, was part of The Shakespeare Theatre Company’s production of “Richard III” a few years ago, he had to perform in 172 shows in 74 days.

The demanding schedule caused Kent, who also plays sports, to drop off his ice hockey team for a good portion of the season. When the show was running that winter, Kent, as fourth grader, didn’t step off stage until 10:30 p.m. and usually got home around midnight on school nights.

“It is a real, significant commitment of time and energy and you do worry if it is simply just too much. But what we have found is that he really enjoys doing the shows. It is a lot of fun for him and he handles all the work just fine,” said Kent Jenkins Jr., whose son also starred as Tiny Tim for two seasons in Ford Theater’s “A Christmas Carol.”

In some cases, children also have more flexibility in their schedule because their families have chosen to home school them. “I actually enjoy teaching her myself and it helps with the scheduling. If she on stage until 11, she doesn’t have to turn around and get up at 7 a.m. the next morning. We can also accommodate the other actors in the show because we can do daytime rehearsals and stuff like that,” said Lori Boyd, mother of Rachel Boyd.

Brian Reimer, now a sophomore at Georgetown Day School in Washington D.C., was also home schooled earlier and said the flexibility benefited his interest in acting. Reimer also played Tiny Tim in Ford’s “A Christmas Carol” and had a part in a Kennedy Center production of “Hecuba.” “Because I was homeschooled I could go to extra rehearsals or early rehearsals and just watch the other actors, who were really really good at what they did, work,” said Reimer.

OTHER PARENTS, like Jenkins, said their children benefit from attending school. “Kent is very social and a very outgoing guy. He likes being in school and it wouldn’t be right to deprive him of that experience,” said Jenkins, who added that his son’s school, Burgundy Farms Country Day School, had been very flexible about homework and other matters when Kent is in the middle of a show.

When Kent first started auditioning for professional shows, Jenkins said he was extremely concerned about the amount of rejection his son would receive and the toll that might take on his self esteem as a child. “It was a big, big concern of mine. But happily, he figured out early on that he shouldn’t take those things too personally and so he just kind of shrugs it off,” said Jenkins.

Kent said he tries not to think about shows where he doesn’t get call backs or gets a call back but ultimately doesn’t get the part. “The best way to handle it is not to think about it. Rejection doesn’t mean you were bad. It just means that you weren’t necessarily what they were looking for,” said Kent.

There is no better insight for a child or a young adult into what it is like to try and make a living as a performer than to work on a professional production, said several students and parents.

At 13, Kent said his experience working with adult actors has made him doubtful about whether he would want to pursue an acting career. “It is certainly a fun hobby but pursuing acting as a career is really hard. You have to work every few months and the pressure and the stress from that could get nerve-racking,” said Kent.

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**Gift of Giving**

**Photos by LaShawn Avery/The Gazette**

Mr. and Mrs. Mauk speak with Dr. Sridharan Gururangan, director of Pediatric Clinical Services at Duke University Medical Center’s The Preston Robert Tisch Brain Tumor Center, during the Gift of Giving benefit dinner at Belle Haven Country Club on Saturday, Feb. 20. All net proceeds will be donated to the center and designated for children’s brain cancer research.

The Alexandria Choral Society performs during the benefit dinner to honor brain cancer survivor Holden Mauk, a 6th grader at St. Stephens and St. Agnes School in Alexandria.


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Frances and Mel Bielawski

At The Neighborhood Pharmacy we want to help you, our neighbors, stay healthy. Come in on Thursday March 25 from 11-7 for a free medication review and blood pressure screening!

Simply bring your medicines and we’ll help you understand how they work together. And we can check your blood pressure to make sure that’s ok.

Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are preferred. Call us or visit our website for more information.

• Major insurance plans accepted, including Medicare.
• Most co-pays equal to those in chain pharmacies.
• Transfer prescriptions over the phone.

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2204 Mt. Vernon Avenue Alexandria, Virginia 703-836-1700 www.delraypharmacy.com

Rex Reiley
RE/MAX Allegiance
703-768-7730
rexyreiley@rmxtalk.com

Alex.Mount Vernon $339,000
1403 P.O.W. Loop
Lovely, 4BR, 2.5 BA Split in popular Riverside Gardens. North facing kitchen, solo and freshly painted inte-
rior. Windows, siding, gutters & downspouts all replaced. Main level lofted floors refinished plus - 1st level under upper level.

Alex/Riverside Gardens
$384,900
1706 Old Stage Road
Lovely, updated 4 BR, 3 BA Split in popular Riverside Gardens. Renovated kitchen, solo and freshly painted inte-
rior. Windows, siding, gutters & downspouts all replaced. Main level lofted floors refinished plus - 1st level under upper level.

Alex.Mount Vernon $459,900
4902 Greenslopes Street
Large, Lovely 4 BR, 3 BA Split w/ 1-Car Garage on a .35 Acre Lot. Beautiful hardwood floors on main level, freshly painted inte-
rior. French doors off Dining rm to a Sun rm with skylight, hot tub & wrap-around deck. Beautifully landscaped yard w/electric pow-
ered shed. 5 minutes to P1. Bedford, 7 minutes to Pentagon/D.C. Immaculate & available for quick occupancy.

Alex.Mount Vernon $790,000
5809 Nalls Road
Spectacular 5 BR, 4.5 BA Colonial w/ 5,200 SF Finished Living Space on a Lovey, Fenced, .34 Acre Lot. Fully Loaded w/ Options: Vaulted Ceiling in Fam. & Sun Rms – 2 Story Foyer – 6 Panel Doors – Walk-in Closets – Master w/Dual Van, 2 Carport conveys.

Alex/Riverside Gardens
$750,000
2467 Woodland Drive
Lovely, 4BR, 3 BA Split in popular Riverside Gardens. Refinished + hardwoods under upper level. Large, Lovely 4 BR, 2BA Colonial w/Carport conveys.

Alex/Riverside Gardens
$859,000
2852 Grandview Street
Lovely , updated 4 BR, 2.5 BA Split in popular Riverside Gardens. Remodeled Family rm & MBR. Windows, siding, gutter & downs-
oids all replaced. Main level lofted floors refinished plus - 1st level under upper level. Lovely, 4 BR, 3 BA Split in popular Riverside Gardens. Windows, siding, gutter & downs-
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Alex/Riverside Gardens
$859,000
2852 Grandview Street
Lovely, 4BR, 2BA Colonial w/Carport conveys.
Alex/Old Town
$597,500
Try this on for signs! Parker Gray District home w/3 bedrooms & 2.5 baths built 2007. Close to 2 metros so leave the car! Features include high ceilings, wood flrs, amazing kitchen w/SS, granite & cabinets galore! Private fenced patio for evening enjoyment & BBQs.
219 A West Street
Sandy McConville
703-402-1567

Alexandria
$655,000
Spring flowers are planted-time to fire up the grill. Move-in ready house. It doesn’t get more convenient than Stratford Landing—whether commuting the GW Pkwy or walking to the neighborhood pool around the corner.
8804 Camden Street
Joni & Greg Koons
703-209-7277
703-209-7678

Alexandria
$595,000
Light filled 3 finished levels TH in private enclave of homes w/courtyard entry. 2 or 3 bedrm, 1.5 bath end unit w/wood burning fireplace, patio, eat-in kitchen & 3rd level family rm w/skylight.
913 Ormonde Street
Christine Garner
703-587-4855

Alexandria
$659,000
Spacious brick semi-detached TH w/3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths & garage. Located in Alexandria’s premier Del Ray area. Convenient to shops, restaurants & minutes to both metro & the airport.
335 Ashby Street
Beverly Tatum
703-585-9673

Alexandria
$339,900
Large 2 bedrm, 2 bath condo w/eat-in kitchen, separate dining rm, 24 hour front desk & security. Beautiful waterfront pool & cabana area, gym, convenience store & much more.
501 Slaters Lane #108
Kerrie Price
703-901-2778

Alexandria
$279,900
Outstanding end unit TH w/spectacular views overlooking park & waterfall. Updated kitchen, 10 ft ceilings, garage parking, 2 bedrooms, 2 baths & 24 hour security. bobbazzle@gmail.com
5300 Holmes Run Parkway #804
Bob Bazzle
703-599-8964

Alex/Old Town
$729,000
Sensational master suite & private guest suite! Totally updated on 4 finished levels.
823 South Lee Street
Dianne Hicks
703-628-2440

Alexandria City
$2,200,000
Exquisite finishes in this custom built home. Over 8600 SF of luxury living on – acres of manicured grounds w/inground pool, spa & 3 car garage backing to parkland.
4638 Strathblane Place
Christine Garner
703-587-4855

Alexandria
$369,999
Delightful sunry 2 level, 2 bedrm, 1.5 bath TH w/private patio. Wood flrs, updated kitchen & baths. Fresh & ready to move in. Pass-thru from kitchen to dining room. Newer appliances. Easy commute location.
3804 Keller Avenue
Julie Hall
703-786-3634

Alexandria
$849,000
Classic cape cod w/3 bedrms, 2 baths, renovated gourmet kitchen, master suite w/updated bath, walk-out LL w/daylight windows. Convenient to metro & shopping.
3315 Wyndham Circle #2230
Susan Wiggens
703-402-3298

Alexandria
$219,000
Fabulous 1 bedrm, 1 bath condo in gated community. New granite counters, new designer ceramic tub/shower, corner balcony & reserved garage space. Amenities include pool, gym, clubhouse, shuttle service & much more.
3315 Wyndham Circle #2230
Susan Wiggens
703-402-3298

Alexandria
$369,999
Delightful sunry 2 level, 2 bedrm, 1.5 bath TH w/private patio. Wood flrs, updated kitchen & baths. Fresh & ready to move in. Pass-thru from kitchen to dining room. Newer appliances. Easy commute location.
3804 Keller Avenue
Julie Hall
703-786-3634

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BUSINESS

An Opportunity To Treat Oneself

Local women open shop specializing in designer cakes, cupcakes.

By Julia O'Donoghue
The Gazette

It may not be as ubiquitous as the latte, but the gourmet cupcake has definitely become commonplace in the Washington D.C. region. Most of the area's high-end entertainment districts have at least one store that specializes in cupcakes. The list of local purveyors includes Red Velvet Cupcakery in Dupont Circle and Penn Quarter, Georgetown Cupcake in Georgetown and Bethesda, Baked & Wired in Georgetown, Hello Cupcake in Dupont Circle, Lavender Moon Cupcakery in Alexandria and Alexandria Cupcake in Old Town.

These shops are not particularly helpful for customers trying to tighten their belts, physically or metaphorically, during the recession. The decadent desserts are about the same size as cupcakes found at the local PTA bake sale but usually cost between $2 and $4 per item.

Occasionally Cake, which opened in Mount Vernon in July, is not tremendously different from other upscale bakeries in the region. Owners Sabrina Campbell and Marcia Crandall charge $2.75 for a “basic flavor” cupcake and $3.50 for a “specialty flavor” cupcake. The pair also creates one-of-a-kind, decorative designer cakes for patrons on a made-to-order basis that typically range from $100 to $200 in price but can exceed $1,000.

But what sets Campbell and Crandall apart from other high-end cake shops is the location of their storefront. While other gourmet cupcake outlets have settled amongst designer clothing boutiques and fine dining restaurants in communities with heavy pedestrian traffic, Campbell and Crandall opened up Occasionally Cake in a strip mall on Richmond Highway, next to a pizza parlor and across from a Roy Rogers fast food restaurant.

“People are very excited to have something new and upscale here. ... There is really nothing like us in Mount Vernon,” said Campbell, who graduated from Edison High School and has lived in the Mount Vernon area for the past eight years.

FAIRFAX COUNTY has struggled, in recent years, to attract high-end retail shops like Occasionally Cake to Richmond.

An Opportunity To Treat Oneself
Local women open shop specializing in designer cakes, cupcakes.

Mount Vernon residents Marcia Crandall and Sabrina Campbell opened Occasionally Cake on Richmond Highway last summer.

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The Transportation Fix

No help on congestion just a small part of spreading pain from budget.

The Virginia General Assembly has adjourned. If for some reason your attention lapsed between the campaign for Governor (Gov. Bob McDonnell took office just two months ago) and now, you might expect a transportation plan as one of the outcomes of this assembly session. Here is the transportation relief proposed and passed and likely to be signed: the maximum speed limit on some roads will increase to 70 miles-per-hour. This seems like it might violate equal protection standards, since there are very few hours of the day on any Northern Virginia’s roads that getting above 55 is possible. Heck, most of us are really happy if traffic on the Beltway or 65 or 95 or Toll Road moves along at 30 mph without frequent stops. 

So in other parts of the state not dominated by congestion, vehicles will be moving faster. In Northern Virginia, there will be even less money for even fewer efforts at relieving congestion. The governor's commitment to fixing transportation, the center of his campaign that boosted him to an election victory even in Fairfax County (not Arlington or Alexandria) turned out to be far weaker than his commitment to eschew any new forms of revenue that might be needed to pay for such a fix. But don’t forget that if you are lucky enough to drive through some of rural Virginia on an interstate, you’ll probably get to go 70 miles-per-hour. That should compensate for some of the pain.

Find Us on Facebook

It’s a work in progress, but the Connection and sister papers Centre View, Alexandria Gazette Packet and Mount Vernon Gazette are now on Facebook. Please become a fan.

— Mary Kimm

$2,200 Raised for Haiti

Mt. Vernon Jazzercisers raised $2,200 for Partners in Health

Stand with Haiti by staging a benefit dance-fitness class Feb. 20. According to Jazzercise instructor and benefit organizer Mindy LaBruno, Partners in Health will use the donations for medical care and medical supplies for thousands of home- less earthquake victims. Held at Hollin Hall Center, the event drew 57 participants. Above are: Dawn Pattillo, Harmony Allen, Jenny Parrar, Mindy LaBruno, and Peggy Frydenlund. For more information on Jazzercise contact LaBruno at 703-765-0142.

Letters to the Editor

Become An Umpire

To the Editor:

Some 15 years ago, I had a life- altering experience — I signed up to become a Little League umpire. Volunteer activity supporting my son’s interest in baseball — sure. But life-altering? Let me explain.

The original reason I signed up was to help the volunteer requirement associated with registering my son to play. Like other parents, I felt I had a good understanding of the rules of baseball, and of course could accurately tell what a ball and strike was from 30 feet away in the stands. In rapid succession, I learned that many of the ideas I had about rules amounted to urban myths – any doctor can tell you that the hand is not a part of the bat; in close plays, a tie doesn’t go to the runner (there is no such thing as a tie.) I learned that coaches generally don’t know the rules, and that they don’t practice what to do in an infiel d fly situation. I learned that umpiring is a great way to keep in touch with neighbors, many of whom become life-long friends as a result.

But the most amazing thing I learned was that becoming an umpire gives you a unique view of youth baseball and the children who play the game. Interestingly, the umpire is the only adult allowed on the field when the game is underway. Dressed as we are, you’d think that we’d stand out like sore thumbs. In fact, the exact opposite is true – umpires become invisible. The players forget we’re there, and say things to each other that they’d never say if they remembered an adult was around. Some of it is just unguarded silliness, but more often than you’d remember their game too seriously, but most of the time, they are just having a good time. Youth is such a fleeting thing, and the pressures on young people seem to grow with every passing year. When my son was 12 and his team was playing the championship, I told the team that in 10 years, they’d forget what the score of the game was, but they’d remember that it was a sunny day, the grass was green and they were playing baseball with their friends.

As the years went by, my son grew up, went to college, got a job. But my love of umpiring grew beyond an obligation into one of the things I most look forward to doing. It was a bond in my family that helped us weather the difficult parts of real life. I’ve seen a generation of fine young people begin to play baseball together, use the baseball experience to avoid some of the pitfalls of young adult- hood, and grow into wonderful adults. I see some of them in Safeway and around Fort Hunt from time to time, and even though they are over six feet tall now, they still remember their days in Fort Hunt Little League and the games we participated in together. Umpires are as essential to the game of Little League baseball as well attended fields and dedicated coaches. Yet today, not enough parents and students and teachers will feel the pain as school districts struggle to adjust priorities in ways that won’t sit well.

See Letters, Page 10
parents of young players are signing up to become umpires, preferring to stay in the stands and watch their kids play. Many worry that umpiring would be difficult, or too great a commitment of time. Some worry that umpiring is stressful with all the voices in the stands. Like my original view of the rules, nothing could be farther from the truth. Umpiring takes as much or as little time as you can give it. Umpiring makes coaches more effective. But most of all, umpiring allows you to become an important and unique part of one of the most enjoyable parts of your children’s lives.

I was talking to one of my fellow umpires before a game last fall, and he mentioned that he had set the goal that he would umpire until he turned 70, and that he had just reached that point. As I get older, I can live without a lot of things in life. But umpiring is not one of the things I am willing to give up.

If you have a child playing youth baseball, please consider becoming an umpire.

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One often reads about the art of conversation—how it’s dying or what’s needed to make it flourish, or how rare good ones are. But wouldn’t you agree that the infinitely more valuable rara avis is a good listener?

—Malcolm Forbes
Final Budget: Small Victories, Misplaced Priorities

By Scott Surovell
Delegate (D-44)

The General Assembly on March 14 approved a two-year budget that abandons our core responsibilities and is fiscally irresponsible. I voted against it. While the budget, now with Governor McDonnell, reflects improvements made after many of us lobbied for our priorities and after our state senators pressed for some rationality, the final product was disappointing.

Before this session, $7 billion had already been cut from the budget. We needed to find $2.1 billion more to balance it as the state constitution requires. Fairfax County received a record amount of money from the state and was only one of a handful of jurisdictions to receive any of money from the state and was only one 

the House Democratic Caucus was given a 60-minute budget “briefing” along with 300 pages of amendments at 3 p.m. on Sunday with a vote scheduled for 5 p.m. Not only did I feel that this was unfair to legislators who had to vote responsibly, I thought it was an insulting way to treat the public. The people of Virginia were more interested in this budget than any other of the last 80 years and the people had 120 minutes on a Sunday afternoon to evaluate 300 pages of changes and send legislation their views.

While many of us fought for two months to improve this budget and achieved some victories, I believe this budget was balanced on the backs of low-income people, the uneducated, the sick and disabled, state retirees, college students and their families and the criminal justice system. My grand-father who struggled through the Depres-

To the Editor:

I hope you will continue to share your views and suggestions. Please email me at scott@surovell.blogspot.com. It is an honor to serve as your delegate. I hope to con- 

Don’t Vote For Health Care

To the Editor:


Don’t vote on the senate health care bill being presented to the House of Representatives for passage. This bill is bad for Virginia and bad for our country.

I have read the US Constitution many times. I assure you: The federal government has no right to revoke our freedom to choose how we care for ourselves and our families. It has no right to interfere with the free market system that has defined our economy since our founding. It has no right to collect our personal information. It has no right to force us to pay for medical procedures we consider immoral and reprehensible.

I and a majority of my fellow Americans are perfectly happy to fund our own health care such as we see fit. We are perfectly happy, in fact eager, to exercise charity to- 

Wendel Allen
Alexandria

Letters to the Editor

From Page 10

Take the first step out of a sense of obligation. I guarantee that you will continue because it will give you much more than you can imagine.

John Donaldson
Alexandria

John Donaldson is a former president of Fort Hunt Little League, an Assistant District Administrator of the ten Little Leagues of Virginia’s District Nine, but above all an active umpire.

Conflicting With Bylaws

To the Editor:

In an earlier letter to the editor, I made reference to Article VI, Section 6, of the MVCCA Bylaws, which states the following: “In order to maintain the nonpartisan status and reputation of the Mount Vernon Council, no person who is an employee of, candidate for, or holding an elective or ap- 

Tidal Wetlands & Additional Submission Requirements. Within that document is a section titled “Wetlands Board Policies” and begins by stating “The Fairfax County Wetlands Board has adopted the following poli- 

The link is to a document titled “A Guide to the Applicant’s Statement of Justification for Shoreline Alteration/Stabilization in Tidal Wetlands & Additional Submission Requirements.” Within that document is a section titled “Wetlands Board Policies” and begins by stating “The Fairfax County Wetlands Board has adopted the following poli- 

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

RICHMOND REPORT

increased education funding. While we won a victory for Fairfax County that was a small step in the right direction, I was deeply disturbed by $250 million in re- 

The budget restored 250 Medicaid waiver slots for the disabled to be cared for in their homes, but also cut payments to health care providers by $150 million. This will jeopardize cov- 

The House Democratic Caucus was given a 60-minute budget “briefing” along with 300 pages of amendments at 3 p.m. on Sunday with a vote scheduled for 5 p.m. Not only did I feel that this was unfair to legislators who had to vote responsibly, I thought it was an insulting way to treat the public. The people of Virginia were more interested in this budget than any other of the last 80 years and the people had 120 minutes on a Sunday afternoon to evaluate 300 pages of changes and send legislation their views.

What’s Wrong With This War?

To the Editor:

I read all of the papers, watch television and listen to the radio, but I am having trouble understanding the war.

Maybe some knowledgeable member of Congress will help me out. I have always understood that the U.S. is the most pow- 

We have West Point, the Naval Academy and the Air Force Academy turning out highly trained men and women every year. The oceans are full of our aircraft carriers, battleships and submarines.

We have over 700 military bases located all over the world. We have thousands of military aircraft, drones and cruise missiles positioned all over the world capable of striking within a moment’s notice.

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Solving Wet Basement Problems

By Gerald A. Fill
The Gazette

The recent heavy snowfall and now the soaking rains in the Washington metro area have created flood conditions in many low-lying areas of northern Virginia and elsewhere in the metro region and now pose a myriad of maintenance problems for homeowners. Why? Because heavy snows and rain have saturated the soil.

The result is many area homes with basements that will begin to collect water around the foundation. Check out your basement. Is your basement wet, flooded? Well, all you need to do is go to the phone book or go online and there are a number of landscapers, excavators, gutter and downspout specialists, and waterproofing contractors listed who will promise to solve your wet basement problem. Just call one up and invite them over to analyze your problem and do the work. Problem solved, right? Maybe, but wait.

Watch out for unscrupulous contractors willing to offer a solution at a high cost that may not solve your problem in the long run. So, what is a homeowner to do? The answer is don’t panic, and perform the due diligence homework to make sure you are pursuing the right strategy to solve your wet basement problem permanently.

The trick is to select an ethical licensed contractor who can solve your problem and not be duped by contractors willing to take your money to do a job which may still leave you with a wet basement problem. Beware of specialists in the landscaping, excavation, roofing, and waterproofing fields who propose their specialty as the key to preventing a wet or flooded basement — even if it is not the correct solution for your problem.

Here are some Dos, and Don’ts to keep in mind when preparing to solve your wet basement problem:

DO: Make certain that you and your contractor diagnose the problem accurately. A sewer back up or a flooded river coming in the front door is not going to be prevented in the future by a home improvement contractor. Floods caused by storm sewer back ups are the responsibility of the government jurisdiction where you live. You can minimize the damage, but not solve it. However, if the gutter was clogged and overflowed into a stairwell or window well, or the ground was so saturated that the basement’s cinder block walls oozed water; or the water cascaded over the top of a poured concrete wall, or through observable cracks in the foundation wall or floor then you have the basis for practical solutions that can be solved by you and/or a licensed contractor.

DO: Unless you are certain that you know the source of the wet basement problem invite competitive bids by more than one type of contractor. It will be required by you, the homeowner, to select the right contractor to prevent the problem from happening again. It is buyer beware out there. Landscapers are going to swear that your problem is drainage and landscape related. The excavator is going to tell you that the only way to prevent the flooded basement in the future is to dig up and expose and remove the exterior foundation wall all the way to the footer. Likewise the waterproofer is going to say that you need a “french drain” (inside the basement; a subslab footer drain) that is graded to a sump pump as the only way to solve your wet basement problem. Each one may, depending on your situation, be correct.

So, what is a homeowner to do? You are not an expert. How to choose among the different contractors out there? There is no magic bullet to this puzzle. Ultimately you will be faced with making a common sense decision based on the facts you gather and what bidding contractors say you need. Here are the steps to a good decision:

Step 1: Get more than one estimate from more than one type of contractor if you are uncertain as to the reason for the basement leak. Check references; licenses; ask whether your jurisdiction requires a government permit for the type of work they are proposing.

Step 2: Do your own analysis while soliciting contractor bids; is it a maintenance-related issue: clogged gutters; downspouts, no downspout extensions, clogged or absent window wells, stairwells, or poor or non existent backfilling against foundation walls. All of these lend themselves to either cleanup and maintenance actions, or specific installations. But, it may not require costly contractor installation.

Step 3: If the analysis doesn’t result in a finding of specific maintenance issues then you are most likely looking at landscaping; excavation; or waterproofing and sump pump installation or a combination of these proposals. Some contractors may do all of the services required. In this case it is best to not only listen to the various contractor proposals but to also assess the warranty or guarantee that comes with their work. Is it in writing and is it specific to the work performed in the area it is to be performed? The difference between a warranty and a service contract is that a warranty should be unconditional and not require an annual fee or a transfer with title of the property fee. Read the warranty language carefully. Also, check out the contractor’s service record carefully before selecting a contractor.

The writer was president of a Washington metropolitan area waterproofing contractor company from 1984-2005.
REAL THREAT
To the Editor:
Climate Change is real and the threat to humanity is real. Do not impede efforts taken to ensure humanity’s survival.
Michael Gary
Alexandria

PROPOSED CUTS TO FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY WILL:
• Close all the libraries two mornings and two evenings a week
• Eliminate weekend telephone and reference service and library programs
• Slash information assistance and computer/Wi-Fi access for students, job seekers, ESL patrons and others
• Eliminate outreach services for the disabled, homebound and senior center residents
• Reduce services for children and teens
• Cut the library budget by nearly 1/3 over two years
• Make per resident library spending for Fairfax County the lowest in the DC Metro area

HELP SAVE LIBRARY SERVICES
Sign our petition at http://tiny.cc/fcpl
Contact the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

- Chairman, At-Large — Sharon Bulova 703-324-2321 chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Braddock — John C. Cook 703-425-9300 braddock@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Dranesville — John W. Foust 703-356-0551 dranesville@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Hunter Mill — Catherine M. Hudgins 703-478-0283 hntrmill@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Lee — Jeff C. McKay 703-971-6262 leedist@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Mason — Penelope A. Gross, Vice Chairman 703-256-7717 mason@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Mount Vernon — Gerald W. Hyland 703-780-7518 mtvernon@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Providence — Linda Q. Smyth 703-560-6946 provdist@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Springfield — Pat Herrity 703-451-8873 springfield@fairfaxcounty.gov
- Sully — Michael R. Frey 703-814-7100 sully@fairfaxcounty.gov

Residents of Fairfax City contact the Mayor and City Council mayor&council@fairfaxva.gov
Friends of Fairfax County Public Libraries
Local Women Specialize in Designer Cakes, Cupcakes

From Page 7

Highway. The area is one of Fairfax’s “revitalization districts,” which means an extra effort is made to plan and attract development to the corridor.

Campbell and Crandall, both Mount Vernon residents, said they chose to move into space on Richmond Highway, in part, because it was close to their homes. “I have kids and I am able to get to my house when I need to get to my house,” said Campbell.

The women, who met while singing in a regional church choir, had also been creating and selling cakes out of Campbell’s kitchen for approximately three years before they opened the store and many of their originally clients lived locally. “Our business grew solely from word of mouth at first. It was really weird when strangers started calling me to make cakes for them,” said Campbell, who is not a professionally trained chef but did take a “cake decorating” course a few years ago.

“We started doing this before the cake shows got popular,” said Campbell, referring to cable television shows that feature similar specialty cake shops.

Despite the current recession, Occasionally Cake has thrived, said the owners. The business has been able to pay Crandall, who quit her day job when the store opened, a full salary since last summer. They also recently hired an assistant baker from New York City. In 2009, the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber of Commerce also named Occasionally Cake “best new business.”

“The community has been very very supportive of us. I have neighbors who come in and say they like buying our stuff because they like supporting a neighbor,” said Campbell.

**OCASIONALLY CAKE’S** proximity to Fort Belvoir Army Base has also been a boon to the business since it opened.

The women have appeared at a bridal show on the campus and were recently hired to prepare desserts for a military ball. Several individuals living on the base have also come in and request specialty cakes to help celebrate military promotions. “They throw really, really big parties for promotions and we do a lot of those cakes,” said Campbell.

Other local institutions have hired Occasionally Cake recently. Campbell said the women made a cake replica of the Browne Academy for the local private school’s annual fund-raiser. All aspects of the building model were constructed to scale and the replica was illuminated from the inside. The Browne Academy piece, one of the women’s more complicated assignments, took approximately 100 hours to complete and would have cost about $3,000 if the shop agreed to do a cake like that again, said Campbell.

**School Notes**

Send announcements to the Mount Vernon Gazette, by e-mail to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon for the following week’s paper. Photos are encouraged. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

The National Honor Society at MVHS is accepting applications from March 15 through April 9. Students must have completed their freshman year, have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.5 and must have demonstrated a commitment to service and scholarship. Additionally, each applicant must write a reflective essay and obtain recommendations from two current or former teachers.

The application packet is provided on the MVHS homepage. Alternatively, you can request an application packet by e-mail from Daniel.Coast@fcps.edu or Karen.Hettle@fcps.edu to obtain a fillable PDF form. This form can be filled in, printed and hand delivered to the IB offices at MVHS before the deadline of April 9.

Applicants will have their packets reviewed by a council of MVHS faculty and a notification about acceptance will be sent out to each applicant on May 7, 2010.

Visit the website, http://www.mhs.us

Samuel McCann, son of Daniel McCann and Mary Jane Malinchak-McCann of Alexandria, was named to the dean’s list at Ithaca College’s Roy H. Park School of Communications for the fall 2009 semester with a GPA of 3.7.

**Mount Vernon High School’s Class of 1980** is gearing up for its 30th Reunion on July 31, 2010 at the Mount Vernon Inn at the Mt. Vernon Estate. To be added to the list, contact Lena Gates Less: lhconser@aol.com, 281-516-3121 or Jennifer Julian Radcliffe: hood1984@aol.com, 703-968-3072.

Fort Hunt High School, Alexandria, class of 1980 announces its 30th reunion. Plans are under way for a fun-filled weekend in July 2010. Visit the web site to register and stay connected on all of the happenings. Go to fhhs80.com or e-mail: fhhsclass8088@yahoo.com.
Huge Cast Fills Lee’s Stage

Some 22 actors perform 1920’s “The Front Page.”

By Brad Hathaway
THE GAZETTE

Ever wonder why you don’t see professional productions of such marvelous old-time hits as the 1928 drama/comedy of a night in the press room of a Chicago courthouse, “The Front Page?” Simple. The script by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur calls for a huge cast by today’s standards.

Who can afford to pay 22 performers at today’s rates? Not professional theaters, that’s for sure. Ah, but community theaters such as the Port City Playhouse can field such a small army because their performers are all volunteers. Still, it takes considerable resources to make a complicated show of this type work and director Roland Branford Gomez gives the project a sense of heft, if not a consistent sense of style.

The action takes place on a single set (that helps with the budget). It is the pressroom of the Criminal Courts Building in Chicago on a late spring evening as a gaggle of reporters ride away the hours awaiting an execution scheduled for the next dawn. How much is a gaggle? In this case, it is over half a dozen and the playwrights have given each a distinctive personality so it would be difficult to get away with fewer just to save money.

They play cards, they trade stories while one plunks away on a banjo and another tries to get some work done at his roll-top desk (the desk plays an important part in the plot after intermission). Various strange characters wander in and out, especially when things get frantic after the escape of the condemned man.

With 22 characters and only two hours of stage time in its three acts, the play doesn’t give very many performers too much time alone in a spotlight. Instead, the show relies on rapid-fire dialogue, often with multiple characters talking at the same time. This kind of show requires a polished, well-practiced pace and here is where this production fails to live up to its potential. The confusion is not as disciplined as the script’s authors obviously intended.

With many people talking over each other’s lines, it is important that the lines that are most important to the plot or to the definition of a particular character’s purpose in a scene are the ones that rise above the din so the audience can follow what is going on. Too often in this production, however, it is the throwaway lines that obscure plot points. As a result, the audience spends a lot of time trying to figure out what is going on rather than sitting back and enjoying the action.

While it is essentially an ensemble show, there is a principal character that constitutes a starring role. Reporter Hildy Johnson is anxious to get the evening over so he’s about to leave on his honeymoon with his pretty bride played by Elizabeth Heir. Mark Lee Adams handles that role with a glint in his eye, a spring in his step and an energy not always matched by the rest of the cast.

In any theater company, it would be difficult to assemble an “all-star cast” when the cast has to approach the two dozen mark. In community theater that is even more difficult, but Gomez and the Port City Playhouse have the reputation for solid productions that draws some of the better community theater actors and actresses to their shows. As a result, this production benefits community theater actors and actresses to their shows. As a result, this production benefits community theater actors and actresses to their shows. As a result, this production benefits community theater actors and actresses to their shows. As a result, this production benefits community theater actors and actresses.

Late in the action, James McDaniel joins the group as Hildy’s editor out to make a name for his newspaper by scooping everyone else and manipulating events to make an even more dramatic story. His arrival sparks the production to a higher energy level.

Another source of pleasure is the music played before the show begins, during intermission and as the audience files out. It sounds very much as if it might be vintage 1920s jazz recordings cleaned up through the magic of modern digital technology. In fact, it is all original music composed by Joseph Colombo. But it is the gaggle of reporters that are the heart of the piece, most notably Will Monahan as a crotchety veteran, Jim Day as a hardened beat reporter, Brian Clark as a sharp-tongued scribe, Ted Culler as the pressroom, and P. Spencer Tamney as a crotchety veteran. Ron Field as the sheriff who’s career is in danger due to the escape of his prisoner, Ron Sturman as the clerk trying against considerable odds to deliver a reprieve from the Governor and Cary Cramer as the escapee.

While it is essentially an ensemble show, a huge cast is required to do justice to the plot and to the definition of a particular character’s purpose in a scene. The audience needs to be able to follow what is going on, and this production fails to deliver its message, even after intermission and as the audience files out.
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LORI PEDERSON
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MONDAY, MARCH 15 AND CONTINUING THRU SATURDAY, MARCH 20

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THEATER

Winners of The Watch Awards
10th Annual Washington Area Theatre Community Honors

The award ceremony was held Sunday, March 14, at The Birchmere, Alexandria. Some 114 productions (32 musicals, 82 plays) were adjudicated in 2009. Thirty community theater companies participated in WATCH adjudication.

Little Theatre of Alexandria

AWARDS (4)
- Outstanding Set Decoration in a Play – C. Evans Kirk - Art of Murder
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Play - Paul Morton - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Play - MYKE - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Featured Actress in a Play - Mollie Wise as “Betty Meeks” - The Foreigner

NOMINATIONS (27)
- Outstanding Light Design in a Play - Liz Owens & Nancy Owens - Art of Murder
- Outstanding Set Decoration in a Play – C. Evans Kirk - Art of Murder
- Outstanding Set Design in a Play - C. Evans Kirk - Greater Tuna
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Play - Paul Morton - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Play - Paul Morton - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Play - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Properties in a Play - Art Snow - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Set Design in a Play - Ken Crowley - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Play - MYKE - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Sound Design in a Play - David Hale - Gross Indecency
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Musical - Bette Williams - Gypsy
- Outstanding Music Direction - Christopher A. Tomasino - Gypsy
- Outstanding Direction of a Play - Roland Branford Gomez - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Featured Actor in a Play - Jeffrey Clarke as “Dr. Hubert Bonney” - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Lead Actor in a Play - Mark Lee Adams as “Dr. David Mortimore” - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Play - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Properties in a Play - Margaret Snow, Art Snow & Bobbie Herbst - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Play - Mary Hutzler - It Runs in the Family
- Outstanding Costume Design in a Play - Beverley Benda & Annie Vroom - Leading Ladies
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Play - Gilda Sagidhi - Leading Ladies
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Play - Gilda Sagidhi - Leading Ladies
- Outstanding Featured Actress in a Play - Mollie Wise as “Betty Meeks” - The Foreigner
- Outstanding Set Construction in a Play - Chris Feldmann - The Foreigner
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Play - Erin Cumbo - The Foreigner

The Foreigner

Port City Playhouse

NOMINATIONS (2)
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Play - J. Arthur Rodger - Curious Savage
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Play - Bette Williams - Veronica’s Room

Dominion Stage

AWARDS (1)
- Outstanding Cameo in a Play - Gayle Nichols-Grimes as “Ann Marwood Bartle” - Jeffrey

NOMINATIONS (3)
- Outstanding Costume Design in a Musical - Patyi DiBella Kreger & Eric S. Scebero - Follies
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Musical - Renee Silverstone - Glorious!
- Outstanding Cameo in a Play - Gayle Nichols-Grimes as “Ann Marwood Bartle” - Jeffrey

Arlington Players

AWARDS (3)
- Outstanding Costume Design in a Musical - Grant Kevin Lane - Follies
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Musical - Bette Williams - Follies
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Musical - Avery Burns - Follies

NOMINATIONS (18)
- Outstanding Choreography - Lisa Anne Bailey & Lauren Simheimer - Follies
- Outstanding Costume Design in a Musical - Lory Levitt & Irene Molnar - Bye Bye Birdie
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Musical - Kat Brais - Bye Bye Birdie
- Outstanding Light Design in a Musical - Ryan Desmond - Bye Bye Birdie
- Outstanding Set Construction in a Musical - Pete Silvia - Bye Bye Birdie
- Outstanding Light Design in a Musical - AnnMarie Castrigno - Cat on a Hot Tin Roof
- Outstanding Cameo in a Musical - Kathleen McCormick as “Buddy’s Blues Sally” - Follies
- Outstanding Choreography - Christopher Dykton - Follies
- Outstanding Costume Design in a Musical - Grant Kevin Lane - Follies
- Outstanding Direction of a Musical - Christopher Dykton - Follies
- Outstanding Hair Design in a Musical - Bette Williams - Follies
- Outstanding Makeup Design in a Musical - Avery Burns - Follies
- Outstanding Music Direction - John-Michael d’Haviland - Port City Playhouse
- Outstanding Musical - Follies
- Outstanding Set Construction in a Musical - Bill Winiowski - Follies
- Outstanding Set Decoration in a Musical - Kate Roehr - Follies
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Musical - Jared Davis - Follies
- Outstanding Set Painting in a Musical - Jared Davis - Follies

10/7/09
Tea Dances.

FRIDAY AFTERNOONS

Meditation Class.

The Del Ray Farmers Market is now open round-the-clock at the corner of Mt. Vernon Avenue and Oxford Avenue in Del Ray. During the winter months the market will be open 9 am to noon each Saturday. The Del Ray Farmers market that will be there are Smith Meadows meats, eggs, fresh pasta and sausages; Amish cheese, yogurt, bakery goods, eggs and jams and jellies; winter vegetables; fancy nuts; pralines; and bakery goods. Any questions, contact Pat Miller at pmiller1800@comcast.net.

Ms. Senior Virginia America is searching for candidates statewide for this year’s May Pageant, which will be held Thursday, May 6 at the Lee Center Kaufman Center, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. Doses will open at 11 a.m. Admission is free with a donation of $10. A deadline for entries will be Feb. 8. Call 703-978-3663 and directions at 703-838-4343. The current Ms. Senior Virginia America, Maureen Bibble, will end her reign in May. The Pageant showcase ages 60 plus who live in Virginia and are U.S. citizens.

Meditation Class. 10-11 a.m. every Sunday. Come enjoy a free class on meditation instruction and practice. Class will be centered around calming abiding (shining/samatha). No experience is needed. All are welcome at the 3rd floor of Mindful Hands Gallery, 211 King Street. Visit http://www.palyuldc.org/meditation.html.

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 Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or go to www.torpedofactory.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 18

March Luncheon. 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is $20. The Army Officers Wives Club of Greater Washington Area. At the Koran Room of the Ft. Myer Officers Club. The featured speaker will be Donna Engerman, advisor for the Military’s Survivor Outreach Services. Contact Wendy Gifford, 703-903-1542, or 703-549-0545.

MARCH 26, 27, 28

“Into the Woods.” Staged by Bishop O’Connell Theatre. Performances are Friday and Saturday, March 26 and 27 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, March 28 at 2 p.m. General admission tickets are $10; students and seniors $5. At 6600 Little Falls Road, Arlington. Visit www.bishopoconnell.org/theatre or call the box office at 703-237-1446.

Ruth Howell, 703-941-1300.

Boris Arratia. 7-9 p.m. Free. Boris Arratia performs Latin American guitar with a twist of jazz. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or go to www.torpedofactory.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 19


SATURDAY/MARCH 20

Spring Fling and Egg Hunt. Hosted by the Stratford Landing Citizens’ Association. Short parade up Camden Street (from Cavenhick St. to Shirtoop Lane) at 2:30 p.m. and proceed into Stratford Landing Park for an egg hunt and games and crafts.

Swordsmen’s Rendezvous. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. $6 admission. Program includes re-enactment of 18th-century swordplay and a display and discussion of 18th-century weapons. At Gatsby’s Tavern, 134 South Royal Street, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadystavern.org.

Concert for Haiti. 7 p.m. Music and dance by the Irish Breakfast Band and Boyle School of Irish Dance. 100% of donations will go to the Hospital Bicentenaires de Pignon through the Community Coalition for Haiti. $10/adults, children free. At Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2701 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria. Call 703-549-4766 or visit www.wpc-alex.org.

Benefit for Haitian Relief. Tea Thousand Villages of Alexandria is hosting a benefit shopping day with 15 percent of the day’s sales going to the Memontte Central Committee, earmarked for Haiti. They will increase the donation to 20 percent for all items actually made in Haiti. At 915 King Street in Old Town Alexandria.

MORAN FAMILY PANCAKE BREAKFAST-BENEFIT. 8:30-10:30 a.m. For Jackson Dundon Recovery Fund at Mango Miles, 4580 Duke Street, Alexandria. Call 703-299-0066 or mmosoun@moranforcongress.org.

BEHIND THE COUNTER TOUR. 9 to 10:30 a.m. Cost is $25, includes a light breakfast. At the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum at 105 South Fairfax, Alexandria. Call 703-838-4343 or visit www.stablerleadbeater.com.

Light Everlasting — Music of Faith, Hope, and Love. 8 p.m. Presented by the 100-voice Fairfax Choral Society. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Alexandria campus of NVCC, 3001 North Beauregard St. Alexandria. Call 703-642-3277 or visit www.fairfaxchoralsociety.org or office@fairfaxchoralsociety.org.

Children’s Book Fair. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Usborne Books and Lyceum staff will make history fun at this event. Kids can become history sleuths on a scavenger hunt and earn their own Museum Detective Badge. At the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria. Call 703-842-5331 or visit www.axlondonhistory.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 21

Masters of the Craft. 2 p.m. Free. Marine Chamber Orchestra performs with Capt. Michelle A. Rakers conducting. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, Alexandria Campus. See Calendar, Page 20.
TUESDAY/MARCH 23

Mount Vernon Quilters Unlimited. 12:30 p.m. Nationally known quilter and author, Karen Kay Buckley will provide a lecture entitled, “To Border or not to Border.” At Hollins Hall Sr. Center, 1501 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Visit www.quiltersunlimited.org/mtv.htm.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 24

Author Thomas E. Crocker. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. This former historian of the mound Builders will discuss book, Braddock’s March: How the Man Who Gave the Order to March Slaughtered Many and Changed America. At the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria.

THURSDAY/MARCH 25

Free Blood Pressure Screening. 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Also medication reviews. At The Neighborhood Pharmacy of Del Ray, 2204 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Walk-ins are welcome but appointments are preferred. Call 703-836-1700.

THE MANGO PROJECT. 7 p.m. Features the sounds of contemporary and Latin-Jazz, as well as a variety of jazz standards and musical treatment of well-known pop, R&B, and smooth jazz selections. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or go to www.torpedofactory.org.

MARCH 25-27

Book Sale. Mount Vernon Unitarian Church. The book sale has been a fixture in the Mount Vernon/ Alexandria/Fairfax community for many years with many thousands of books available for purchase. The books will be available in the “mansion” and in the “chapel” on the church grounds.

• On Thursday, March 25 the sale will be open from 1 to 5 p.m.

• On Friday, March 26 the sale will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Special on this day will be 1/2 price books all day in the Mansion.

• On Saturday, March 27 the sale will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Extra Special on this day will be $5 for a bag of books in the mansion and 1/2 price books in the chapel all day. The church is south of Alexandria off Fort Hunt Road. Follow signs at the intersection of Mason Hill and Fort Hunt Road. At 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-765-5950.

FRIDAY/MARCH 26


SATURDAY/MARCH 27

Yoga for Rookies, 10 a.m. Free Class. At The Body in Balance Center, 1423 Powhatan Street, Alexandria. Call 703-578-4434.

Fort Hunt Preschool Rummage Sale. 8 a.m. to noon. Features infant’s, children’s and maternity gear, including clothing, toys, games, books and furniture. At Fort Hunt Preschool, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria.

SUNDAY/MARCH 28

Team F.W.L.K Fund-Raiser. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Pump your self for the cure. 50% of sales will be donated to Team F.W.I.K. (Fabulous Women I Know) At Salm’s deZEN, 1008 King Street Alexandria. Call Salon deZEN at 703-549-1400. Visit www.fwik.org.

Snow Crab Legs and Shrimp Feast. 1-4 p.m. Sponsored by the Merrifield Lions Club. There will be a Deep Sea. Advanced tickets are $38/adults, $48/family of 4 adults, and groups of 8 or more are $36/person. At the Dunn Loring Fire Department, 2128 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring. Call 703-255-2468 or email kdalton@landon-ip.com.

The Dream House. 2 p.m. The U.S. Marine Band with Col. Michael J. Currah conducting and Mark Shields, moderator, At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, NVCC, Alexandria Campus.
Ralph D. Dunavant

Ralph D. Dunavant, Sr. died on Tuesday, Feb. 23, 2010. He was born, April 15, 1922, in Stoneville, N.C. where he lived until he was hired by the Federal Government and moved to Washington, D.C. just before WW II started. In 1943 he was drafted into the Army Air Corp and spent the remainder of WW II in the South Pacific. He was assigned to the 419th Night Fighter Squadron of the 13th Air Corp in the Intelligence Section. After the war he returned to Washington, D.C. and resumed his Federal Government career while continuing his military service in the Air Force Reserves. In 1948 he married Mildred L. Massey of Haines City, Fla.; they met during his Air Corp training in central Florida during the war. He returned to active military duty in 1950 for the Korean War and was stationed at a base in Florida.

After the Korean War he resumed his Federal Government career and remained in Florida until 1956 when he took an overseas government post in Frankfurt am Main, West Germany. While there he was a founder of the Bethel Baptist Church in Frankfurt am Main which was the first English language Baptist Church in the city. At the end of 1960 he returned to the United States and settled in Fairfax County where he lived on Dawn Drive for 36 years, until 1996 when he moved to Manassas, Va.

Mr. Dunavant retired from the Air Force Reserves as a Major. He retired from the Federal Government after 33 years of service. He and his son opened American Printing & Paper Products, a print shop, in Manassas, Va. He worked at the shop every day until shortly before his death.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Mildred M. Dunavant, his daughter, Angela K. Dunavant, his son, Ralph D. Dunavant, Jr., his daughter-in-law, Margo J. Dunavant and three grandsons, R. David Dunavant, Andrew S. Dunavant and Matthew J. Dunavant all of Manassas, Va. His funeral was Feb. 27 at Pierce Funeral Home, 9609 Center Street, Manassas, Va. Interment is March 10, 2010, in Arlington Cemetery, Arlington. Donations in lieu of flowers to the 419th Night Fighter Squadron.

Herbert Wilson Price, Jr.

Herbert Wilson Price, Jr. (also known as My Friend Bill or Honest Bill or Pop Pop), of Milford, Del., died peacefully Tuesday night, Feb. 23, 2010 in Milford, Del. at the age of 89. Born in Pontiac, Michigan in October 1920 to Herbert Wilson and Linda Price, his family moved back to Delaware when he was just a couple months old.

Bill was a farm boy and was competitive in 4H. He grew up on several dairy farms in the New Castle area, which is where he developed his love of horses. He was a proud graduate of Newark High (1938) where he participated in Boys State and was elected governor for a day. Bill was an even prouder graduate of the University of Delaware (1942) and Blue Hen football. As a member of the Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity at UD, he majored in business and marketing. Bill married Helen Fihelly of Philadelphia in 1947 and had 2 wonderful daughters, Carole and Marci. For most of Bill’s professional career, he worked in corporate real estate for several major oil companies (Esso, Atlantic and ARCO) and lived in many cities all across Virginia (Salem, Roanoke, Virginia Beach and, last but not least, Alexandria) where Bill and Helen finally settled for 30-plus years.

Bill was an active member and officer in the Fort Hunt Sportsman’s Association during the 1960s, 70s and 80s raising money for local youth sports. Upon retirement, Bill and Helen moved back to Delaware where they enjoyed a very full retirement with friends and family. One of the activities that filled their retirement was attending Blue Hen football games, both home and away, with their fellow UD fans. As Helen often said, “Bill came a long way from his farm days but he never forgot his roots.” Bill is survived by his best friend and loving wife of 63 years, Helen, his daughter Carole Price White and husband Tony White (Oregon), daughter Marie Price Corbin (Texas) and grandson Kyle Corbin (Texas). A memorial service will be held Saturday, March 20 at 11 a.m. at the chapel of Melson Funeral Services, 38040 Muddy Neck Rd., Occoquan, Va. where friends may call after 10 a.m. Burial will be private. Bill would be honored if you wanted to make a donation to your local chapter of one of his favorite causes: Eater Seals, March of Dimes or the American Heart Association. Online condolences can be sent by visiting www.melsonfuneralservices.com.
SECRET POLICE?

**ALEXANDRIA:** In September, the Alexandria Police Department issued a press release announcing the arrest of Ralph Fowler, a man they charged with a series of burglaries in Old Town. In response to a Freedom of Information Act request, Alexandria officials refused to release incident reports detailing the crimes, alleged in the press release. In an interview about availability of public documents, Alexandria Police Chief Earl Cook said he didn’t think he needed to justify his department’s lack of transparency.

**ARLINGTON:** In July, the Arlington County Police Department arrested former Alexandria Police Chief David Baker and charged him with drunk driving. In response to a Freedom of Information Act request for the police report, county officials charged $24 for a one-paragraph summary of the document in which they misidentified the man they arrested. They later explained that Baker was correctly identified in the report, but they refused to release it, even now that Baker has served his sentence in the county jail. Arlington police officials declined a request to be interviewed about their commitment to transparency.

**FAIRFAX:** In November, a Fairfax County Police Department officer shot and killed a motorist on Richmond Highway. In response to a Freedom of Information Act request seeking information about the incident, Fairfax officials declined to release the name of the officer who killed the man or share documents related to the incident. A spokeswoman for the Fairfax County Police Department said the agency is concerned that victims might be unwilling to report crimes if the department was more transparent, although she acknowledged she had no evidence to support that claim.

The actions of the Police Department in the wake of the arrest also raise a number of questions about the level of transparency in Arlington. In the hours after Baker’s arrest, seven media organizations made public-records requests for the police report. County officials denied those requests, citing their designation clause in the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Instead of releasing the public document, Arlington officials offered a two-paragraph summary of the report for a fee of $24. The four organizations that agreed to receive the two-paragraph summary that misidentified David Baker as Paul Baker and incorrectly stated that the arrest took place in 1995 instead of 2009.

“Public officials who try to hide information never look good,” said Chip Watkins, an Arlington tax attorney who saw a copy of the document and speculated that the mistake was intentional. “Either someone was trying to cover up for him or they were just sloppy.”

In Alexandria, Police Chief Earl Cook has been on the job since August, after Baker resigned. As one of the three finalists for the job, Cook said that he would review the policy of shielding public access to documents that are widely available in other states.

“I think that’s something that’s going to have to be under review,” Cook said when asked about the lack of access to public documents in Alexandria. “I didn’t disagree with the policy in the past, but I’m open to discussion. If we have a better way of doing it or if it is going to serve the public better, perhaps we’ll change that policy.”

Seven months into his tenure, Cook has yet to launch a formal review. When asked about the issue now, he says he never intended to conduct one.

“I didn’t have an idea in mind that I needed to review our processes to make sure we are doing those things that serve the community. And that’s what I’ve been doing on an ongoing basis.”

The lack of transparency in Alexandria is consistent, even in cases when the police are seeking publicity. For example, a series of high-profile burglaries in Old Town last summer led to an arrest of a man named Ralph Fowler. On Sept. 25, the Alexandria Police Department issued a six-sentence press release along with Fowler’s mug shot. Yet in response to a Freedom of Information Act request, Alexandria officials declined to release the incident reports leading to his arrest.

“As one who promotes and advocates transparency I personally don’t have a problem with those documents being released,” said Alexandria Mayor Bill Euille. “But I need to check with the proper authorities to see why they have such a hang-up.”

Hartmann says the reason Alexandria refuses to release documents that are widely available in the rest of America is concerns about privacy. He says he stands by his police chief’s decision against full disclosure of public documents — even in cases where the police have sought publicity by issuing press releases.

“The police chief has concerns about certain information in police reports associated with victims or witnesses that he feels needs to be protected,” said Hartmann. “There are certain circumstances where it would be in the victim’s interest to not have their names divulged at a particular stage of a case.”
Senior Trio To Play Key Roles for Majors

By Jon Roetman  The Gazette

Mount Vernon right-hander Mike Murdock was a first-team all-National District selection last season, when he helped pitch the Majors to a second-place finish in the district. Entering 2010, Murdock will once again be the ace of the Mount Vernon pitching staff.

What can he do to improve? “Every team has a staff ace,” he said, “but you’ve got to have more than one player to go anywhere, or have a good, solid season. So it’s just coming in every day with all the other pitchers, trying to make everyone better.”

Ah, the sound of senior leadership.

Murdock, along with seniors Andrew Sable and Jimmy Woehrle, will play key roles in determining whether the Majors can get back to the National District title game. Sable, a two-time all-district selection at third base, moves to shortstop this season in an attempt to bolster the team’s defense. Woehrle moves into the Majors’ No. 2 starting pitcher role after spending his junior year as the No. 3.

Senior right-hander Mike Murdock returns as the ace of the Mount Vernon pitching staff.

The spotlight will be on the senior trio as head coach Luke Sable places an emphasis on pitching and defense. “We’ve got to play good … defense,” Luke said. “I’m a defensive-oriented coach. … We want to stay in all the ballgames and be in a position to win … the games 2-1, 3-2.”

Murdock throws in the upper 80s and toes the rubber against most of the Majors’ toughest opponents. Woehrle, a second-team all-district selection, throws in the mid-80s and will now face stiff competition moving into the No. 2 spot.

“Hopefully,” Coach Sable said, “they’ll stay healthy and be able to throw strikes and keep us in the games.”

Andrew Sable played second base his freshman year and moved to third base as a sophomore. Two years later, he makes yet another position change, this time to shortstop.

Senior right-hander Jimmy Woehrle moves up from No. 3 starter to No. 2 in the Mount Vernon pitching rotation.

Stop. While he said he was comfortable at third, he’s ready for the transition.

“I’m kind of looking forward to it,” he said. “Being a senior leader, shortstop’s kind of the leader of the infield, so I’m looking to help out.”

Sable, who’s verbally committed to George Mason, hit .390 last season and will bat third for the Majors this year.

Sophomore Kyle Quinnley will be the team’s catcher. While he’s two years younger than the team’s top pitchers, Luke Sable said there won’t be a problem with communication.

“We’re expecting good things from [Quinnley],” the coach said. Sophomores Justin Boutin and George Palacio will compete for playing time at second base. Junior Collin Bowyer, a transfer from North Carolina, could see time in the outfield or on the mound. Junior Tre’ Cook is the team’s No. 3 starter.

Offensively, Coach Sable said the Majors will play small ball, relying on speed and an occasional bunt, to push across runs. However, junior third baseman Logan Beougher, listed at 6-foot-4, 245 pounds, will provide Mount Vernon with some power at the No. 4 or No. 5 spot in the batting order.

Mount Vernon travels to face Washington-Lee at 6 p.m. Tuesday. W-L and two-time defending district champion Yorktown each received votes in the first Northern Region coaches poll of the season. Mount Vernon was nowhere to be seen.

“We’ve got high expectations,” Woehrle said. “Not much respect coming our way.”

Aces Looking for Host Families

The Alexandria Aces Collegiate Summer Baseball Club of the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League is seeking host families for the upcoming 2010 season. All that players will need is a place to sleep and access to a washer and dryer. The Aces take care of everything else. To volunteer as a host family, contact Aces Host Family Coordinator, Hilary Garner, at 202-216-8304, or e-mail Hilary at hilary@alexandriaces.org.

The Alexandria Aces are a part of the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League (CRCBL), a wooden bat summer program made up of amateur players from a wide variety of colleges and universities from throughout the United States. The league is regionally located in the Washington, D.C./Baltimore metropolitan area. Other teams in the league are Baltimore Redbirds, Bethesda Big Train, Herndon Braves, Rockville Express, Silver Spring-Takoma Thunderbolts, Southern Maryland Nationals and Youse’s Maryland Orioles. In September of 2009, the ‘Cal Ripken, Sr., Collegiate Baseball League’ officially changed its name to the ‘Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League’.

During the Fall of 2009, the Redbirds franchise officially changed the geographical name of their franchise from ‘Maryland’ to ‘Baltimore’. The Southern Maryland Nationals will be a new expansion franchise for the CRCBL in 2010. They were formerly called the ‘Cardinals’, were members of the Clark Griffith Collegiate Baseball League (CGCBL), winning their 2009 league championship.

Registration Now Open for New Spring Break Soccer Camp

The “Sev Gronlie Peace Camp” is a new soccer camp for elementary-aged children to be held at Carl Wilson Bridge Half Marathon. The destination half marathon will begin at the historic Mount Vernon home of George Washington and will end at the new National Harbor resort in Maryland. The 13.1-mile course will be USATF certified.

Each child will receive a T-shirt and Soccer ball so they can learn the rules of the game. This camp is open to all elementary-aged children in the community. Online registration is now open for this camp at www.wilsonbridgehalf.com. Entries will be limited to 4,000 start- ers for the inaugural running.

Five questions with West Potomac senior Martez Redfearn

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

Q: Who is your favorite basketball player?

Q: What’s your favorite food?
A: McChicken.

Q: When you look back, what will you remember most about your time at West Potomac?
A: The Patriot District championship.

Q: Who’s your favorite music artist?
A: Lil’ Wayne. He always compares himself to the best, he always says he’s the best, he’s No. 1 and that’s how I feel: I’m the best and I’m No. 1.

— Jon Roetman
Air Quality in Mount Vernon Called Poorest in Region

**From Page 1**

decide that this data is not needed and that the DEQ is going to rely solely on the Lee District Park monitor for all of its air monitoring needs," Hyland concluded.

Fairfax County, which has been footing the bill for what is a state responsibility, decided to discontinue its support of the four air monitoring sites as a cost-cutting move. The state’s decision places the county areas with among the highest ozone levels in Northern Virginia outside the monitoring network at a time when the federal EPA is on the verge of issuing more stringent national air quality standards for ozone.

Mount Vernon, which for years has had the poorest air quality in the region, will be, along with other county jurisdictions, the big potential loser in all of this from the perspective of local environmental advocates. State DEQ officials disagree, arguing that the Lee District Park site now, and once it is upgraded, will be adequate to cover monitoring in the county.

According to one Mount Vernon-area environmental advocate, Larry Zaragosa, “Elimination of air quality monitors that report some of the county's highest ozone levels is at odds with the need to identify and report the highest concentrations.”

The region as a whole is not meeting present national air quality standards for ozone; the new more stringent standard will compound the problem for the region to meet minimum air quality levels.

Charles Turner, director, Air Quality Monitoring at DEQ, explained that the state intends to use different siting criteria and new, more up-to-date technology to meet new national air quality monitoring requirements.

**Referring to** the impending more stringent air quality standard Leta Mach, Chair, Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC), in a Jan. 27 letter to the U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson, wrote: “MWAQC supports the range of reconsidered ozone standard, 60-70 parts per billion (ppb) as being more protective of human health and the environment.” But, Mach went on in her letter to forewarn of the difficulty to meet the new standard: “The new standard will be extremely difficult to meet in the metropolitan Washington region.”... “That without U.S. EPA assistance to state and local governments to meet the new standards particularly as it relates to pollution that does not originate in our region, the task of meeting these new standards will be very difficult to achieve.”

While Fairfax County government has been in the forefront of efforts to monitor air quality Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Sharon Bulova signaled a change in the county’s position in supporting air monitoring in light of revenue constraints. She has previously pointed out that the air quality monitoring responsibility is a state responsibility. Echoing the county’s fundamental support of air quality monitoring, Providence District Supervisor Linda Smyth is concerned enough that she reports the air quality ozone scale on her own Web site. Early warning of high ozone levels is important for residents who already are afflicted with emphysema, asthma, are elderly, and those with chronic heart conditions or other medical problems.

“Loss of the locally managed air quality monitors that have reported some of the county’s highest ozone levels is at odds with the need to identify and report the highest concentrations in the future,” said Zaragosa.

**Ozone Levels**

The federal EPA’s soon to be adopted proposal for a more stringent ozone standard than the one adopted in 2008 is based on the following:

- Scientific evidence of adverse respiratory effects in healthy adults at 0.060 ppm;
- Studies indicate that people with asthma are likely to experience more serious effects than healthy people;
- Studies indicate associations for a wide range of serious health effects and hospital admissions and premature mortality that extend below the current standard level of 0.075 ppm; and
- Estimates from the risk and exposure assessment indicate that important improvements in public health could be achieved by a standard more stringent than 0.075 ppm.
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**Employment**

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An established Section 8 Enderly Property in Alexandria, VA is seeking a source, highly motivated, self-starter to fill the position of Part-Time Service Coordinator.

Must have experience working with elderly and disabled. Extensive knowledge of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Services and SSA a must. Experience with Fairfax County Social Services a plus. Only qualified applicants need to apply. Work schedule is 30 hours per week. Salary based on experience. Equal Opportunity Employer. Send resume to: HR@mvhouse.org

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**City of Alexandria**

**EDUCATION**

 pesticide management

Mosquito Control

The City of Alexandria is accepting applications from qualified individuals for the position of Pesticide Management Inspector. The successful applicant will be responsible for the daily operations of a pesticide management program including the assessment, control and monitoring of mosquito populations. The inspector will coordinate the mosquito control program and assist in the control of other pests. The position requires a current Alexandria City Pesticide Management Permit and a valid Virginia Pesticide Applicator License. Experience in pest control and/or entomology desirable. Contact John Gargiulo, 703-749-6054.

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