



PHOTOS BY "MANGO" MIKE ANDERSON

Some of the participants in Saturday evening's Burke and Herbert Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. SEE STORY, MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 3

Alexandria Gazette Packet

25 CENTS

VOL. CCXXVI, No. 49

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

DECEMBER 9, 2010

Reimagining The Waterfront

New King Street pier will anchor city planners' vision for the future.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Floating brothels were once popular on Alexandria's waterfront, a lawless region where skipping out on the commonwealth involved little more than floating out a few feet off the bulkhead. Maryland and the District of Columbia weren't going to patrol these waters, which became a criminal menagerie of speakeasies

and casinos. Perhaps the most famous ark of ill repute was the "Dream," a houseboat serving four clients operated by the legendary Madame Rose.

These days, Madam Rose is long gone. And the industrial character she would recognize is a thing of the past. The concrete plant has been turned into a park, and much of the waterfront has been transformed into open space. City plan

SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 37

Riding into Tomorrow

Union Cab looks forward to thriving under city's new regulations.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Now that the city has finally adopted a long-awaited regulatory framework to oversee the city's taxicabs, Union Cab is looking forward to a bright future unencumbered by the storm-clouds that have long plagued the startup

company. The owner-operated cooperative — one of the few in the country — began in 2007 and has been trying to eke out a place for itself on the crowded taxicab landscape since then, as the economy headed south and plunged into a global financial meltdown.

SEE NEW REGULATIONS, PAGE 30



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

This Way David Ricklis, Drum Major for the MacMillan-Birtles Memorial Pipe Band, has been participating in the Scottish Walk parade since he was a high school student in 1965.

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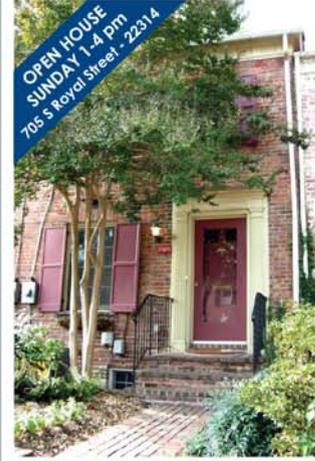
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Chairman Moran

Just as U.S. Rep. **Jim Moran** (D-8) is losing his position as chairman of an appropriations committee on Capitol Hill, his younger brother is assuming the chairmanship of a different kind of organization. This week, former Del. **Brian Moran** (D-46) was elected chairman of the Virginia Democratic Party. The younger Moran represented Alexandria in the House of Delegates for more than a decade before resigning in an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination to run against current Republican Gov. **Bob McDonnell**.

After the crushing third-place loss, the former delegate took a position as a Washington lobbyist for the Career College Association. Several months ago, he launched a behind-the-scenes campaign among party regulars to build support for a bid to lead the Democratic Party of Virginia. This week, that effort paid off and party members voted Moran chairman.

"Virginia Democrats have always been the leading voice for good jobs, good schools and equal opportunity for every family," Moran wrote in a letter to supporters Tuesday afternoon. "But now those gains are under attack by Republicans who put their political agendas ahead of middle-class families."

Moran is not the first Alexandrian to take the helm of the Democratic Party of Virginia. Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley** served as state party chairman from 2003 to 2005. That was a time when the party elected a Democratic governor and took control of the Senate. Moran's task will be to keep the state blue for President **Barack Obama**, hold Democratic Sen. **Jim Webb's** seat and find a way to take control of the Republican-held House of Delegates. "Democrats are kind of at a low point right now," said **Isaac Wood**, director of communications at the Virginia Center for Politics. "So there's pretty much nowhere to go but up."

The Final Cut

Advocates for mental health in Northern Virginia are closely watching an effort in Richmond to save \$22 million by closing the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute in Falls Church, the only public psychiatric hospital in the region. Although Northern Virginia has a handful of private psychiatric hospitals, those facilities are often unwilling to admit people with more difficult psychiatric symptoms, particularly those who are violent or aggressive.

"The closure would have a devastating impact on persons with mental illness in our region," wrote Community Services Board executive director **Michael Gilmore** in an e-mail alerting city leaders to the proposal. "Local governments are not in a position at this time to backfill state reductions." Gilmore and others say closing the Northern Virginia Mental Health Institute would harm those in Alexandria in need of mental-health services, breaking what they call a "continuum of services" for people who cannot be safely served in the community. The Falls Church facility serves the entire Northern Virginia region, admitting 985 people last year with a 98 percent occupancy in October 2010.

"We've seen waves of this in the past, and sometimes we've seen that the savings get passed along to the localities to fill the void although I don't think that's covered in the current proposal," said Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley**. "We are going to have to find a way to do it."

Roaming Enforcement

Last Saturday night, the Alexandria Police Department set up a sting operating designed to nab drunk drivers. The roaming enforcement effort stopped 81 drivers and busted five drivers for driving while intoxicated. The dragnet also uncovered a handful of unrelated infractions, and officers issued 37 summonses for miscellaneous traffic offenses and 44 traffic violation warnings. One Alexandria sheriff's deputy and 10 Alexandria cops participated in what public-safety officials called a "mobile enforcement effort." In a press released issued before the crackdown, Police Chief **Earl Cook** reminded drivers that the maximum penalty in Virginia for the first conviction of driving under the influence is 12 months in jail, a \$2,500 fine and a 12-month suspension of driving privileges. Additional penalties include mandatory jail sentences associated with higher blood-alcohol content of the driver.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

Love on the Docks

Patriot Dreams wins Best in Show honors.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was a labor of love for Jay Gaston, as he and his wife Ginger spent the better part of three days decorating their boat for this year's Burke and Herbert Holiday Boat Parade of Lights.

"We're both retired Army and have spent our share of Christmases away from home," said Gaston at the Captain's reception at the Old Dominion Boat Club following the parade Dec. 4. "It was important for us to do something to recognize those who are away from their families serving our country."

Gaston's 42-foot Sea Ray Patriot Dreams won Best in Show honors for their display called "Our Lady of Sea Ray," a church-theme complete with stained glass windows and a steeple.

"A boat like this is a bit of a challenge," Gaston said as he pointed to the stained glass display. "But my wife painstakingly cut out each piece of cellophane to make the windows and we began assembling everything when we pulled into dock Thursday."

Other winners included Larry Chandler's Hi C's as Best Powerboat for the display of a giant polar bear. Best Theme went to National Potomac Yacht Club

SEE A WINNING LABOR OF LOVE, PAGE 31



Jay and Ginger Gaston aboard the Best in Show entry Patriot Dreams.



Deborah Estebon and Fran Orr celebrate at the Captain's party at the Old Dominion Boat Club.



Robin Roane and Dennis LaRue.



Decorated boats line the city docks after the Holiday Boat Parade Dec. 4.



Patriot Dreams, a 42-foot Sea Ray, won Best in Show for Jay and Ginger Gaston.

PHOTO BY "MANCO" MIKE ANDERSON

PHOTO BY "MANCO" MIKE ANDERSON

PEOPLE

Taste of Scotland

Hundreds of guests attended the Campagna Center's prelude to the Scottish Walk by attending and imbibing in their annual Taste of Scotland on Friday, Dec. 3. Guest of honor, Robin Naysmith, the Scottish Government Counsellor in North America with the British Embassy, and the premiere sponsor of this year's Walk was on hand to meet and greet. Naysmith re-

called being posted to Washington with the Scottish Government three years ago before Christmas and was asked to participate in the 2007 parade. He said that — to his amazement — “a wonderful antique white car” with his name on a placard was already in place. After experiencing the festivities he decided then that the event was worthy of sav-



Dozens of single malt whiskeys were available for tasting at the patron's reception.



Members of the Alexandria Choral Society take a brief respite from greeting guests of the patron's reception with song.



Kristin Rumburger, Skip Miller, Eric King and Mason Butler.



Sean and Erin Dunston enjoy the evening festivities with Travis and Catherine Boone.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

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NEWS



PHOTOS BY LA SHAWN AVERY-SIMONS/GAZETTE PACKET

Festival of Lights
Vice Mayor Kerry Donley speaks during the Chanukah Festival outside the Crowne Plaza Hotel on Dec. 5.



Rabbi Mordechai Newman of Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington lights the menorah. Following the kindling ceremony, hot potato pancakes and doughnuts, the traditional foods of Chanukah, were distributed free.



Things To Do Today

- 1. Breakfast w/ Mary & Bob—8:30
- 2. Tai chi group at 10
- 3. Stop by library before lunch?
- 4. Pottery class—1:00
- 5. Scrabble club at 3:00

Notes:

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PHOTOS BY SANDY LEVITZ LUNNER / GAZETTE PACKET

The 16 filmmakers from this year's iMovie Mentor program get ready to board their Hummer stretch limo en route to Tuesday's premiere. From left: Jonathan Alvarenga, Herson Zelaya, Elvis Gomez, Zerik Brooks, William Alvarez, Bernat Rivas, Julio Rivas, Michael Seegars, Anthony Hernandez, Roberto Bonilla, Marvin Moreno, Jose Mejia, Benjamin Velis, Gustavo Jimenez, William Salgado, David Gonzalez.

Lights, Camera, Compassion!

iMovie Mentors Film Festival features shorts by Alexandria youth.

BY SANDY LEVITZ LUNNER
GAZETTE PACKET

Old Town went a little Hollywood Tuesday night, Dec. 7, complete with limousine, red carpet and even paparazzi for the premiere of the 2010 iMovie Mentors Film Festival at the Old Town Theater on King Street.

At about 6 pm, a motorcade of three police motorcycles with their lights flashing escorted a white stretch Hummer limousine up King Street in Old Town and stopped in front of the Old Town Theater. One-by-one, each of 16 6th grade boys from George Washington Middle School emerged from the limo and strutted down the red carpet while family, friends, and teachers flashed cameras and called out their names.

And while the evening was really all about the boys, it was clear the mentors were fully invested in the program and proud of their boys' accomplishments.

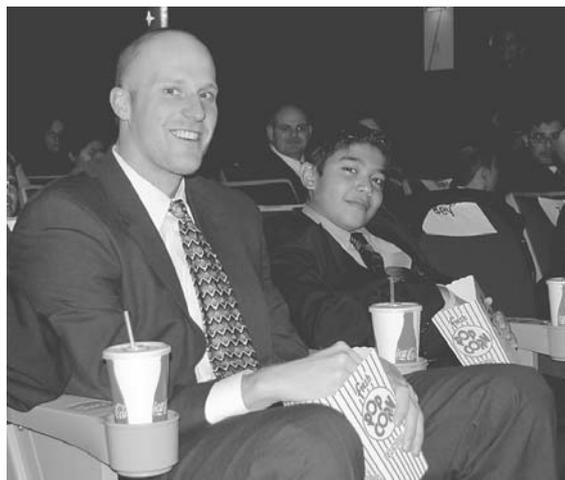
"This is a real positive program. I really enjoyed it, and the kids have as well," said Bruce Slawter of West Springfield Village just outside of Alexandria. Slawter, a retired Air Force officer, has been mentoring William Alvarez.

"Not only was it fun for me to work with Will, I was pleased to see him mature and come along and move forward."

"I liked a lot hanging out with Bruce," William said. "And we had so much fun."

Linda Odell, director of Alternative Programs with the Alexandria Court Service Unit, is the force and energy behind the iMovie Mentors program. She pointed out that the children in the program are not court involved.

"The idea behind our mentor programs is to prevent the kids from court involvement," she said.



Mentor Mark Jones with David Gonzalez.

EIGHT YEARS AGO Odell started "Space Of Her Own," the SOHO mentoring program for girls. She matches women mentors with girls and they make art together. At the end of the program, they then use the art to redecorate their bedrooms.

When Odell wanted to start a similar program for the boys, she knew art and decorating wouldn't cut it. A survey of all the boys at George Washington Middle School showed that 47 per cent were interested in making movies.

The beauty of iMovie Mentors is that no movie-making skills are required of the boys or their mentors to participate.

"We teach all that, from start to finish," Odell said.

The challenge in the past has been finding mentors. This year was the largest program to date with 16 boys and 16 mentors. Odell says she is always interested in talking with prospective mentors.

Another challenge, as with many programs, is funding. The cost to run iMovie Mentors is \$20,000 annually. This is the last year of a 4-year Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant. Odell says she'll be concentrating on raising money for iMovie Mentors after the holidays.

SEE LIGHTS, CAMERA, PAGE 32

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BUSINESS MATTERS

Tiki Ball

The long-awaited theme for the upcoming Alexandria Chamber of Commerce ball has finally been revealed, casting a decidedly Caribbean theme to warm the dead of winter. Incoming Chairman **"Mango" Mike Anderson** has decided the theme of his installation ceremony will be "Tiki Ball," combining the informal nature of a Hawaiian shirt with the traditional handoff of authority among the captains of industry.

"We are going to be bringing a bit of the Caribbean to the Hilton Mark Center," said Alexandria Chamber of Commerce President **Tina Leone**. "You'll want to put a heavy winter coat over your sundresses."

Incoming chairman are typically installed in a gala, but Anderson nixed the idea of being at the center of an event called a "gala." Ball is still a formal concept, although Anderson wants to dress it down a bit by going tiki. So dig into your closet for floral prints and images of parrots playing poker. And don't worry about wearing summertime attire in early February.

"The Mark Center has promised to give us a tropical climate in the ballroom," said Leone.

1791 Watermark

Among the ghosts haunting the waterfront, one has given nightmares to generations of land-use lawyers, developers and urban planners. It's the 1791 high-water line, a line in the mud drawn at a time when the original District of Columbia created. Two centuries later, the federal government claimed everything east of the 1791 watermark and initiated a "quiet title" suit against the city of Alexandria and various private waterfront owners in 1973.

A series of 1981 settlement agreements ended most of the clouded titles, restricting how the land can be used. But settlement agreements never materialized for the Old Dominion Boat Club and several properties along the Strand. Earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Justice appellate lawyers recently filed the latest appeal in the case, which could pose a problem for the waterfront planning process. City planners want to move the boat club's parking to a new building at the western edge of Waterfront Park even though boat club members seem lukewarm to the idea.

"While it would be preferable not to have a parking lot at this location," the concept plan notes, "that is not likely to occur."

Companion Fur Is Dead

Watch out, black-market purveyors of illegal dog and cat fur. U.S. Rep. **Jim Moran** (D-8) is coming after you.

This week, Moran's "Truth in Fur Labeling Act" passed the Senate, and it's now on the way to the President's desk. The bill passed the House in a unanimous vote in July, and the Senate waited until the lame-duck session to approve the measure. Moran said the legislation is designed to close a loophole in current law, which does not require type of fur be labeled for products valued at less than \$150.

"This loophole has been exploited by exporters pawning off dog and cat fur as an artificial fiber," said Moran in written statement after the Senate vote Tuesday night. "The public would be outraged to learn their favorite hat or pair of gloves was lined with the fur of their favorite companion animal."

Aw, Shucks

Everybody knows **Jack Taylor**. His name is everywhere, including daily television commercials for his Toyota dealership and a steady stream of philanthropic events for hospice care and college scholarships for those in need. It's that balance that prompted the Virginia Automobile Association to name Taylor the dealer of the year for 2010. But don't ask him to gloat.

"Those kinds of things have always embarrassed me," said Taylor. "There are a lot of great car dealers out there."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS



Members of the Commission for Women volunteer at the Holiday Art Show Dec. 5. From left: Mary Catherine Gibbs, Liz Johnson, Jenny Wade, Tarina Keene, Laura Martin and Diane Crawford-Batt.

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

13th Annual Women's Holiday Art Show

More than 30 artisans showcased their crafts at the 13th Annual Women's Holiday Art Show Dec. 5 at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

Sponsored by the Alexandria Commission for Women and Friends of the Commission for Women, holiday shoppers enjoyed refreshments as they browsed a selection of pottery, clothing, jewelry and crafts in support of the city's Domestic and Sexual Violence Services.

"We appreciate everyone coming out to support us," said Lisa Baker, director of the Office for Women. "It's a fun afternoon and a great way to get some holiday shopping done and support a vital community need at the same time."



Del. Charniele Herring (D-46), right, browses jewelry from Shanta Smith of Traci Lynn designs at the Women's Holiday Art Show Dec. 5.

Encouraging Financial Education

Jennifer B. Murphy, a 2010 graduate of the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) of Alexandria, introduced national leaders of education and finance as they came together last month at T.C. William High School to sign a collaboration agreement aimed at promoting and providing financial education and savings programs for students and their families.

Murphy was chosen to introduce the national leaders of education and finance because she instituted a financial literacy course for students at the Minnie Howard Campus of T.C. Williams High School. Murphy's program, "Money Smart" was launched as her community project for PLTI. All students are required by PLTI to create and implement a community project.

The "Money Smart" course was so successful that two sessions were added to the class at the request of the students who wanted to learn more.

The Parent Leadership Training Institute, PLTI, a



Jennifer Murphy, PLTI graduate; Fay Slotnik, executive director of PLTI, and Joyce Woodson, founder of the PLTI, with the signed agreement.

20-week leadership skills building program teaches community building, public policy, budgeting, how a city and state operate, public speaking, and other skills necessary for effective democracy action. It is now in its fifth year in Alexandria.



Girls from Jefferson-Houston, Douglas MacArthur and George Mason elementary schools participated in this year's Girls on the Run Reindeer Romp 5k Dec. 4.



PHOTOS BY KARYN MORAN

Jennifer Kaplan, deputy director of the White House Council on Women and Girls (in white visor), is joined by colleagues Anne Brewer, Elspeth Rollert, Maude Baggetto, Kathrin Murtha and Sadena Thevarajah at the finish line of this year's race.

Reindeer Romp

More than 7,000 runners, including teams from Jefferson-Houston, George Mason and Douglas MacArthur elementary schools, participated in the Dec. 4 Girls on the Run Reindeer Romp 5k, the second-largest 5k race in the area behind the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure.

"It was an amazing day," said Karyn Moran, director of Advocacy and Community Outreach for Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia. "More than 3,000 people turned out to cheer on the accomplishments of these incredible girls."

Established in 2001, GOTR NOVA is an after-school mentoring program that uses running as the foundation for its curriculum. A chapter of Girls on the Run International, GOTR NOVA serves more than 3,400 girls ages 8-13 at 150 sites throughout the region.

"I know first-hand what this organization can do for young girls," said Moran, whose own daughter McClain participated in GOTR at MacArthur and was a volunteer at this year's race. "It's inspiring to see the confidence and sense of achievement the girls experience through this program."

Led by female coaches, participants in the 10-week program train with "buddy runners" — parents, teachers and community volunteers — for the annual Reindeer Romp, held this year at the Reston Town Center.

"It's less about the run and more about setting a goal, working for the goal and achieving the goal," added Catherine Keightley, executive director of GOTR NOVA.



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Tough Road Ahead

State and local coffers will continue to shrink in 2011; transportation improvements unlikely.

The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance quotes Gov. Bob McDonnell's remarks to the Dulles Area Transportation Association earlier this week. "I can't emphasize how important it is to get started now," McDonnell said, to take advantage of favorable infrastructure pricing [due to the recession] by starting to invest more in transportation.

But the Alliance, which advocates for spending on roads and highways, points out that McDonnell "provided few details as to new funding sources, but promised that specifics would surface in the weeks ahead."

Last January was the "now" to get started to take advantage of "favorable infrastructure pricing."

McDonnell has been in office a year now, and won in Northern Virginia largely because of his vigorous campaigning on transportation issues. But he allowed the first year of his tenure, including the first year's session of the General Assembly, to pass without a serious proposal on how to fund transportation improvements in Northern Virginia or elsewhere in the state.

EDITORIALS

Instead, McDonnell has spent the last months talking up a liquor privatization proposal as a solution to transportation. In fact, that proposal would possibly pay for one intersection or overpass improvement project in Northern Virginia before moving on to cost state funding for education, public safety and social services tens of millions of dollars a year by turning over the revenues for private companies' profit.

Meanwhile, localities in Northern Virginia received essentially zero dollars from the state for transportation improvements in past year.

More on the outlook ahead for public services from Deputy County Executive Ed Long as he prepared the budget forecast for the coming year:

❖ While home values are up for the first time in five years, the county still faces a multimillion dollar shortfall and the future of the local economy is uncertain.

❖ Government contracts are a major component of the Northern Virginia economy. In Fairfax County alone in 2008, federal procurement contracts totaled \$17 billion. Since this is such a large component of the local economy, the discussion of cutbacks in federal contracts

is a major concern.

❖ The Fairfax County budget gets less than 20 cents back from Richmond of every tax dollar it sends to the state.

❖ There are 30,000 unemployed people in Fairfax County, with the current unemployment rate approximately 4.9 percent, or close to half the national rate. Still, 30,000 people is a huge number of unemployed.

Share Your New Year's Resolutions

It's early and much of the holiday eating season is still in front of us.

But most of us will engage in some soul searching and resolution making around the New Year. In the first issue of 2011, the Gazette will share the New Year's resolutions of individuals and offices. Send us your resolutions, plus your tips on keeping resolutions. Feel free to offer resolutions for local officials as well. Send to smauren@connectionnewspapers.com.

Please include a photo with your resolutions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Value to Consultants

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Alexandria School Board, I would like to respond to three recent articles about Superintendent Morton Sherman's use of consultants within Alexandria City Public Schools.

The School Board supports Dr. Sherman's hiring of consultants. He is acting within the scope of his authority as set forth by the Board, and he has followed all proper procedures in engaging our consultants.

All consultants are vetted through our business office, and each consultant has signed a contract with the school division. All expenditures have been within the Board's budget guidance.

Consultants are bringing to ACPS the expertise we need to transform TC Williams High School and the entire school division. Dr. Sherman is bringing in valuable, national-level expertise without adding to the overhead of permanent staff.

The consultants hired have already proven their worth. For example, results on state-mandated tests have increased for all students in ACPS in all subjects. Writing scores are up, specifically be-

cause of the training we provided ACPS teachers through an internationally-recognized consultant. And, we have begun the state-mandated TC Williams transformation implementation, putting Alexandria ahead of other school divisions in this situation who continue to plan. Our work is avoiding significant costs to Alexandria taxpayers.

Transforming ACPS requires us to change the way we've done business in the past. In the last two years under Dr. Sherman's leadership, we have realigned nearly 15 percent of our budget and are putting more money into classrooms. We have eliminated or reassigned hundreds of jobs.

Dr. Sherman is doing what we hired him to do: institute change to assure that every student achieves his or her potential. Because of the work of this School Board, Superintendent Sherman, staff, and consultants, achievement is up and per pupil costs are down.

We're doing this even in the face of significant enrollment increases which are putting many of our elementary schools over capacity and with city allocations down over three years.

We ask for the public's continued support for our work and the

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Snapshot

Four-year-old-twins Mac and Ginny Coulby flank little sister Lily, 2, on Santa's lap at the City Dock prior to the Boat Parade of Lights Dec. 4.

OPINION

Mentors of the Month

Max and Karen McAllister work with Tylee (Max) and Johira (Karen) Jenkins, brothers who attend Cora Kelly School for Math, Science, and Technology. Max and Karen are Tutor/Mentors with Wright to Read, a program which promotes literacy through the tutoring and mentoring of elementary school students and outreach to the Alexandria community. Wright to Read takes referrals of new students in grades 1-5 from classroom teachers in Alexandria City Public Schools. Tutor/Mentors often work with their student(s) for several years, sometimes following the student(s) into middle and/or high school. To learn more about Wright to Read, see www.WrightToRead.org.



TYLEE (2nd grade): "Each week, Max and I go to the library to read and work on the computer. We read mostly fiction books about people. I have worked with my Tutor/Mentor, Max, for a year. Some things that I enjoy doing with him are reading and talking about books. I have learned from Max how to sound out words when I read and how to use pictures as clues for figuring out words. Max deserves an award because he helps me read books that I don't like at first but then I like once I begin reading. He always tells me funny jokes that make me laugh."

JOHIRA (5th grade): "Each week, Karen and I read books, go to reading websites at the public library, and talk about books. We read a lot of chapter books. Action books and historical fiction are my favorite. I have worked with my Tutor/Mentor, Karen, for two

years, since 3rd grade. Some special things that I enjoy doing with her are cooking, playing Wii, and playing reading games together. I have learned from her that I can skip words I do not know when reading and come back to them later. I can reread parts of the book to refresh my memory when answering questions. Karen deserves a Mentor of the Month award because she never gets angry and she is super nice. She is like a best friend, but she is a grown up. Karen and her husband Max make a good couple."

The Alexandria Mentoring Partnership is currently recruiting volunteers to mentor the children of Alexandria. To learn more about mentoring opportunities in the city, contact Lorelei Coyle at 703-746-4506 or through the website at www.alexandriava.gov/mentoring. Mentor a child, change two lives.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

work of Dr. Sherman as we transform ACPS for the benefit of all our students.

Yvonne Folkerts,
Chairman, Alexandria School Board

Help in the Transformation

To the Editor:

Almost everyone has read or been read Aesop, so we've come to believe him as a source. So, as Aesop once said, "Every truth has two sides; it is as well to look at both, before we commit ourselves to either."

In response to the suspiciously cyclic sound of a few cynical critics of the ACPS's tireless Superintendent Dr. Mort Sherman (whose batteries just keep going and going and going) I offer a few observations for the community to consider.

1. Who doesn't want to see our public school system succeed? For all of the sharp criticisms of Dr. Sherman by the suspiciously same voices ... where are your ideas, recommendations or perspectives on a solution? I for one agree with the view that criticism is an indirect form of self-boasting. I think Steve Martin once said, "Before you criticize a man, walk a mile in his shoes. That way, when you do criticize him, you'll be a mile away and have his shoes." For those of you who have used the power of your pen to condemn and carp, I personally invite you to lunch with Dr. Sherman to offer your solutions, ideas and experiences to contribute to Dr. Sherman's transformation strategy. It takes a community to build a community and our community would be invaluable blessed to have your input.

2. Transformation is a journey, not a destination. I

can tell that some are foolishly prematurely disappointed with the future. To you all I can say is ... there is no greater community asset than a strong education system. Nothing increases real estate values, attracts new business investment and creates jobs more effectively in a community than a successful public education program. Our Alexandria City Public Schools deserve more than being a dart board for the disapproval of those who apparently have no faults.

Since to the rest of us we realize that education reform is an evolution, not a revolution ... the story of the success of the transformation is not just in the numbers (and the numbers get stronger and stronger and stronger), but the success is felt in the day to day achievements of our students and their in-classroom experiences.

We all can remember we had a day in school where someone was chosen as "principal for the day." Few of us have a clue what it would be like to be principal for a day or superintendent for day. Why, because it is hard to comprehend the scope and scale of the responsibility that comes with being a leader in the ACPS. Just step back and imagine what it would be like to being the leader of an organization where your customers are four to 18 years of age and represent the most diverse student population in Northern Virginia. They come from 128 different countries, speaking 75 different languages; one-quarter have the need to be regularly assisted to learn, speak and comprehend English; half come from a low-income or single-parent household where likely the parent or parents work tirelessly trying to make ends meet (and aren't home) and that child eats two meals a day in school. And as the organization's leader, you send your professional team into that environment on a day to day basis to deploy their deep skills, in

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

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THE SCOTTISH WALK



A piper gets a little tuning before the start of the parade on St. Asaph Street.



Alexandria Fire Chief Adam Thiel and his daughter Sophie.



Gaylord Hotel's Grinch gets a hug from Charlotte Hall.



Alexandria Police Motor Squad Officers Fowler and McClish prepare to lead the parade.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

Plaid Tidings

Campagna Center's Scottish Walk celebrates 40 years.

Bagpipes and tartans filled the streets of Old Town during the 40th annual Scottish Walk Parade Dec. 5, the centerpiece of a weekend of holiday events that included a Heather and Greens sale, Children's Tea Party, Designer Tour of Homes and Taste of Scotland cocktail reception.

"After the weather last year, this year was wonderful," said drum major David Ricklis, who has been participating in the Scottish Walk since he was in high school in 1965.

More than 20,000 people lined the streets to watch this year's pa-

rade, which included over 100 Scottish clans, local dignitaries and costumed canines.

"This is an amazing event," said Robin Naysmith, head of the Scottish Affairs Office at the British Embassy. "The warmth and affection for Scotland is overwhelming and it is wonderful to be here today."

Sponsored by the Campagna Center, the St. Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C. and the Scottish Affairs Office, proceeds from the weekend events go directly to support the center's programs for Alexandria's children.

— JEANNE THEISMANN



Seaport Foundation apprentice Oscar, left, walks in the parade with Kathy Seifert, Mary Ellis Fannon, Howell Crim, apprentice Saul, Tom Tuttle and apprentice Steffan.

PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/CAZETTE PACKET



Betty and Shelby Youles enjoy the parade outside the Queen Street home of Roger Fleming.

JEANNE THEISMANN/CAZETTE PACKET



Former Sen. John Warner and his wife Jeanne discuss issues on the reviewing stand with Robin Naysmith, head of Scottish Affairs at the British Embassy.



The flagbearers of the St. Andrews Society of Washington lead off behind the Alexandria Police Motor Squad.



Highland dancers warm up with the St. Andrew's Society Pipes and Drums.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/CAZETTE PACKET

THE SCOTTISH WALK



Bagpipes were the instrument of choice during the parade.

Jennifer Miller performs during the Mass Band concert at the conclusion of the Scottish Walk parade.



Young Latane Montague is joined by friends in the rumble seat of his grandfather, Bob's, classic automobile.

PHOTOS BY
JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET



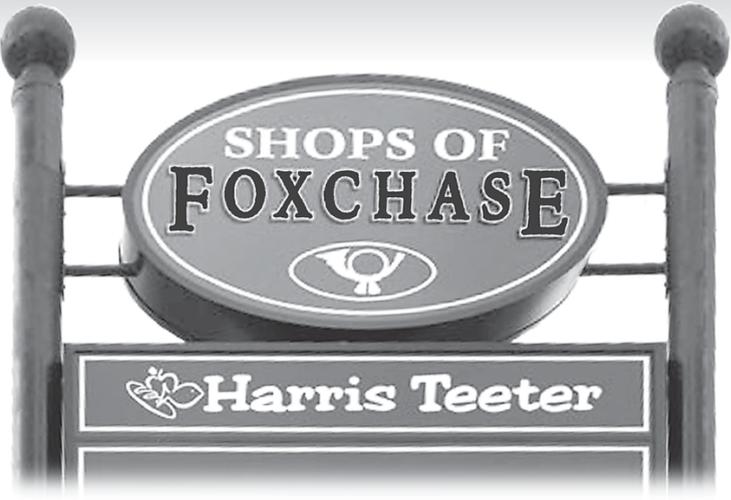
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PHOTOS BY MARY CALVERT

Turkey Bowl at Lee Street Park

Dozens of neighbors and friends dropped by Lee Street Park on Thanksgiving for the annual cheering on and playing of the Turkey Bowl. The Bowl is in its 20-something year and draws current neighbors and old friends alike to the park to cheer and play before dinner. Above: Chidozie Ugwumba, David Calvert, Taylor Manning and Jordan Yarboro.



Back row: Walter Hall, Rick Hohlt, Mark Swartz, David Calvert, Jordan Yarboro. Middle row: Jim Fleming, Robert Brandt, Bennett Habilston, Skipper Calvert, Taylor Manning, Jack Kurtz, Chidozie Ugwumba, Jamie Nemeroff. Children in front: Blake Kurtz, Luke Hohlt, William Brandt, Brooke Kurtz, Matthew Brandt, and John Fleming.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 11

tutions, experience and passion with that “customer base,” having to overcome the out of classroom issues that each student brings with them into the classroom. Nevertheless, every day that is what occurs. Our teachers, the true heroes of our community (together with our school bus drivers) always come to work everyday with one objective ... inspire their students regardless of their circumstances to continue on their daily journey to find their unique potential and to grow as a person. Every day should be teacher appreciation day!

3. We invest in our teachers because they are our most important asset and we all know, school districts who invest resources in continuing education and professional development for their teachers outperform school districts who don't. The return on investment of bringing expert advisors into our teachers' lives is incalculable.

Continuing professional development is an essential and vital ingredient to the growth of our teachers. As we invest in our education professionals, we hope to retain the excellent core of teachers we now have and to recruit the very best in the years ahead. This investment in our teachers is in part achieved by ACPS engaging a number of outside experts. These are professionals who have nationally-recognized content knowledge in education, teacher growth and classroom strategy improvements. They have not only the expertise, but they bring knowledge that transcends the resources ACPS currently has. They bring fresh, innovative and inspirational different perspectives that offer new approaches to education solutions and, perhaps most importantly, these experts bring their access to new ideas and concepts from other school districts. Simply stated, these are expert teachers whose knowledge is invaluable to our teachers and school community. They enable our teachers, principals and staff to develop the level of “next practice” (vs. best practice) thinking that will fuel our education transformation.

Anyone who has ever had an employer

invest in their future through professional development know the benefit of being supported in your personal growth. Of course we have all also felt the feeling or had the thought, “why today? ... I have so much to accomplish.” I guess the adage, “no pain no gain” is also applicable to professional development. For teachers and parents it is no different. Teachers want to be in the classroom ... that is where they not only perform their job, it's where they perform their magic. They also want to grow, learn new strategies and new knowledge. Parents feel the same. It's hard for both to when your son or daughter's teacher is out attending one of the growth development sessions or workshops that ACPS is hosting. We feel our children's “pain” in not having their teacher be in class ... but we also know that when they return from their workshop or seminar, their new knowledge will benefit our children.

Personally speaking, I would rationalize my children's teachers being absent by saying, “that makes sense.” But the failure of every school where I have sent my children is not hearing from the school (in advance) telling me where the teacher was going, what they learned and how they were going to apply that new knowledge to my child's growth. We in Alexandria can achieve a huge breakthrough in communications by being one of the first in America to adopt this new communications objective.

Eleanor Roosevelt had many great thoughts, perhaps one of my favorites was, “great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people.” It is time for the shooting to end and the dialogue to be the focus of our passions. Public education (which reflects all of life's challenges) is our highest local priority. Contributing ideas, contributing insights and contributing experience should be our single most important civic responsibility (outside of voting). Our students, parents and teachers should expect and deserve nothing less.

Alan Hilburg
Alexandria

Have Fairfax Run City Schools

To the Editor:

Here we go again! Another budget season is upon us. Property assessments are unexpectedly going to be higher thereby resulting in a revenue windfall of some \$20 million. Our Council members are already recommending that we give half of it to the schools as a revenue sharing program. You couldn't make this up! I say that's just more money down a “sink hole.” Wouldn't a novel approach be to return the funds to the tax-paying residents?

Every year when you open the budget request from ACPS you can be guaranteed that they will ask for an additional \$10 million over what was appropriated the previous year. It's like clock work. We just keep throwing money at the schools but to no avail. It's about time we did something positive and dynamic.

Several years ago I suggested that we turn over the entire Alexandria public school system to Fairfax County. I thought it was a good idea then and I think it is an even better idea now. After reading all of the recent rhetoric concerning the mismanagement of the Alexandria School System, I am convinced that the only solution is to do away with the defunct and clueless School Board and its ineffective school superintendent. As a result our young students would be the real beneficiaries.

Fairfax County Public Schools System is the 12th largest in the country. Ninety-two percent of its graduates continue on to postsecondary education. Their SAT averages exceed both the state and national averages. In addition, Fairfax with its current enrollment of 166,000 students could easily absorb our small school system, which is projected to rise to about 13,500 students, without a ripple. Fairfax City is also a self-incorporated city just like Alexandria. They pay Fairfax County to run their schools. A precedent has already been set so let's make a deal.

The cost per pupil in Fairfax County is \$12,898 compared to Alexandria's \$18,003.

That means that the city could save roughly \$5,000 per student or \$67.5 million per year. Even after giving Fairfax County a reasonable fee to absorb our system into theirs we will be way ahead monetarily. Not only will we make money on the deal but our youngsters will receive a first rate education.

Townsend A. “Van” Van Fleet
Alexandria

Parades and Budgets

To the Editor:

The Scottish Walk is a great Alexandria tradition, even if running it this year required a large cash donation from the Scottish government. While I am thankful for their support, as I'm sure all Alexandrians are, I'm embarrassed too.

The walk is a great, albeit quirky, community event: one that attracts both residents and visitors, who in turn support Old Town's small business community. It's a mistake to look at only the actual cost of the event, or retail sales for the day, and not its year around marketing value when deciding whether or not the City should support it financially. The same thing can be said about the George Washington Birthday parade, which went down Washington Street when I was kid, and the St. Patrick's Day parade, which until recently started west of Route 1. Yet all three have seen their support, in-kind or otherwise, slashed to balance the budget.

We are not talking millions here, but a \$100,000 maybe to offset the cost of the three parades — funds that could perhaps be raised through a slight increase in the room tax on hotels. Their cost should be part of the city's marketing budget. It's sustainable tourism, with minor impacts really to the residents who live here. OK, I'm not saying we can't do more to deal with the parking problems, which we must solve anyway for a myriad of reasons.

Instead of cutting funding for these pa

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 15

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 14

rades, which bring a unique atmosphere to our town, plus new business, we should focus more attention at what is really causing the budget to grow, or not to benefit fully from this growth. But what do we do: we cut funding for parades, or eliminate a key staff person at the Black History Museum. We pay for this kind of budget cutting with our quality of life.

Andrew Macdonald

Appreciating George Mason

To the Editor:

The Bill of Rights, one of the most important bulwarks of our freedoms, was the product of the wisdom and determination of George Mason IV of Gunston Hall. This forceful statement was adopted on Dec. 15, 1791, when the Virginia legislature provided the decisive vote. Although it is the best-known section of our Constitution, many founding fathers, including George Washington, opposed its inclusion. George Mason, a proud citizen of Alexandria and Fairfax County for his entire lifetime, deserves our honor and thanks for his many important

contributions to our local welfare as well as that of our state, nation and the world.

When the British closed the port at Boston, he immediately realized that the American colonies must unite to resist the British tyranny. He initiated assistance by word and deed by writing the Fairfax Resolves, adopted in Gadsby's Tavern on July 18, 1774. He also set an example for others by sending foodstuffs overland to the Bostonians at his own expense and inviting others to join him in doing so.

Mason's Virginia Declaration of Rights was adopted by our General Assembly on June 12, 1776. Jefferson's most famous lines in the Declaration of Independence closely paraphrase that document. It also served as the basis for our Constitution's Bill of Rights, the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen adopted in 1789, and the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

Mason wrote the first constitution for the State of Virginia, which served us for almost 200 years. It was an important model for the United States Constitution, the oldest written constitution still in active use in the world, distin-

guished for its separation and balance of powers, a doctrine Mason adopted after careful study of contemporary thinking and the best features of all governments until his time. Mason was the genius who set the framework for our Constitution, and his tenacity in insisting that a Bill of Rights be included ensured that a citizen's rights are protected at all levels of government.

Mason recognized the moral and practical obligation of the nation to ensure freedom for all people and end slavery at the earliest opportunity. He advocated the education and gradual emancipation of the slaves. Because the Constitution put off starting to free the slaves for 20 years and lacked a Bill of Rights, although he wanted a stronger central government, he voted against its adoption, incurring the life-long enmity of his best friend and closest neighbor, George Washington.

Although Mason did not have a college education, he recognized the importance of continuing education by reading and thinking deeply throughout his life, for the benefit of his family, city, state and nation. It is very appropriate that

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

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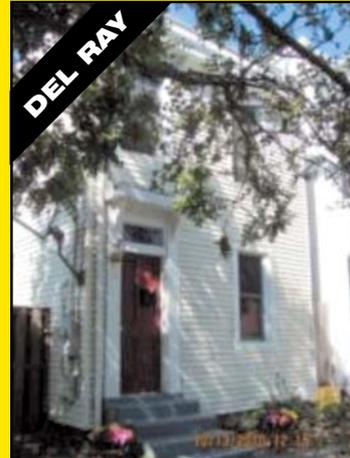
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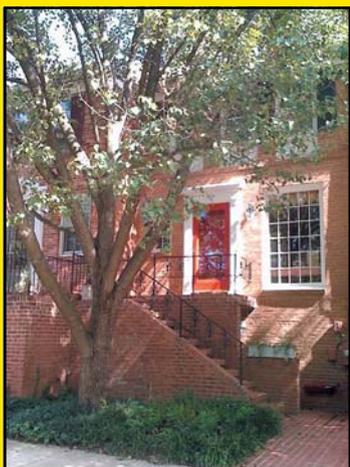
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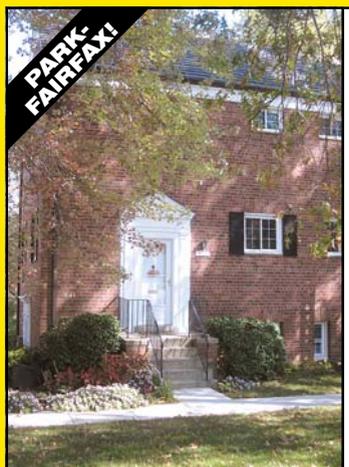
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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 15

we have an elementary school in Alexandria and a university and regional library in Fairfax which were named for him. In his personal affairs he set an example of practicality, order and honor. He was a faithful and active Christian, a loving husband to his childhood sweetheart and father to his nine children, and a warm friend and host.

Let's celebrate Bill of Rights Day on Dec. 15 and his birthday on Dec. 11, (1725). Alexandria should declare and celebrate George Mason Week to honor this exemplary citizen.

Ellen Latane Tabb
Alexandria

True Patriots

To the Editor:

Patriotic, civic-minded rich Americans don't want their tax cuts extended, at the expense of the middle class struggling to keep families fed and housed. They know that no nation prospers without a thriving middle class.

The rich who proclaim themselves patriots, but want only their neighbors to sacrifice, are the ones clamoring for extension of their tax cuts ... more for them, less for America, and less for other Americans. They will only use more money to buy more elections — by deceiving with slogans — the American majority, too overburdened to follow issues in depth.

Fellow Americans, please open your eyes. From your non-partisan neighbor, an independent voter for over 40 years.

Angela B. Saunders Silverman
Alexandria

PEOPLE NOTES

To have a People Note published in the Gazette-Packet, send an e-mail to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com.

Jim Steele will join their Board of Directors of Living Legends of Alexandria in January. Steele is a photographer and master photographic printer working primarily in black and white. Influenced by the work of Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, he works in both traditional and digital media. Steele has a studio at the Torpedo Factory Art Center and his work is in many corporate and private collections. He frequently lectures on the subject of fine black and white printing. He has guest lectured in photography at Georgetown University and taught for the Art League, Smithsonian, and Photoworks.



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1pm

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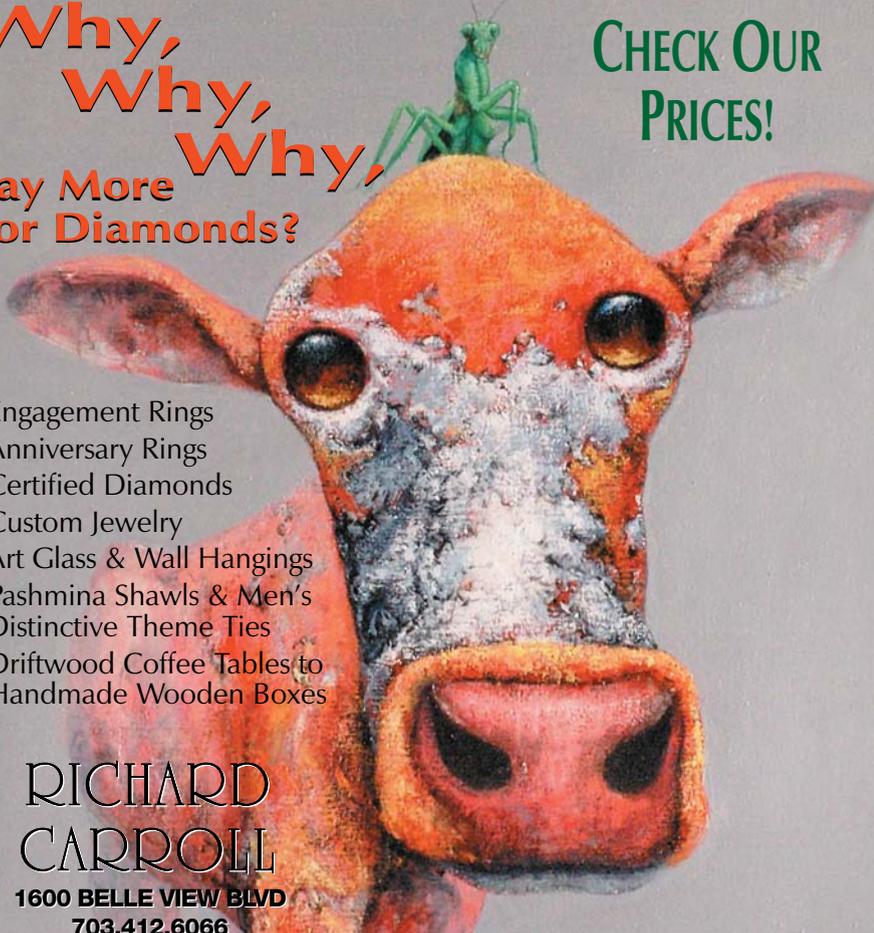
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4504
Neptune Dr
\$479,900
Prestigious Yacht Haven Estates
Great Potential! Large brick rambler on gorgeous 1/2 acre lot near river in Yacht Haven Est.

Many features include: maintenance free exterior. 4BRs on main level, including master with private bath, large room sizes, 2 FPs, hardwood floors, huge lower level family room w/fireplace plus storage area! Exceptional price provides opportunity to create your own masterpiece! OPEN SUN 12/12, 1-4. GW Pky S, past estate; L-Ferry Landing; R-Forest Haven; L-Neptune.



9316
Heather Glen Dr
\$650,000
Price Slashed - Large Colonial!
The most house for the money in area! 3 level, 4BR, 2 car garage colonial with the most spectacular family room addition you will ever find! Curved all glass walls and screen porch overlook fabulous custom pool. Originally priced in the \$800's. Owner wants immediate sale and has slashed the price accordingly! OPEN SUN 12/12, 1-4. GW Pky S, past estate; L-Old Mt Vernon Rd; R-Robertson Blvd, L-Heather Glen.



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8826 Camden St \$879,900

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9316
Allwood Dr
\$489,500
Absolutely Impeccable!
New Price! Stunning home features bright open floor plan with soaring cathedral ceilings on main level. 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 Mt. Vernon.



6515
Princeton Dr
\$749,900
Classic Colonial - Near Old Town!
PRICE REDUCTION!
Move in ready! Spacious home in Belle Haven area.

Center hall colonial with up to date floor plan featuring kit with SS & granite, family room, 4BRs, 3.5BAs, fin LL & oversized 2 car gar. "Close In" location with 2 tiered deck & seasonal river views.



7106
Colgate Dr
\$499,500
Hollin Glen - Super Value!
WOW!!! MAJOR PRICE REDUCTION! OWNER WANTS IMMEDIATE SALE. Owners have priced to sell immediately! Spacious home in prime location just minutes from Old Town. Many special features include: updated kitchen, 4 large BRs, 3BAs, hardwood floors, fin LL, 2 fireplaces, fenced in rear yard with two level deck. Move fast nothing like it at this price in prime 'close-in' market!



4408
Tarpon Ln
\$625,000
Yacht Haven - Near River!
Spacious four level home has been meticulously maintained. Absolutely gorgeous half acre lot within walking distance of clubhouse and river in this fabulous waterfront community. Both home and grounds are in exceptional condition. Significant upgrades include luxurious baths, hardwood floors and much updating throughout. Unique opportunity to be near water at reasonable price.



6309
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THE SCOTTISH WALK



Laura Niswander unpacks wreaths for the Heather and Greens Sale at the Campagna Center.



Campagna Center Executive Director Karen Hughes, front right, is joined by volunteers following the Scottish Walk Dec. 5.

Ryan and Hadley Stinson purchase wreaths from the Heather and Greens Sale.



PHOTOS BY
 JEANNE THEISMANN
 GAZETTE PACKET



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Alexandria and Dundee: “Linking Arms” for an ever-stronger Sister-City relationship.

A half-century ago, Alexandria twinned with Dundee, Scotland, as part of the Sister Cities International movement. Among countless exchanges between the two seaports since then was the visit to Dundee some five years ago by Alexandria’s mayor, Bill Euille. Treated to, and thrilled by, an evening of entertainment at Mains Castle featuring the Dundee Schools Music Theatre group, the mayor invited the group’s founder and producer, Lina Waghorn, to bring her students to Alexandria that year during the December Scottish Walk, which she did. This past week, Ms. Waghorn returned to the city with her husband Iain; her staff, Director Kenny Christie and Musical Director Paul Clancy; and a selection of Dundee Schools musical and theatrical stars.

The compelling story of the group’s beginning and trajectory merits recounting. A dozen years ago, Ms. Waghorn — who had been a teacher in the Dundee school system and later advanced to a system-wide administrative position — noticed that many of the students lacked the self-confidence needed to assure their academic and social success. A musical production, she thought, would bring out their natural abilities, imbue them with a stronger sense of self, and possibly even set them on a surer path to life-long accomplishment. That first show (which had been modestly conceived as a one-time-only undertaking) proved a huge success, and the city encouraged Ms. Waghorn to continue. Over the ensuing years the group has trained hundreds of students; currently, some 150 young Dundonians — from age 4 to late teens — take weekend music and theatre classes and perform throughout the city, the country, and beyond. Validating Ms. Waghorn’s conviction that “If we link arms, together we’ll be stronger,” many of them have gone on, and are going on, to pursue performing-arts careers and other advanced degrees at universities.

On Saturday, Nov. 27, a selection of eight of the older students and four adults of the Dundee Schools Music and Theatre group arrived in Alexandria to participate in a week of cultural exchange leading up to the



PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE

Students and staff of the Dundee Schools Music and Theatre group of Scotland joined the Alexandria Sister Cities Committee and sang their way through the parade route on Saturday morning.

Scottish Walk on Dec. 4 — a visit sponsored by Alexandria’s Sister Cities Committee. Several families in the city graciously hosted the students, while the adults settled in at the Monaco Hotel on King Street. The group’s program consisted of tours of Old Town, Fort Ward, and select Washington monuments, engagingly led by the Director of the Office of Historic Alexandria, Lance Mallamo, as well as of the U.S. Capitol and various national museums. Two days were set aside to interact with young people sharing similar artistic interests at T.C. Williams High School and St. Stephens and St. Agnes Upper School. Mid-week Mayor Euille hosted a reception for the group at City Hall.

In return, the Dundonians treated Alexandria to a series of unforgettable performances. In addition to several impromptu public bursts of song and dance, the group entertained a standing-room-only crowd at the Lyceum on Dec. 1 with gospel songs, renditions of Gershwin and Sondheim, other Broadway hits, and soulfully rendered Scottish ballads. The next night they entertained at the Torpedo Factory with more informal presentations that stopped en-

chanted Christmas shoppers in their tracks. The group capped its week by leading the Alexandria-Dundee Sister Cities contingent in the Scottish Walk, singing selections of Scottish songs to the general and enthusiastic delight of spectators bracketing the parade along Old Town’s sidewalks. When the Scottish delegation passed the reviewing stand, Mayor Euille jumped from his official perch there to give each and every one of them a grateful embrace.

In helping to assure a wonderful week with our visitors from Dundee, the Alexandria Sister Cities Committee would like to recognize the time and generosity of the Office of the Mayor, the Office of Historic Alexandria and especially the Lyceum, the faculty of T.C. Williams High School and of St. Stephens and St. Agnes Upper School, the Office of U.S. Sen. Mark Warner, the Office of Citizen Assistance, Hard Times Cafe, Union Street Public House, O’Connell’s Restaurant, and Whole Foods Market, as well as former Committee members Chris Beatley and Willie Dixon — all of whom helped sponsor activities in which the Dundee group participated. We would most especially like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Bracken, Crabill, Rush, and Schonberger families for offering their homes to the young delegation from Scotland: they proved to be hosts who, in short order, genuinely became the trouper’s Alexandria “families.”

The visit this year of the Music and Theatre group is but the latest, albeit undoubtedly the most fun, in a series of exchanges between Dundee and our city — exchanges which redound to the collateral benefit of the cities themselves, their young people, and all those who realize the critical importance, in today’s ever-more global reality, of Lina Waghorn’s counsel that “together we’ll be stronger.”

— JUDY NAVARRO
Secretary

Alexandria Sister Cities Committee

Holiday Concert Series

The City of Alexandria Announces 2010 Holiday Concert Series. Enjoy the festive sounds of the season in Alexandria as a break between shopping, on your way to dinner, or just to get into the holiday spirit. Come enjoy local performers with their rich talent as they entertain you during this festive time of year. Types of music featured include barbershop, folk, Hanukah favorites, hand bell ringers and good old fashioned caroling.

All the performances are free and held outdoors. Concerts will be cancelled due to inclement weather. For up to date information, call the City’s Special Events Hotline at 703-746-5592. The following concerts are scheduled at Market Square, 301 King St., Alexandria.

SATURDAY, DEC. 11

- 1 p.m. — Bell’s Angels, St. John’s Lutheran Church Handbell Choir (Handbells);
- 2 p.m. — Alexandria Harmonizers (Men’s Barbershop);

SUNDAY, DEC. 12

- 2 p.m. — St. Matthew’s United Methodist Church Handbell Choir (Handbells);
 - 3 p.m. — Blue Book Value Band (Swing Blues);
- The public is encouraged to take public transit or walk to the event. Visitors to Old Town can take the Metrorail lines to the King Street Station, and then take the free King Street Trolley to the event. For DASH schedule information, call 703-370-DASH or visit www.dashbus.com. For Metrobus schedule information, call 202-637-7000 or visit www.wmata.com. For a parking map, visit www.alexandriava.gov/12490.

Alexandria Black History Museum Hosts Day of Kwanzaa Events

On Saturday, Dec. 11, the Alexandria Black History Museum will host three Kwanzaa events — an informative program, a craft workshop for children, and a film screening.

The day kicks off with the free Pre-Kwanzaa Program from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This annual event explores the history and significance of Kwanzaa. Participants will learn about the principles of Kwanzaa, a seven-day cultural celebration that begins Dec. 26 and ends Jan. 1, and find out how to incorporate it into your holiday season. Brian Sales, who studied with Kwanzaa founder Dr. Maulana Karenga, will instruct participants in the basic history of Kwanzaa, provide advice on celebrating Kwanzaa at home, and perform a traditional libation ceremony.

Then from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., families can

take part in a Children’s Kwanzaa Craft Workshop. Jessica Smith, founder of Culture Kingdom Kids, and Kwanzaa educator Pier Penic will direct children (ages 4-12) and their parents in making Kwanzaa crafts. This event will be located in the Museum’s Watson Reading Room. Advance reservations are requested and a \$5 fee covers craft supplies.

Finally, at 4:30 p.m., attend a free screening of “The Black Candle: A Kwanzaa Celebration.” This vibrant documentary from M.K. Asante uses Kwanzaa as a vehicle to explore and celebrate the African-American experience. Filmed across the United States, Africa, Europe and the Caribbean, “The Black Candle” is a timely illumination on why the seven principles of Kwanzaa are so important to African Americans today. Narrated by Maya Angelou, it traces the holiday’s growth

out of the Black Power Movement in the 1960s to its present-day reality as a global, pan-African holiday embraced by over 40 million celebrants. This viewing is part of “Movies with a Mission,” a series of films about the African Diaspora that seek to inform and inspire dialogue.

The Kwanzaa celebration was created in 1966 by Dr. Karenga who designed the celebration as a way for African Americans to reaffirm their heritage and culture and their bonds to one another as a community.

The Alexandria Black History Museum is located at 902 Wythe Street in the heart of Alexandria’s historic Parker-Gray District, and is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 703-746-4356 or visit www.alexblackhistory.org.

Talk of the Town



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All That Glitters As you might imagine, The Wanderer has many women of all ages on his shopping list. And, as all sophisticated, dapper gentlemen know, jewelry is ALWAYS the answer. Luckily we have a variety of excellent choices in town. The Wanderer is loathe to go to The Mall.

Photos by Louise Krafft



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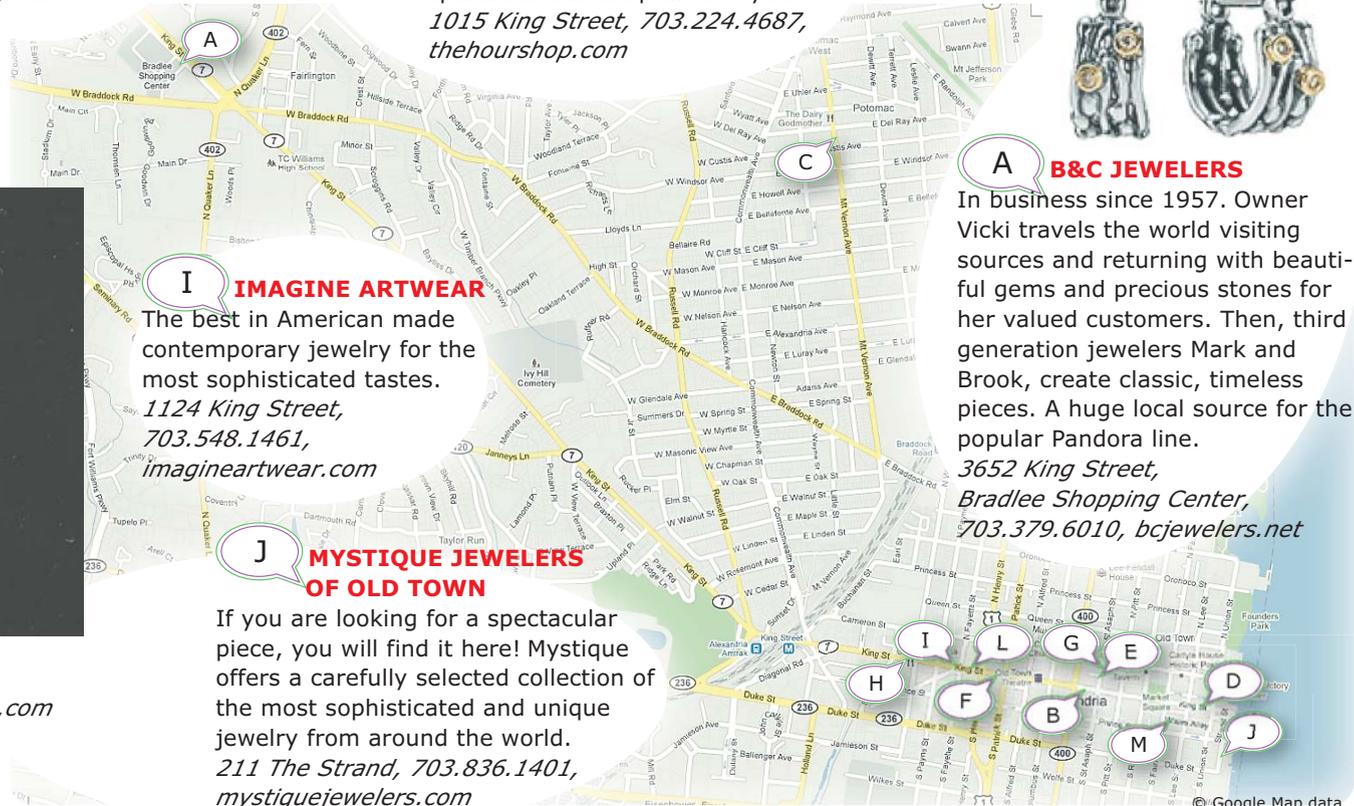


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THEATER



Maria Simpkins (The Ghost of Christmas Past), Steve Izant (Ebenezer Scrooge), Kathleen Lovain (Cratchit Child 1), Aimee Meher-Homji (Gladys Cratchit), Julian Worth (Cratchit Child 2) (Front) James Senavitis (Bob Cratchit) and Peter Johnson (Tiny Tim).

Two Takes on "A Christmas Carol"

BY BRAD HATHAWAY
THE GAZETTE

Different playwrights can make very different plays out of the same basic story. Take, for example, two different versions of the tale Charles Dickens told in "A Christmas Carol." That's what the Little Theatre of Alexandria did for its pair of shows for the holiday season. Two different playwrights make different use of the story of Scrooge, the ghosts of Christmas, Bob Cratchit and his entire family including Tiny Tim.

One, a version crafted for the theater by Donna Ferragut, tells Dickens' story straight out with touches of color and sentiment direct from the original text. It is being presented as an early evening or mid-afternoon matinee show through the rest of this week, with 22 adults and children who break into Christmas carols from time to time. It is a very traditional family holiday effort and provides a warm touch of nostalgia that runs just over an hour.

Ferragut's adaptation is under the direction of Jennifer Lyman who lets things start out a bit slowly but accelerates the pace as the play progresses so there's a sense of release when Scrooge finally sees the light on Christmas morning. Her Scrooge is Philip Baedecker, who brings an imposing presence to the role, seemingly more comfortable with the grumpy moneylender than with the giddy convert to the joy of the season.

The quartet of ghosts are played by performers who also play other roles. Cal Whitehurst makes the first visit as Marley, Scrooge's late partner rattling the chains he forged in life. Melissa Ledesma-Leese is the Ghost of Christmas Past. Shawn Perry, who has earlier put just a bit of light-hearted fizz into Fizziwig switches into a red suit for the Ghost of Christmas Present and then Dru Hodges

Where & When

"A Christmas Carol" plays Wednesday to Friday at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday at 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. through Dec. 12 while "Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge" plays Friday and Saturday at 9:30 p.m. through Dec. 18 at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street. Tickets are \$15. Call 703 683-0496 or log on to www.thelittletheatre.com.

switches from Young Scrooge in one scene to the Ghost of Christmas Future in the next.

Larry Grey is poor Bob Cratchit and he establishes and retains a generosity of spirit. Suzanne Martin gives voice to an other view as Mrs. Cratchit, who has reservations about toasting Scrooge at the Christmas Eve table. Brittany Morgan provides a warm moment as their eldest daughter Martha, and Benjamin Leese delivers the final line, "God bless us, every one" with conviction.

With all that seasonal sentiment, you might think the theater would shy away from a second show from the same source for their "late night" alternative, but the tone and content of the other version of the tale of Scrooge's night of ghostly visits is the polar opposite of Ferragut's adaptation. It is "Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge" an adaptation by Christopher During that turns Dickens' story on its head. My colleague Christopher Rawson of the Pittsburgh Post Gazette correctly observed that the play "is a rollicking parody that caters to our desire to have our traditional holiday and mock it, too."

This unorthodox comic piece is performed on Friday and Saturday evenings starting at 9:30 p.m., which means few parents will bring younger children. That is a good thing as few children with early bed times are likely to get most of the humor of the Durang version which focuses on the long-suffering wife of Scrooge's clerk. As Durang sees it, she's had it with poverty, with her husband's kowtowing to his skinflint employer, and with the ever-growing brood of mouths expecting to be fed. All she wants to do is head off to the bar, down a few tankards of gin and then jump off of London Bridge to end it all. Her plans, however, are interrupted by a less-than-competent ghost bringing Scrooge to see what's going on.

The evening is sparked by a delightfully daffy set of performances. Maria Simpkins is the bumbling ghost who's powers just are not working quite the way Dickens had written in his version. Steve Izant is a Scrooge whose "Bah Humbug" is a symptom of his "19th century Tourette Syndrome." Most importantly, Aimee Meher-Homji is fun to watch as the fed up Gladys Cratchit. These three head a cast of 15 including Geoff Baskir and Kevin Harr who team up as "George Bailey" and "Clarence the Angel" who drop in from "Its A Wonderful Life." Peter Johnson is, among other things, a less-than-tiny Tiny Tim who doesn't want to use his crutch, hoping that people won't notice he's a cripple despite "falling 24 times a day."

Both shows use a bit of music. The caroling in the Ferragut version is delivered without much enthusiasm but generally on pitch. The four inconsequential songs in the Durang version, on the other hand, are sung with great energy but often sharp, flat or simply wavering. Neither show depends on the songs however, so the damage is generally slight.

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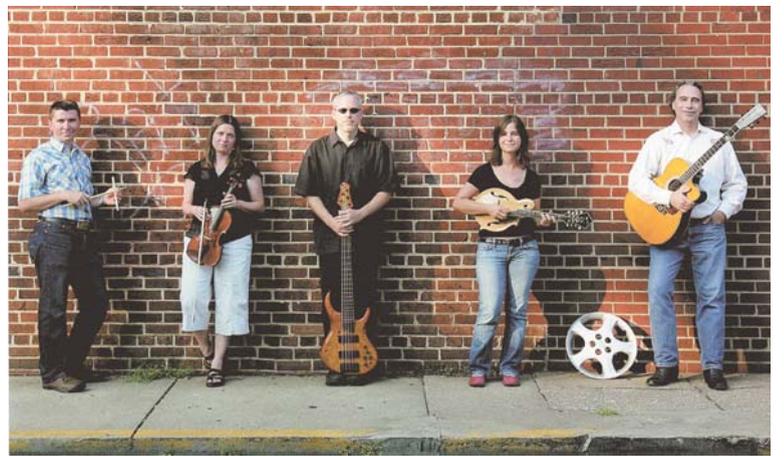
A Tribute to Hazel Dickens

Friday/Dec. 10 at 8 p.m.

Ten Bluegrass Acts with headliners Bill Emerson (and Sweet Dixie), Dudley Connell and Dede Wyland will honor Bluegrass legend Hazel Dickens, 75, who will also grace the stage. The show's lineup also includes Randy Barrett, Bumpkin Pie (with Coup de Grass), Karen Collins and the Backroads Trio, Dead Men's Hollow, Sally



Dede Wyland



U-Liners

PHOTO BY KENNETH M. WYNER

Love, Akira Otsuka and the U-Liners. Also a benefit for Hungry for Music. At the Lee Center's Richard Kauffman Auditorium, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. Tickets are \$20/general, available at www.hungryformusic.org or by calling 240-582-6193.

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Bumpkin Pie (Michael Dunkley and Suzanne Ives Dunkley) are based in the Bucknell area of Alexandria.

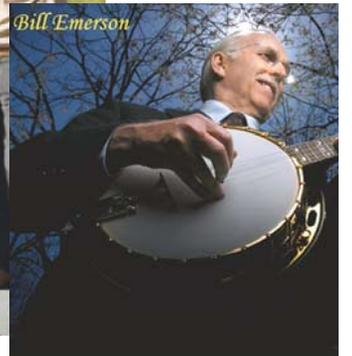


PHOTO BY TOM PICH

Hazel Dickens



Karen Collins and the Backroads Trio



Bill Emerson



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FINE ARTS

NOW THROUGH JAN. 3

“Small Works.” Fifteen members from the Multiple Exposures Gallery are exhibiting “Small Works.” Noting larger than 12x12-inches in film, digital, color and B&W will all be represented. Juror Lenny Campello is an artist, art critic and writer. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, 105 N. Union St., #312, Alexandria.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 24

Holiday Small Works and Silent Auction. Gallery West fills the walls with an eclectic show of small works just in time for holiday gift giving. The display will feature original paintings, sculptures, ceramics, photographs, digital art and jewelry. Artist's Reception is Saturday, Dec. 11 from 5 to 8 p.m. At Gallery West, 1213 King Street in Old Town, Alexandria. Visit www.gallery-west.com or call 703-549-6006.

NOW THROUGH MAY 1, 2011

Exhibition of Commemorative Wares. Features ceramic wares that reflect the Alexandria community's keen interest in current and historic events. At the Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Old Town Alexandria. Open Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. \$2 admission. Call 703-746-4994 or visit www.alexandriahistory.org.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 19

Andrew Zimmerman's Colorado Winter. Featuring Andrew Zimmerman's silver-gelatin photographic prints. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery, NVCC, 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.— 4 p.m. Monday-Friday and during performances.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 2

Ceramic Guild Show. Santa is coming to town and the Torpedo Factory Art Center's Scope Gallery has clay creations and stocking stuffers to jingle everyone's bells. Shopping is Monday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., with Thursdays open until 9 p.m. At Scope Gallery, 101 North Union Street, Studio 19, Alexandria. 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 7

The Springfield Art Guild Art Show. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring: 40 works of art are displayed in this exhibition and sale. These works include oil, watercolor, photography, and mixed media. At Godwin House, 4800 Fillmore Ave., Alexandria. Call Donnalyne Lefever 703-644-6677.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 2

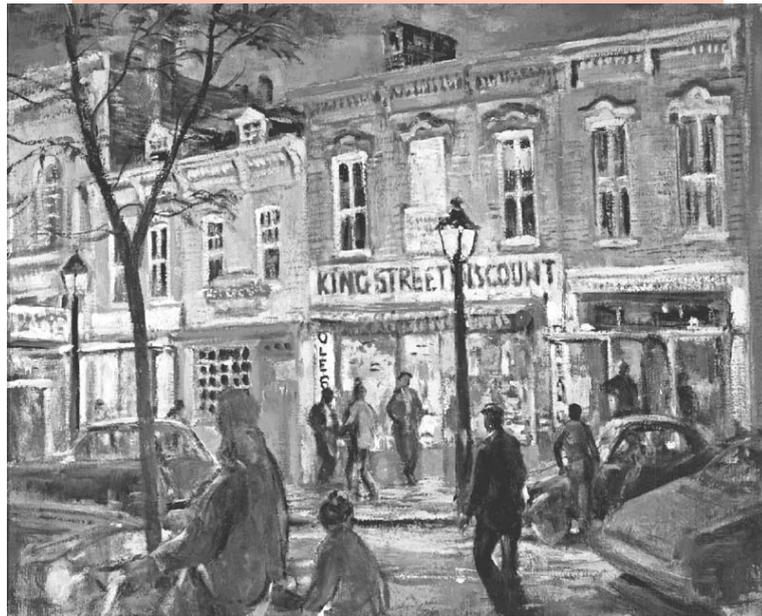
Metalwork 2010. Free. Metalwork 2010 is the Washington Guild of Goldsmiths (WGG) biennial show and sale to exhibit their members' work. Reception to meet the artists on Thursday, Dec. 9 from 6-9 p.m. At the Target Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org or call 703-838-4565.

THURSDAY/DEC. 9

Second Thursday Art Night. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. Browse open studios, interact with artists, enjoy live music and refreshments. Meet the artists at Metalwork '10 in Target Gallery. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Visit www.torpedofactory.org; 703-838-4565.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

Women of Courage. 4 to 7 p.m. Free. The Art and Stories of Entrepreneur Artists and Change Makers. A multicultural celebration of art, music and entrepreneurship. Meet



TUESDAY/DEC. 14

Artist Horace Day. 6 to 8 p.m. Reception to celebrate the current exhibition, “Style and Identity: Black Alexandria in the 1970s, Portraits by Horace Day.” The exhibition of more than 30 paintings by Horace Day (1909-1984) features Alexandria street scenes and portraits of African American Alexandrians from the early 1970s. The exhibition will be open through Friday, May 7. The reception is free but reservations are requested and can be made by calling 703-746-4356. At The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe Street in the heart of Alexandria's historic Parker-Gray District. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or call 703-746-4356.

Empowered Women International's 12 graduates from the 2010 Entrepreneur Training for Success program. The event program starts at 5 p.m. and includes a keynote address from Jimena Ryan of Raffa, P.C.; a live jazz performance by Tacha Coleman Parr (vocals) and Scott Giambusso (electric guitar); a book presentation and signing by novelist Jameela Alter; and a reception and holiday shopping extravaganza with wine and appetizers. At Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. RSVP required at cfripp@aol.com.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 2, 2011

Molded from Complicated Mixtures. Drawing inspiration from the quirky characters and funky forms produced in plastic toys, Megan Marlatt renders in a classic style paintings that depict the many meanings behind toys. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 12

Faculty Exhibition. Marymount University's Barry Gallery will showcase the work of 11 Marymount faculty artists in the upcoming Fine Art and Graphic Design Faculty Exhibition. Marymount's Barry Gallery is located in the Reinsch Library on the University's Main Campus, 2807 North

Glebe Road, Arlington. The Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Contact Judy Bass, the Barry Gallery curator, at 703-284-1561.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 23

Artist Jan. E. Moffatt. Featuring the 2010 Blue Door Collection and more. At Art in the Garden at the Historic Manor House, Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Hours: Wednesday to Sunday, 12 noon-4:30 p.m. Call 703-941-7987, 703-642-5173, www.GreenSpring.org.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 31

Greg Viggiano Photo Exhibit. The exhibit will showcase local digital photography, the Pentagon Memorial, and other selected images. At Firehook Coffee Shop on Union Street in Old Town Alexandria.

JAN. 5 THROUGH JAN. 30

Gallery West Presents WOW! Works in wax, oil, and wire by new member artists Susan Stayer, Caty Forden, Margret Lindsey, and Sue Lindsey. Meet the artists at their reception on Saturday, Jan. 15 from 5 to 7 p.m. Refreshments will be included. At Gallery West, 1213 King Street, in Alexandria's Boutique District. Visit

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Each year, UCM helps families in need to have a happy holiday season by providing thousands of toys and other gifts for children through the Share the Joy program — and your help is what makes this program possible!

Consider supporting the Share the Joy program by:

- ❖ Donating new, unwrapped toys for children aged infant to 15 years — gift cards are also welcome
- ❖ Volunteering in the Holiday Shop at UCM, where parents browse and pick out gifts for their children
- ❖ Hosting a gift drive at your

church, business or civic organization

❖ Donating holiday food items such as turkeys, hams, stuffing, etc.

For more information about helping out with the Share the Joy program, contact Christine Fiske at 703-768-7106 ext 328 or christine.fiske@ucmagency.org.

Volunteers will be needed from Dec. 6-17 to sort and set up the Holiday Room, where UCM clients come to pick out gifts for their children. Additional volunteers will be needed on Dec. 18-20 for gift distribution.



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ENTERTAINMENT

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.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 6, 2011

Christmas at Mount Vernon. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Themed decorations (including 12 Christmas trees), a gingerbread Mount Vernon, historical chocolate-making demonstrations, and 18th-century dancing will be offered. Visit Aladdin, George Washington's Christmas Camel, take special Mansion tours, and make a Chocolate Toast to Christmas, with our 18th-century-style chocolate drink, a Washington family favorite. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon; call 703-780-2000 or visit mountvernon.org. Admission: \$15 for adults, \$7 for youth (6-11), and free for children 5 and younger.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 19

Alexandria Jaycees' Christmas Tree Sales. The tree lot features a variety of trees, including Canaan Firs, Douglas Firs, Fraser Firs, and Scotch Pines in heights from 4-10 feet, with prices from \$45-\$90. Proceeds to benefit the Holiday Shopping Tour for underprivileged children. Operating hours are Tuesday-Friday 6-9 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; and Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. At the Safeway Parking Lot, 500 South Royal Street, Alexandria. Call 703-866-7171 or go to www.alexjaycees.org or visit <http://www.alexjaycees.org/trees.php>.

Mount Vernon by Candlelight. Dec. 11-12; Dec. 18-19. From 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Join "Mrs. Washington" for an evening of candlelit tours, fireside Christmas caroling, and hot cider and ginger cookies. Tour the first and second floors, hear characters from Washington's world as they guide visitors through the home, adding ambiance to a traditional Christmas evening at Mount Vernon. Admission: Adults/\$20, Youth 11 and under/\$14. At George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate & Gardens, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon; call 703-780-2000 or visit mountvernon.org.

NOW THROUGH DEC. 12

"A Christmas Carol." Admission: \$15. The Little Theatre of Alexandria rings in the holidays with a return of a classic by Charles Dickens. Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly Victorian humbug, travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present, and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. At The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe Street, Alexandria; call 703-683-0496 or visit www.thelittletheatre.com.

THURSDAY/DEC. 9

Second Thursday Art Night. 6 to 9 p.m. Free. Studios and galleries will be open until 9 p.m. for holiday shopping and indulgent treats will make for a decadent evening. Visit Target Gallery from 6-8 p.m. for the reception for the Washington Guild of Goldsmiths show, featuring work by jewelry, metal, and enamel artists. From 6:30-8 p.m., The Art League Gallery hosts the reception for the All-Media Membership Show and Greetings From..., a show of 4x6" work depicting real or imagined places the artists have visited or would like to visit. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Call 703-838-4565 or visit www.TorpedoFactory.org.

Latin American Book Discussion Group. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Free and open to the public. At Beatley Library, 5005 Duke Street, Alexandria. Call 703-746-1702.

Jon Carroll Performs. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Jon Carroll is the Grammy winning songwriter-performer from the Mary Chapin Carpenter Band and Starland Vocal Band. At the Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Call 703-548-0035 or visit www.joncarroll.org.

Ghosts Along the Waterfront. 7 p.m. Author Michael Lee Pope will share stories from his book, "Ghosts of Alexandria," and discuss the waterfront planning process. At the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Madison Room, 901 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria.

DEC. 9-11

"A Christmas Carol." Admission is \$10/adults; \$7/students or seniors. Family rates of \$30 for 4 or more. Presented by the Mount Vernon High School drama department. Dec. 9, 10 and 11. At the Little Theater, Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old



DEC. 17-18

Alexandria Singers Holiday Show. "Yule School Reunion!" In three family-friendly performances, following a colorful and whimsical story line, The Alexandria Singers will take you through their favorite music of the holiday season both old and new. Premium seats \$20; General admission \$15; Discounted rate* \$10 (*Seniors 65+, Students, Groups of 10+, Active Military); Children (6 and under) \$5. Friday, Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Dec. 18 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Convergence, 1801 North Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Visit www.AlexandriaSingers.com or 703-941-SING (7464).

Mount Vernon Road, Alexandria. For details, go to eademarco@fcps.edu or 703-619-3259. Group sales contact Jeanette Kraynak at 703-619-9069.

FRIDAY/DEC. 10

Tribute to Hazel Dickens. 8 p.m. Ten Bluegrass Acts with headliners Bill Emerson (and Sweet Dixie), Dudley Connell and Dede Wyland will honor Bluegrass legend Hazel Dickens, 75, who will also grace the stage. The show's lineup also includes Randy Barrett, Bumpkin Pie (with Coup

de Grass), Karen Collins and the Backroads Trio, Dead Men's Hollow, Sally Love, Akira Otsuka and the U-Liners. Also a benefit for Hungry for Music. At the Lee Center's Richard Kauffman Auditorium, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria. Tickets are \$20/general, available at www.hungryformusic.org or by calling 240-582-6193.

Fair Trade — Fair Play Drum Circle. 8 to 10 p.m. Bring your drums, other musical

SEE ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 29

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Wednesday - All American Night
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Thursday - Italian Night
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Friday - Fish Night
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ENTERTAINMENT

FROM PAGE 28

instruments, or just your feet and dance! Join a community of like-minded activists drumming for fair trade. Learn more about the fair trade movement and enjoy fair trade treats. Sponsored by the D.C. Fair Trade Network (dcfairtradenetwork.org). At Mindful Hands, 211 King Street. Visit www.mindfulhands.com or call 703-683-2074.

DEC. 10-12

"The Lamplighter." Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 10 and Saturday, Dec. 11; and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 12. A musical ghost story adaptation of Charles Dickens' tale, "A Christmas Carol," presented by Bishop O'Connell Theater. Tickets are \$5/students and seniors, \$10/general admission, and can be purchased at the door or by calling the box office at 703-237-1448. Bishop O'Connell High School at 6600 Little Falls Road in Arlington. Find out more at www.bishopoconnell.org/theatre.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11

"The Black Candle: A Kwanzaa Celebration" Film Screening. Free. Kwanzaa Celebration Program. From 1 to 3 p.m., families can take part in a Children's Kwanzaa Craft Workshop (\$5 for supplies). Educational program 11 a.m.-1 p.m.; Film screening 4:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m. At the Alexandria Black History Museum 902 Wythe Street, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4356 or visit www.alexblackhistory.org

Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser. 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Free. Hosted by Jefferson-Houston K-8 School. Come to relax, have fun. Donations are greatly appreciated. At 1501 Cameron St., Alexandria.

Bike Collection. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Wheels to Africa Bike Collection taking place at T.C. Williams High School. A suggested donation of \$10 will help ship a bike to Africa. Wheels to Africa was started by an 11-year-old Arlington boy, Winston Duncan, who decided he had to help people in Africa who need transportation to obtain food, water and medicine. Since 2005, Wheels to Africa has shipped over 2700 bikes to Africa. Wheels to Africa, requests a \$10 donation with each bike to help cover the costs of shipping bikes. Visit www.wheels-to-africa.org.

Beading and Jewelry Making. 2 p.m. Free. Beginner's class. Space is limited. Call Renee at 703-746-1784 or email rdipilato@alexandria.lib.va.us. At the Alexandria Library, Duncan Branch, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria.

Gunston Hall Plantation Christmas and Yuletide Dinner. Plantation Christmas: 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.; Yuletide Dinner: 4:30, 6 and 8 p.m. Plantation Christmas: \$15 adults; \$8 ages 6-18; \$2 ages 2-5; Yuletide Dinner: \$49.95 adults and ages 11 and older; \$24.95 ages 6-10; \$9.95 ages 2-5. Ride in a horse-drawn carriage, sip warm cider by the fire, and sample period recipes prepared in the hearth kitchen. Costumed characters engaged in seasonal activities greet you in the house and throughout the grounds. At Gunston Hall Plantation, 10709 Gunston Road, Lorton; call 703-550-9220 or visit www.gunstonhall.org.

Alexandria Harmonizers Holiday Concert. 2 p.m. Free. Celebrate the holidays with this free concert of seasonal favorites in the barbershop style by the Alexandria Harmonizers Chorus. At Market Square, 301 King Street, Alexandria; call 703-746-5592. Visit www.harmonizers.org

"Christmas in Camp." Noon to 4 p.m. This family holiday event interprets how Christmas was observed during the Civil War. Features a patriotic Santa Claus, living history presentations, Victorian decorations, refreshments, tours and crafts. At Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road in Alexandria. Call the Museum at 703-746-4848 or visit www.fortward.org.

Ice Skating Show. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Free. Watch local ice skaters show off their moves at Mt. Vernon RECenter's Holiday Ice Show. Features the RECenter's most experienced skaters, as well as beginners of all ages. At Mt. Vernon RECenter, 2017 Belle View Boulevard, Alexandria. Contact Skating Director Carl Kirtley 703-768-3224, or via e-mail at carl.kirtley@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Christmas Boutique. 9 a.m. to noon. Handmade Christmas décor, ornaments, hand knitted items, baked goods, and unique gifts. Proceeds support Heritage Presbyterian Women's outreach programs for children and women. At Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Call 703-360-9546.

DEC. 11 TO 12

Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours. Tour times are from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Saturday and 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday. At Carlyle House Historic Park (121 North Fairfax Street), Gadsby's Tavern Museum (134 North Royal Street), Lee-Fendall House (614 Oronoco Street), and The Athenaeum (201 Prince Street). Enjoy seasonal decorations, entertainment and light refreshments. Admission: \$20 adults/\$15 seniors/\$5 kids Reservations recommended. Call 703-746-4242 or VisitAlexandriaVA.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 12

Christmas at Mount Vernon Concert. 7 p.m. The event will feature the Bells at Mount Vernon hand-bell choir, along with choirs and instrumental performances. Sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At the Mount Vernon Virginia Stake Center, 6219 Villa Street, Alexandria (S. Van Dorn and Franconia Road). Contact Craig Steinburg at (703) 550-7307 or csteinburg@cox.net or Jared Whitley at (801) 518-0826 or jaredwhitley@gmail.com.

Book Fair Fundraiser. Maury Elementary School PTA is hosting its book fair fundraiser. At the Potomac Yards

Barnes & Noble. Volunteers will be providing free gift wrapping for purchases. Plus, if you "Just say Maury" when you make your purchase of books, games, DVDs or cafe treats, a percentage of the sale will go to fund literacy programs. Contact Kelly Smith at kellyandwill@aol.com or 703-739-0983.

Christmas Candlelight Service. 6 p.m. Doors open at 5:40 p.m. for instrumental prelude. Entitled "Sing Noel," this Christmas celebration will feature readers, the APC Adult and Children's choirs, instrumentalists, and congregational carol singing by candlelight. Childcare will be provided, including special activities for kids through age six. A Christmas reception will follow immediately after the service. Alexandria Presbyterian Church is at 2405 Russell Road in the Del Ray neighborhood of Alexandria. Contact: 703-683-3348, www.alexandriapres.org.

Interactive Nativity Pageant. 2 to 4 p.m. The pageant will feature live animals, including sheep and a donkey. Christmas cookies and hot chocolate will be served in the church's community room. Opportunities for worship, Bible study, youth activities, grief counseling and healing are offered throughout the week. At St. Andrew & St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Catholic Church, 402 E. Monroe Ave., in the Del Ray area of Alexandria. Visit www.standrewandstmargaret.org or call 703-683-3343.

Alternative Christmas Giving Bazaar. A fund-raiser for local charity. After the 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. In the Fellowship Hall of Westminster Presbyterian Church, 2701 Cameron Mills Road, Alexandria. Visit www.wpc-alex.org.

Air Force Brass Quintet. 3 p.m. Free. Performs with the Seika Girls High School Wind Orchestra. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Call 202-767-5658 or visit our homepage: www.usafband.af.mil

Children's Holiday Concert. 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25, includes post-concert candy reception. "The Nutcracker Suite" with conductor Kim Allen Kluge and the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt Street, Alexandria. Call 703-548-0885 or visit <http://www.alexsym.org>.

DEC. 12-14

Journey to Bethlehem. Free. 6 to 8 p.m. Guided tours through the "City of Bethlehem" on the front lawn of Aldersgate Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, at the corner of Collingwood and Fort Hunt roads in the Mt. Vernon area of Alexandria. Call 703-765-6555 or visit www.aldersgate.net.

TUESDAY/DEC. 14

UCM Fundraiser. All Day. Mamma's Kitchen will donate 10 percent of the sale from your meal to the United Community Ministries. At Mamma's Kitchen, 7601 Fordson Road, Alexandria. Call 571-312-6690.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 15

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the Smokin' Polecats with Marianna Prevetti. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

Toastmasters Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Mount Vernon Chapter, Toastmasters International. Meets on the first and third Monday of each month at the Fairfax County South County Government Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Visit <http://mountvernon.freetoasthost.org/> or Email: mtvernontoast@gmail.com.

Author Talk by Thomas Kaufman. 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. Free. Will introduce his Washington, D.C., detective novel, Drink the Tea. At the Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1705.

THURSDAY/DEC. 16

A Winter Concert. 7:30 p.m. Cost is \$5. Featuring seasonal selections and Vivaldi's "Gloria in D." Guest soloists will be Jennifer Wintle, soprano; Melanie Bales, soprano; Kathryn Morrison, mezzo soprano, and Jihanna Davis, mezzo soprano. Sponsored by the West Potomac High School Choirs.

Model Railroad Club Train Display. 10 a.m. Enjoy a holiday tradition with the Model Train Club. A display in the front lobby as well as a working train set-up in Room 213 will be featured. The Club will also discuss the history of subways in America. At Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Call 703-765-4573 to make reservations.

FRIDAY/DEC. 17

Evening of Music for Brass Quintet. 8 p.m. Free. The U.S. Air Force Band Chamber Players Series will perform. At George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive, Alexandria. Call 202-767-5658 or visit www.usafband.af.mil.

DEC. 17-18

"Yule School Reunion." Alexandria Singers Holiday Show. In 3 family-friendly performances, following a colorful and whimsical story line, The Alexandria Singers will take you through their favorite music of the holiday season both old and new! Premium Seats \$20; General Admission \$15; Discounted Rate* \$10 (*Seniors 65+, Students, Groups of 10+, Active Military); Children (6 and under) \$5. Friday, Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday Dec. 18 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.; At Convergence, 1801 North Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Visit www.AlexandriaSingers.com (703)941-SING (7464).



Journey to Bethlehem

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www.aldersgate.net 703-765-6555

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Looking Forward To Thriving Under New Regulations

FROM PAGE 1

"I have to applaud your courage in starting a company in these tough economic times," said Vice Mayor Kerry Donley during a speech at company's annual meeting this week. "We want you to thrive, and we'll work with you if you work with us."

The relationship between Union Cab and the city hasn't always been so clear-cut. For years, it was clouded by the specter of the harshest sanction available to city regulators. Under rules adopted back in 2005, when the City Council adopted an ordinance that allowed Alexandria officials to shut down any taxicab company that did not log an average of two calls for each driver every day. Many argued that the rules were excessively harsh, especially for a startup company trying to compete with industry leader Yellow Cab.

"They were utterly unrealistic expectations," said former City Councilwoman Joyce Woodson, also addressing the annual meeting of the owner-operated company. "But now probation is not going to be a problem hanging over your head, unfairly in my opinion."

BACK IN OCTOBER, members of the Alexandria City Council approved a new regulatory model that reshuffled the deck for taxicab companies in the city. Although they

would still be held to a requirement to maintain a certain average of dispatch calls each day for each driver, the punishment was no longer annihilating the business. Instead, under the new rules, the penalty for failing to meet the dispatch requirements is now preventing the non-compliant company from accepting transfer drivers from other companies.

"It's a win-win," said Yellow Cab Company owner Jim Yates after the October vote. "The consumer will win by maintaining dispatch service, and the companies that don't meet the requirement will be able to survive."

Union Cab employees and their supporters aren't so sure the new rules are a win-win. They say Yellow Cab has a decades-long head-start and a name many people feel is synonymous with taxicab service.



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/GAZETTE PACKET

Vice Mayor Kerry Donley presents a plaque of appreciation from Union Cab to former City Councilwoman Joyce Woodson.

Catching up to that would be a difficult challenge for any startup business, especially during an economic downturn. But Woodson expressed confidence this week

that Union Cab will now be able to compete for contracts with Senior Services of Alexandria and the Virginia Department of Transportation. Within the next two years, Woodson predicted, the dispatch requirement will no longer be a problem for Union Cab.

"We're now in calmer waters," said Woodson, who was presented with a plaque recognizing her support of Union Cab. "This is the time when small business should start thinking about planning for the future."

ONE POTENTIAL stumbling block in Union's future could be the number of authorizations granted to the driver-owned cooperative. Last month, the Traffic and Parking Board voted in favor of a recommendation to take 40 authorizations away from Union Cab. Under the board's recommendation, 20 would be given to a new taxicab company known as "Go Green" and the other 20 would be split between Yellow Cab and King Cab for models that were either hybrid or accessible to customers with disabilities. City officials say they disagree with the parking board's recommendation.

"Our concern is that we don't want to create a significant burden for Union drivers," said Abi Lerner, deputy director of Transportation and Environmental Services. "They would be responsible for buying very expensive new vehicles."

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Lorraine Lloyd, right, presents Melyssa Moller with the "Hardest Souls" award for Steve Brown's boat Endless Summer. Moller danced aboard the boat in a hula skirt and bikini top despite the freezing temperatures.



Kent and Pam Kitchens celebrate the Best in Show win with Jay and Ginger Gaston.

A Winning Labor of Love

FROM PAGE 3

for an 11-boat sequential presentation of a Nativity scene that included wise men, camels and the star of Bethlehem.

"This is an exciting event to be a part of," said Garrett O'Shea of Red Peg Marketing, a national marketing company based in Alexandria and promoter of this year's events at the City Dock. "Next year we hope to make it even bigger and better and perhaps have big screens on the dock with a live feed of the boat parade."

Judges for this year's boat parade were Stephanie Landrum of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Jody Manor of Bitter-

sweet Café, Isabel Alvarez of Kimpton Hotels and Dee Berford of the Old Dominion Boat Club.

"Judging is a challenge," Landrum said of the 51 boats that took part in this year's parade. "But we were all in awe of that stained glass display."

For the Gaston's, the boat parade is just one more way for them to honor our troops.

"We will be participating in Wreaths Across America next week at Arlington Cemetery," Gaston said.

"At this time of year it's especially important to remember those who are away from home protecting our freedoms and also those who have died for our country."

Fred Parker took a break from serving chili at the Captain's party to play the spoons with Jeff Carmella of J.C. and the Headcats.



2010 Boat Parade Winners

Best in Show - Patriot Dreams - Jay Gaston: Church of "Our Lady of Sea Ray" complete with stained glassed windows and a steeple.

Best Powerboat - Hi C's - Larry Chandler: Giant polar bear in lights.

Most Spirited - Inappropriate - Brian Rochford: Twister - light-up Twister board plus people playing Twister on the bow.

Thinking Outside the Christmas Box - Tuesday - Joe Landa: Save the Tatas - pink ribbon theme for Breast Cancer Awareness

Most Animated - Becky Lynn - Brandon Bowers: Blinkey-Flashy Spinney Stars.

Best Sailboat - L'Attitude Adjustment - Mark Silcox: Cruzan Christmas - 55-foot Christmas tree with presents underneath.

Best Spirit of America - Crowes Nest - Tom Crowe: The Grinch cartoon movie projected on sail - a classic American Christmas movie

Hardest Souls - Endless Summer - Steve Brown: Hula girl - touch of the tropics with a Hawaiian-style Christmas.

Best Try - Kayla Jane - Mike Cusamono: Spirit of Christmas - Disney theme on the bow and Frosty with reindeer on the stern.

Best Theme - National Potomac Yacht Club: Nativity scene on 11 boats including wise men, camels and star.

Best Holiday Cheer - Act of Grace - Walter Weiss.

Honorable Mention - All Hands on Deck - Dave Beck: Smokin' Red Hot Christmas with swinging red lights.



Donna and "Mango" Mike Anderson and Charlotte Hall.



Karen and Rob Kaufmann, Jim Hartmann and Sandy and Charlie Collum aboard the Cherry Blossom.



Potomac Riverboat Company owner Willem Polak and his wife Cathie.

PHOTOS BY
JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET



Andrew Palmieri and Nancy Appleby.

Legal Notices

ABC LICENSE

City of Alexandria trading as Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL for a Wine and Beer off premises license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. Liz Williams President

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 2003 Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22314 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Unit at (703) 838-4709.

OBITUARY

Roger C. Thornton, 82, of Clearwater, Florida, passed away November 30, 2010. His final days were spent surrounded by family and love. Roger is survived by Ruby, his loving wife for 46 years, his two children, Gina V. Lam, V. Tyrone Lam and his wife Kristin, his granddaughter, Elizabeth Lam and his sister Jacqueline Crawley. Roger was born January 4, 1928 in Peoria, Illinois. He moved to Clearwater Florida in 1992, from Alexandria, Virginia, where he sold Industrial Commercial Real Estate most of his career. He was an active boater, loved helping others and had a laugh that would fill any room.

www.mossfeasterdunedin.com

Obituary

Betty Hine was born July 14, 1932 in Miami, Florida. She died on December 4th from relentless pain due to fractures caused by osteoporosis. She lived for several years in Leesburg, Florida, New York City, and Alexandria, Virginia. She held executive positions at the Waldorf Astoria, Sheraton Corporation, and the Marriott Corporation. Her favorite roles, however, were wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She is survived by her husband of 58 years, Ken Hine, a daughter, Debby Frye; two granddaughters, Kristen Vreeland (Chris) and Katie McIlvenny (Declan); and 5 great-grandchildren, Sydney Frye, Ciara McIlvenny, Paige Vreeland, Chloe Vreeland, and Sean McIlvenny as well as a sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Diane and Pete Esthus. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Church of the Trinity, 7225 North Lockwood Ridge, Sarasota, FL 34243 or to Philanthropy Department, Tidewell Hospice, 5955 Rand Boulevard, Sarasota, FL 34238. A memorial service will be held on the 29th of December at 3 p.m. at The Glenridge on Palmer Ranch, 7333 Scotland Way, Sarasota, FL 34238.

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Lights, Camera, Compassion!

FROM PAGE 7

THE PROGRAM STARTS while the boys are still in the fifth grade. One day a week, they have life skills classes with Odell and her assistant Kelly Robinson. Evenings they each have dinner with one of the mentors and take the movie-making class with another. A highlight of the program is an overnight trip to Camp Kekoka (built by Alexandria Police officers), after which each mentor is paired with one of the boys for the remainder of the program.

That's when the real movie-making and relationship-building begins.

Tuesday's festival was the culmination of months of hard work and fun. The festival kicked off inside the near capacity theater with a humorous exchange between two of the boys in the program, Roberto Bonilla and William Salgado who shared highlights of the iMovie Mentors experience.

Each boy, along with his mentor, introduced his movie. They talked about their favorite parts of the program and what they learned during the process of making their movies.

Anthony Hernandez made a movie about litter. "The main reason is where I live people litter," he said. "We have trashcans everywhere but people still litter. I hate littering because it looks ugly and I don't like playing soccer in a dirty place."

Zerik Brooks said it was fun being in the iMovie program because he played new sports like soccer and ultimate Frisbee. "I have tried new things like artichoke dip and hummus, and been new places, like Camp Kekoka."

Will Alvarez and Bruce Slawter introduced Will's movie "Let's Get Soaked." Will always wanted to do water sports. "Slides and stuff like that," he said. While doing research for his movie, Will realized he had concerns about swimming because he hadn't really spent time around pools.

"So, while making the movie," Slawter said, "we learned about things such as water hazards, basic rules for water safety, and how to get swimming lessons in Alexandria."



Bruce Slawter and William Alvarez.



George Washington Middle School student Bernat Rivas and mentor Doug Peterson.

ODELL SAYS that even though the mentors don't meet formally with the boys after December, they stay in contact for at least several months, but hopefully much longer.

"We're not there to replace their parents," Slawter said. "Just someone else in their lives they can rely on." He added that he enjoyed getting to know Will's parents who were very supportive of the program.

"The idea is for these kids to know there is another caring, trusting adult they can go to one day for help with college applications, finding a job, even dating advice."

And for at least one night, they all get to shine.

"The boys say their favorite part of the program is the camp trip," Odell said. "But they always say the best day of their life is the film festival."

believes this is a great time to add a feline to the family. Help offer a cat or kitten "It's a Wonderful (2nd) Life" opportunity and take advantage of special incentives throughout December. Felines from 1-3 years of age now have their adoption fees reduced by 50 percent and those 3 years of age or older will be free. All standard application/adoption processes, rules and procedures apply. Visit www.alexandrianimals.org or call 703-746-4774.

THURSDAY/DEC. 9

Great American Energy Debate Workshop. 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. To promote energy education and awareness. 13 schools from the area will attend this student-led training workshop. At Commonwealth Academy.

Alexandria School Board. 7:30 p.m. meeting. At the School Administration Offices, Winkler Building Board Room, 2000 North Beauregard Street. Call Rosemary Webb at 703-824-6614.

Alexandria Transit Company. 5:30 p.m. Board of Directors meeting. At Sister Cities Conference Room 1101, City Hall, 301 King Street. Contact Marlene Jones at 703-746-5637.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have a notice listed, e-mail gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Call Steve Hibbard at 703-778-9412 with questions.

ONGOING

Join The Full Cup, Becky's Fund (a domestic violence organization) and other partners by participating in the Bra Call Holiday Drive. From Dec. 6-31, they will be collecting gently used or new bras that will be donated to women living in low income housing or shelters. Look for the red box at these businesses:

- ❖ The Full Cup, 218 N Lee St # 206;
- ❖ Appleseed, 115 S. Columbus Street;
- ❖ Bellacara, 1000 King Street;
- ❖ Bloomers, 924 King Street;
- ❖ Diva Consignment Boutique, 116 S. Pitt Street.

Christmas Tree Sale. The Annual Christmas Tree Sale to benefit the Alexandria Police Youth Camp is in progress. The sale will be ongoing, weeknights from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and every weekend from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., until they are sold out. The sale is held by the Amtrak Station at 110 Callahan Dr., Alexandria.

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

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False Victimization Yields Subject for First Novel

BY SENITRA MCCOMBS
GAZETTE PACKET

Current Alexandria resident and author Kathie Truitt's real life experience with false victimization provides the subject matter for her first book "False Victim." She spoke about the challenges of writing, her hobbies and what she's working on next.



Kathie Truitt

Being that it was a true story, was it challenging to write "False Victim"?

Yes, besides having to relive those events. It was also a challenge to get the time line right and condense it so that it would be interesting and entertaining. It didn't end there because once you find a publisher, you have an editor that wants to change things. Then, I had to prove that I'm the victim and that this actually happened.

In the book, you mentioned "false victimization." What is it?

False victimization is when an individual attempts to convince others that he or she is being stalked by invented claims made to gain attention.

What do you hope readers come away

with after reading the book?

That this can happen to anyone. Also if you have a gut feeling about someone or something, listen to that and act on it.

Where can people purchase the book from?

They can go to any local bookstore, amazon.com, Borders Bookstore. They can also go to my publisher's website: www.tatepublishing.com.

How has this experience changed you for better or/and worse?

There was a Kathie before and a Kathie after. I was a very caring and mushy person. I've gone from emotion full to emotion less. I don't pursue friendships anymore. Every day is a struggle to trust and trying to get back to who I was before. I would really like to be able to "feel" again.

Do you have or come from a large family?

No. It's just my mom and dad and a brother. I'm the oldest. I come from a very small town Missouri:

El Dorado Spring.

In what ways are you either similar or different from your book's main character Julie Patterson?

Julie is taller, more attractive and a former Miss Mississippi while I'm a former Mrs. Missouri America. Other than that Julie and I are one in the same.

Do you have any favorite food(s)?

My favorite thing is to eat Italian food. I love Floriana Restaurant. The food is to die for. My son-in-law brought the restaurant from his mother.

Do you have a favorite author?

Rita Mae Brown. I love her. She writes a series of books about Virginia hunt country.

How long was the writing process? When was the book released?

It took me about 10 months. The book was released Aug. 3 and I've been on the road promoting it.

Do you have a favorite movie or musical artist?

My favorite movie is "Secondhand Loins." I saw a doctor when I was going through this and her assignment to me was to see the movie "Secondhand Loins."

Where or from whom do you draw your inspiration in general?

I draw all inspiration from God, my family and my children. When I was going through this ordeal, there was a time when my fate was in no one's hands but his. My lawyer, my daddy and my husband couldn't protect me.

Are you working on anything right now?

Yes, I'm currently working on my next book titled "The Hillbilly Debutante Café," a fictitious café in my hometown and the quirky characters that hang out there.

Do you have any hobbies?

I've been an avid horsewoman since I was a child. Anything that has to do with being outdoors. I also enjoy hanging out with my family.



NEIGHBORHOOD

Old Town

WHAT HAPPENED OR WHAT'S HAPPENING?

'Townners, I tried to get away from the office for about 10 minutes or so as Fall approached, but it didn't work!

I did sneak out for awhile last month, only to return and find all sorts of things happening in my Old Town — some OK and some, well, judge for yourself.

We told you months ago that a plan was afoot to make Market Square a sort of rolling food cart — or food carts. Eight are planned in a pilot program set for next spring. The jewel that is Market Square may never be the same. I've written before that the idea of food carts running amok on Market Square terrifies me. Am I alone in fearing our wonderful Square might be made into something like a fast-food restaurant in front of our elegant and historic City Hall? Bad or good? We report, you decide.

We also told you some time back that the former Olsson's Bookstore on S. Union Street soon will morph into a full-fledged restaurant with both indoor and outdoor dining — the latter to be built out over Wales Alley, which would be bricked over. Plans are moving right along on this project, described by one of its owners as "a gastro tavern." Quite a change from the old days at Olsson's.

The developers, highly-respected locals who already operate the Majestic Restaurant, Eamon's, PX and the award-winning Restaurant Eve, say the

8,000-square foot space will accommodate a total of 350 diners inside and out. Still another eaterie in the heart of Old Town. Bad or good? We report, you decide.

In case you haven't yet noticed, downtown meter parking costs have had a wild ride over recent months — spiking this summer 75 percent. The outcry by merchants, shoppers and others was immediate and loud. Council, obviously fearing an uprising and possibly being sued by shoppers who suffered hernias from hauling around bags of quarters to feed meters, in its eternal wisdom agreed recently to lower the rates to \$1 an hour — at least until next spring. The roller-coast ride over parking costs in Old Town probably didn't have to happen. Bad or good? We report. You decide.

AND THEN CAME recently the arrival of the Glass Stache. "Welcome to Old Town's newest smoke shop," wrote Michael Lee Pope of this newspaper. Glass Stache is a new business establishment that quietly opened last month at the corner of N. Lee and Queen and sells a variety of glass pipes and other paraphernalia that its owners insist are for smoking tobacco. The new establishment joins a sex shop a few blocks away called Le Tache. When asked about the new shop recently, our Mayor said, "I don't mind, if it's legal." Wow! But I must remember that, good or bad, we report. You decide.

The future of the iconic Torpedo Factory also continued to be debated as the summer wore down.

The alarm that some of the Factory's artists have had over possibly losing their role in the management of this destination may have been soothed by some creative legislating by Councilman Ron Krupicka in concert with Factory icon Marian Van Landingham by agreeing to a new board makeup of 13, with seven being artists.

The Torpedo Factory still may end up in the hands of the bean-counters who see it as a cash cow that should be milked by the city as a revenue-raiser first and an arts center second.

Finally, as I wrote this column the other day my latest Gazette Packet arrived with the news that the heavy-duty retailers, Artcrafters, centrally located at the corner of King Street and S. Lee Street, is closing its doors at the end of the year. The company will operate exclusively out of a location at National Harbor across the river. The owners told the Gazette Packet that it was increasingly difficult to operate in the current Alexandria business climate, an unfriendly City Hall, taxes and other expenses and National Harbor is a place which is far less expensive to run a business.

This view seems to be heard more and more in Old Town — merchants complaining about dealing with City Hall and its stringent rules and regulations.

I'll be writing more about this issue in the new year. But for today, good or bad, we report. You decide.

— BOB FELDKAMP

RECREATION

Music Fills Lee Center

BY MCKENYA
DILWORTH-ABDALLA
ACTING CENTER DIRECTOR
NANNIE J. LEE MEMORIAL
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The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities' ACCT (Alexandria City Community Theatre) had its last performance of the season, Celebrations Around The Globe, Saturday, Dec. 4, at the Richard Kauffman Auditorium at the Lee Center. The show is the only annual event of the ACCT season and features celebrations of cultures of the world. Within our neighborhood recreation centers, we have a number of countries represented and they were on display this past Saturday. The countries and Islands were Angola, Sierra Leone, India, Ethiopia, St. Croix, Jamaica, Denmark, Senegal, El Salvador, Peru, Honduras, Egypt, Ghana, Jamaica and, last but not least, the United States of America. The children presented themselves and their countries to an encouraging crowd of parents and community supporters with the song, "We Are The World," playing in the background.

Bill Emerson, Dudley Connell and Dede Wyland headline 10 bluegrass acts in "A Tribute to Hazel Dickens" at 8 p.m. Friday, Dec. 10, at the Kauffman auditorium Lee Center in Alexandria

music.org or by calling 240-582-6193. This show is to honor Hazel Dickens, 75, the legendary bluegrass and old-time musician, who also will grace the stage. ACCT ensemble members are performing as a part of the program to inaugurate the partnership between ACCT and Hungry for Music. Hungry for Music supplies the musical instruments for the musical programming of the arts initiative entitled MUSE (Music Unites Students Everywhere).

Dunlo Art is an arts class for seniors that meets at Nannie J. Lee every Tuesday from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. under the tutelage of Rhoda Seligmann. Their Winter Art Exhibit opened Dec. 2 at the gallery space in Nannie J. Lee. The exhibit is scheduled to be up until March 1, 2011. The artists that are featured are: Rhoda Seligmann, Barbara Stickell, Griffin, Frankie B., Nu Mokharti, Valerie Ziegler-Grande and Parvanch Limbert.

For more info about happenings in the recreation centers and/or about ACCT future performances call me at 703-746-5533.

Titans Show Promise in Season-Opening Victory

TC, Wakefield represent historically black schools with throwback jerseys.

BY JON ROETMAN
GAZETTE PACKET

The T.C. Williams boys basketball team entered Saturday's season opener against Wakefield eager to make a name for itself. The Titans wanted to disprove any notion of dependence on the success of past TC teams for notoriety.

When the game was over, the scoreboard said this new group of Titans can play. Wakefield head coach Tony Bentley, however, said the Titans intimidated the Warriors like TC teams of the past.

TC defeated Wakefield 63-40 on Oct. 4 during the Parker-Gray game at T.C. Williams High School. The teams wore throwback jerseys with names of former players on the back to honor historically black schools in Alexandria and Arlington. TC represented the Parker-Gray Bulldogs with uniforms similar to those worn by the New York Nets of the 1970s. Wakefield represented the Hoffman-Boston Trojans with a jersey style similar to the Atlanta Hawks of the early 1970s. Bentley helped design the jerseys.

"It was a good experience to wear their jerseys," said TC senior Tyrell Sitton, who represented Parker-Gray graduate Earl Lloyd, the first African-American to play in the NBA. "It was special."

Each school offered VIP seating in the lower sections of the bleachers and several former coaches were recognized.

"The atmosphere was wonderful," Bentley said.

While the atmosphere was exciting, the outcome was encouraging for the Titans. TC scored the game's first 11 points, holding Wakefield scoreless for the first 4 minutes, 32 seconds of the opening quarter. The Titans led 20-8 after the first and 39-16 at halftime.

"My kids played very scared tonight," Bentley said. "I think it went back to the old T.C. Williams, where kids were afraid to play against TC and my kids fell into that



T.C. Williams junior Jordan Byrd scored seven points during the Titans' win over Wakefield on Oct. 4.

trap. They played scared tonight and you can't coach a scared team — no x's and o's are going to help kids that are scared."

TC pulled away an 11-0 run in the third quarter. T.J. Huggins capped the run with a putback, giving the Titans a 52-19 lead. Huggins led TC with 15 points. Sitton scored 10 points for the Titans, and Jordan Byrd, Rick Mathews and Donte Adams each had seven.

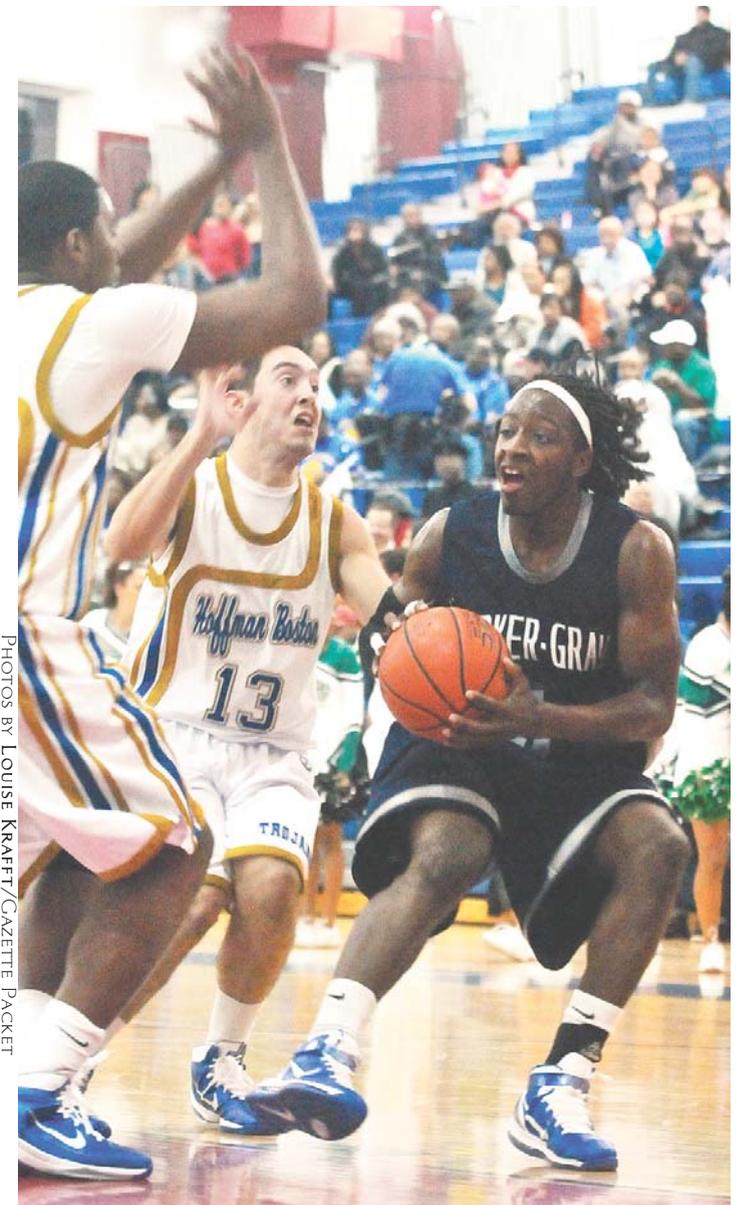
It was the "first time I ever came in at halftime," TC head coach Julian King said, "and didn't have anything to yell about. ... Everybody's thinking about the past success

It was the "first time I ever came in at halftime and didn't have anything to yell about."

— T.C. Williams head boys basketball coach Julian King

of get that you're riding off the coat tails of another team. Those guys came out and made a statement that they're going to play hard and just as intense as the other teams that we've had."

TC won three consecutive Northern Region championships from 2007-09 and captured the AAA state crown in 2008. Last



T.C. Williams senior Tyrell Sitton, wearing a Parker-Gray throwback jersey representing Earl Lloyd, scored 10 points against Wakefield on Oct. 4.

we've had [and] we had some explosive athletes. This group is new and you kind

year, the Titans failed to reach the regional tournament, losing in the first round of the Patriot District tournament. The season was marred by ineligible players and forfeits. King said the Titans have put last season's mishaps behind them and are ready for success during the 2010-11 campaign.

They're off to a good start. "We're not playing any games this year," Kerman said. "We're all about business."

TC travels to face West Springfield at 7:45 p.m. on Dec. 10.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Senior Whitmire Commits to UVA

Three weeks ago, T.C. Williams senior Jay Whitmire, a three-sport athlete and one of the state's top offensive tackles, took a recruiting visit to Notre Dame. Shortly after, he canceled a visit to the University of North Carolina because it coincided with a basketball scrimmage.

Busy juggling school and basketball with trying to decide his football future,

Whitmire wanted to make a decision soon. On Nov. 28, he chose somewhere closer to home.

Whitmire committed to play football at the University of Virginia. The family sent an e-mail announcement on Dec. 1. The senior, who sat out of Saturday's win over Wakefield with a leg injury but is expected to play Friday against West Springfield, said being close to home was more of a bonus than a primary factor in the decision.

"I wanted to get it over with before basketball started," he said. "I knew I wouldn't

have time to make visits. UVA was the best choice for me. [Head] coach [Mike] London and the whole staff [were a factor in the decision] and it's close to home and it's a great university."

Whitmire said Virginia is interested in him as an offensive tackle, though there was talk of him possibly playing defensive tackle or tight end. Whitmire said he will likely redshirt in the fall.

Virginia finished 4-8 in 2010, closing the season with four straight losses after upsetting Miami on Oct. 30.

Ireton Girls Beat SSSAS in Tourney Final

The Bishop Ireton girls basketball team defeated St. Stephen's & St. Agnes 58-47 on Dec. 4 in the championship game of the SSSAS tipoff tournament. The Cardinals improved to 2-0, including a

SEE SPORTS BRIEFS, PAGE 36



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SPORTS



**T.C. Williams
lineman Jay
Whitmire,
right, committed
to play
football at the
University of
Virginia.**

PHOTO BY
LOUISE KRAFFT/
GAZETTE PACKET

SPORTS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 35

92-11 win over Montrose Christian the day before.

Junior guard Reeme Lghzaoui earned tournament MVP honors. Laura Hart was also named to the all-tournament team, along with SSSAS athletes Catherine Doulis and Lauren Mizzell.

Ireton will travel to face Coolidge on Dec. 10. SSSAS will travel to face Flint Hill on Dec. 9.

TC Girls Start 2-1

The T.C. Williams girls basketball team lost its sea-

son opener to Stone Ridge on Dec. 3, 47-44, but bounced back with victories over South Lakes and Hayfield to start 2-1. The Lady Titans defeated South Lakes 56-47 on Dec. 4 and Hayfield 60-49 on Dec. 7. T.C. Williams will play its first home game at 7:45 p.m. on Dec. 10 against West Springfield.

Episcopal Boys 3-0

The Episcopal boys basketball team is off to a 3-0 start with wins over Pennsylvania schools Haverford and Germantown Academy and fellow Alexandria school Bishop Ireton. The Maroon will take part in the Life & Breath Foundation Tip Off Classic at Wakefield School on Dec. 10-11.

SCHOOL NOTES

Send announcements to the Alexandria Gazette Packet, 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.

Several Alexandria students participated in this year's Healthy Kids Fun Run event at the Pentagon on Oct. 30. George Mason was among five local schools to receive the Healthy School Award which awards a donation for P.E. equipment to the schools with the most student participation. The event provides young people with the opportunity to participate in healthy activity by running in the one-mile fun run with other students in our area. Fun Runners are also able to visit tents and stations promoting healthy living and fitness activities. What a great way to motivate students to stay in shape while also having fun!

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities is hosting an Invitational Cheerleading Competition on Saturday, Dec. 11 at 11 a.m., at T.C. Williams High School, 3330 King St., Alexandria. The competition features cheerleading teams from Charles Barrett, Charles Houston, Cora Kelly, Mount Vernon, Nannie J. Lee, Patrick Henry and William Ramsay Recreation Centers, as well as teams from around the metro DC area.

Trinity Wilson of Alexandria, a junior at the University of North Carolina, has been selected to serve as a Federal Service Student Ambassador for the 2010-11 academic year. The Ambassadors program enlists students to promote public service on college and university campuses, nation-wide. Forty-seven students representing 40 schools were selected from more than 150 applicants.

As an Ambassador, Wilson will serve as an on-campus resource for federal job and internship information, providing "insider" tips on where to find and how to land coveted federal jobs. Responsibilities range from conducting presentations and workshops to collaborating with campus career services representatives.

To be eligible for the program, students had to complete a federal government internship. This year's Ambassadors had internships at agencies ranging from the Peace Corps to the CIA to Department of the Treasury.

Annela Levitov of Alexandria graduated magna cum laude from Gettysburg College with a bachelor's degree on May 16, 2010. **Erin Cushing** of Alexandria graduated cum laude from Gettysburg College with a bachelor's degree on May 16, 2010.

Emmanuel College of Alexandria recently held its 88th Commencement exercises on Saturday, May 8. During

the ceremony, nearly 600 bachelor's and master's candidates were awarded degrees including **Brenna Reilly** of Alexandria graduated with a degree in political science.

Caitlin Patricia Crowe of Alexandria graduated with a psychology degree from Mary Baldwin College on May 23. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Crowe of Alexandria.

Abigail Wolk Grenadier of Alexandria was named to the dean's list at the University of Mississippi for the Spring 2010 semester.

Patrick Higgins of Alexandria is one of the semifinalists eligible to compete in the 2010 Virginia Geographic Bee, sponsored by Google and Plum Creek. Patrick is the son of Bill and Sarah Higgins of Alexandria and attends Browne Academy.

W Wesley Pasfield of Alexandria has graduated from Boston College with a Bachelor of Science degree from the University's Wallace E. Carroll School of Management with majors in finance and marketing.

Caitlin Jane Rattigan of Alexandria earned a Bachelor of Arts from Mercer University's College of Liberal Arts on May 15 during the commencement for the University's Macon campus.

Reimagining the Waterfront

FROM PAGE 1

ners have a vision for what's left, and they are about to unveil a draft master plan that could serve as a model for a generation or more. At the center of the small-area plan is a 200-foot pier that will anchor the city's central business district with a new public pavilion replacing the parking lot of the Old Dominion Boat Club.

"The King Street pier is the soul of the plan," said Alexandria Planning Director Faroll Hamer. "This is intended to be a great public space."

A watercolor painting explains the concept in broad strokes, although Hamer warns that the marina configuration shown in the image will be rearranged in the document unveiled next week. After hearing concerns from the community about the jumbled nature of pleasure boats and commercial vessels, city planners went back to the drawing board to cluster uses together. Hamer says the draft small-area plan she will present at the community meeting at the United Way's waterfront headquarters Monday will create a cleaner distinction between the two realms.

"The earlier version of the plan was too mixed up," Hamer said. "You'll see the

newer version of the plan clusters the activities together so they are not all jumbled together."

AT THE FOOT of King Street, according to the vision outlined in the plan, is a new open-air market and pavilion. Planners envision a time when the promenade could be rented for weddings, parties or meetings, potentially creating a new source of revenue for city coffers. The drawing shows the new public-activities building at a spot currently occupied by a fenced-in parking lot owned

"Right now, it's hard to find the center of the waterfront. We're hoping that the plan we present next week will change that."

— Planning Director Faroll Hamer

by the Old Dominion Boat Club, a slice of land that's at the center of a longstanding legal dispute between the city of Alexandria and the federal government.

"The title dispute deals with the redevel-

A new 200-foot pier at the foot of King Street will be the centerpiece of the vision city planners will unveil next week.

opment of the waterfront," according to a 1978 waterfront plan tucked away in the city's archives. "The suit brought by the federal government against the private landowners and the city was filed at the request of conservationists. They have argued that the area should be turned into a national park."

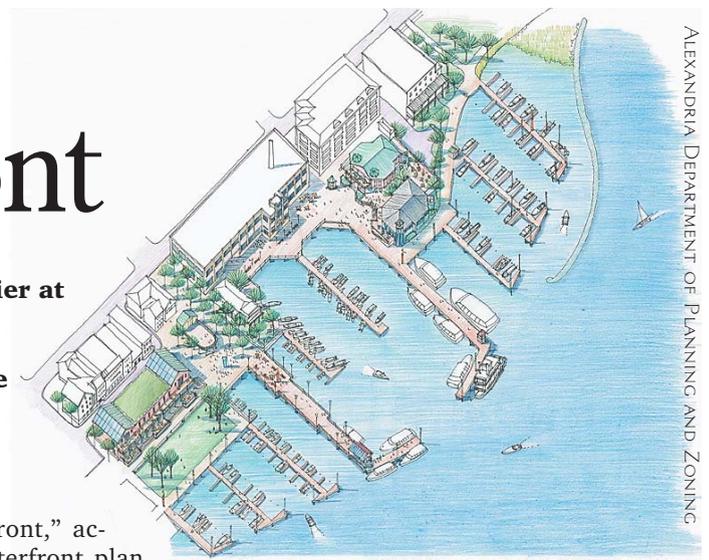
That never happened, although the National Park Service does have flanking sites at the northern edge and southern tip of the city. Instead, the waterfront remains a disjointed collection of various land uses. Part of it remains industrial, with twin Robinson Terminal operating deepwater ports at historic wharf locations north and south. The draft plan is expected to identify both Robinson Terminal sites as prime candidates for redevelopment, a development that is expected to take place in the near future.

"There's going to be redevelopment at these sites with or without a plan," said Old

Town Civic Association President John Gosling. "Having a plan creates a degree of certainty, and some would argue that it might even trigger investment."

THE TWIN Robinson Terminal sites are part of the canvas that city planners have used to paint a vision of the future in which pedestrians have continuous access along the waterfront. That's been a central theme of waterfront planning documents for decades, but Hamer says the time has finally arrived for Alexandria to enter the post-industrial era by finding a new use for these sites. The concept plan released earlier this year calls for "land uses that are active and welcoming to the public, such as a hotel." Former Vice Mayor Andrew Macdonald has

SEE NEW KING STREET PIER, PAGE 38



ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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New King Street Pier Anchors Planners' Vision

FROM PAGE 37

argued that this would be a mistake. "Adding hotels and restaurants essentially privatizes the waterfront," said Macdonald. "I think Robinson North could be a maritime museum and Robinson South become open space."

Another potential stumbling block is an area known as Waterfront Park, just south of the Old Dominion Boat Club's parking lot. Hamer says the plan released next week will have several options for this site, including the one outlined in the concept plan that will encroach into the western edge of the park with new development. The new building would serve as a parking lot for the Boat Club and could include one or more restaurants with a view of Waterfront Park and the river.

"I'm appalled," said Pat Troy, who has long argued that the park be named in honor of Alexandria founding father John Fitzgerald. "They are using the dispute with the Old Dominion Boat Club as a ploy to take the park away, and I think that's a terrible idea."

WATERFRONT PLANNING is nothing new. Efforts to shape and reshape the city's shoreline date back to the founding of the city in 1749. In the early days, Alexandria's port was one of the most active in North America for tobacco. By 1770, wheat bound for the tropics became the major shipping commodity. By the dawn of the 19th century, mills began grinding flour and bakeries produced bread and crackers for sailors along the waterfront. Scottish merchants represented large firms in London and Glasgow. But then the waterfront began a long and slow decline.

"What was once a busy port, a trading post to the world, has, like Rip Van Winkle, let time and events pass it by," wrote city planners in a 1950s-era waterfront planning document.

Yellow fever epidemics diminished the

"Adding hotels and restaurants essentially privatizes the waterfront."

— Andrew Macdonald

population, and the War of 1812 brought an embargo on shipping and the British plundered the city. Then Alexandria became a major center for slave trading in the 1830s and 1840s, which created a chilling effect for population growth. Baltimore took over Alexandria's wheat trade, and the flour mills shut their doors. After the Civil War, the city's port remained relatively insignificant while other cities in the New South prospered while Alexandria's waterfront became

dominated by lumber yards, oil depots and fertilizer manufacturing.

"Today, the original function of Alexandria — a transfer point between land and water transportation — is a very small factor in the city's economic life," according to a 1970s-era waterfront planning document. "The waterfront is no longer a focal point it was in times past, either economically or socially."

BUT MUCH HAS changed in the last three decades. An old Ford plant was transformed into high-end townhouses. And many of the old industrial uses have been supplanted by parks, marinas, shopping and art centers. It's the last remaining pieces of the puzzle that the waterfront plan released next week will take aim at, reshaping the

Robinson South

The current industrial use includes a warehouse and a very large pier with deepwater access, although redevelopment has been planned for several decades. Current plans call for land uses here that are "active and welcoming to the public, such as a hotel."

New Building

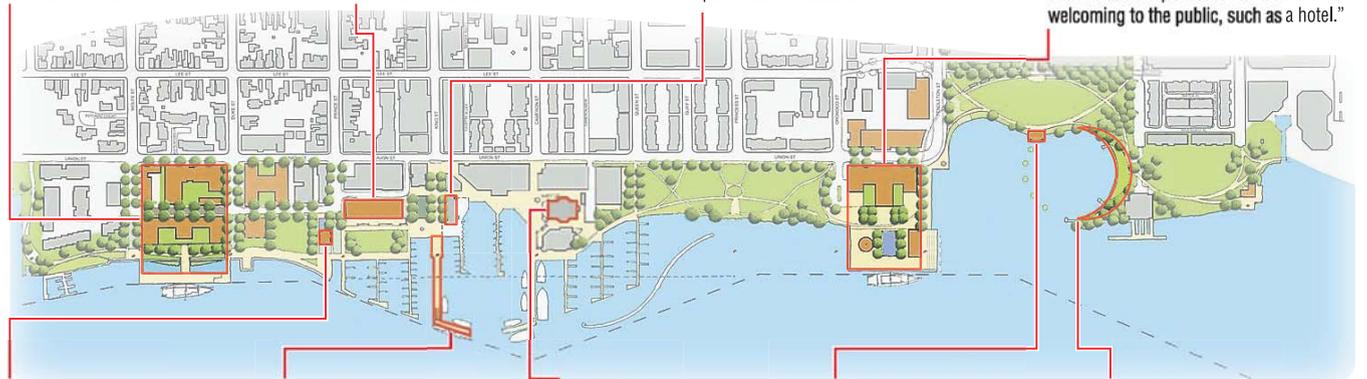
Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the concept plan is the proposal to approve a new building at the west end of Waterfront Park. The building would include parking for the Old Dominion Boat Club as well as restaurants with a view of Waterfront Park and the river.

Old Dominion Boat Club

At the center of the waterfront plan is this building, which was moved from its original location at the foot of Prince Street in 1923. A legal dispute dating back to the early 1970s would need to be resolved before plans for the centerpiece King Street pier could be realized.

Robinson North

Like Robinson South, the property located here is one of the last remaining industrial uses along the waterfront. It includes warehouses and a very large pier with deepwater access. Redevelopment of the site has been planned for several decades, and the current plan calls for "active and welcoming to the public, such as a hotel."



Beachcomber

The old restaurant building had a wraparound porch and was well known in its day. The building later became a gun shop known as Potomac Arms, which closed several years ago when the property was purchased by the city. Some would like to see the building restored, others would prefer the structure be demolished to open up the view of the river.

King Street Pier

The centerpiece of the waterfront plan is a "world-class pier" at the foot of King Street, which would extend about 200 feet into the river. A new open-air market and public activities building would replace the Old Dominion Club's current parking lot on a promenade leading toward the pier, which would host the water taxi and other "high frequency activities."

Food Court

City planners have concluded that the Food Court "doesn't draw sufficient customers to be successful. The leaseholder has expressed interest in redeveloping the Food Court into two restaurants."

Oronoco Bay Park Stage

Planners call for a "large shade structure at water's edge to provide an overlook picnic shelter or stage. The structure would become the focal point of the park and should be a significant work of garden architecture."

Curved Boardwalk

City planners have concluded that the existing curved boardwalk needs to be replaced by one that "better handles tide changes (perhaps a floating structure) and possibly extending the boardwalk to maximize views."

GRAPHIC BY LAURENCE FOONG/
GAZETTE PACKET
SOURCE: ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND ZONING

Waterfront Consultants

- ❖ \$280,000 to **AECOM** (previously EDAP) to provide design expertise and graphics for public space flood mitigation.
 - ❖ \$102,000 to **Moffatt and Nichol Engineers** for marina and shoreline condition assessment, marina-related concept design, engineering, permitting and cost estimates and a marina marketing assessment.
 - ❖ \$72,000 to **Economics Research Associates** (now AECOM Technology Corporation) for market analysis of retail and restaurant demand and recommendations on financing and phasing implementation.
 - ❖ \$24,000 to **AECOM-Transportation** for a traffic analysis at key intersections and mitigation recommendations for general circulation.
- Total: \$478,000

SOURCE: Department of Planning and Zoning

current assemblage into a continuous public realm of pedestrian connectivity.

"Right now, it's hard to find the center of the waterfront," said Hamer. "We're hoping that the plan we present next week will change that."

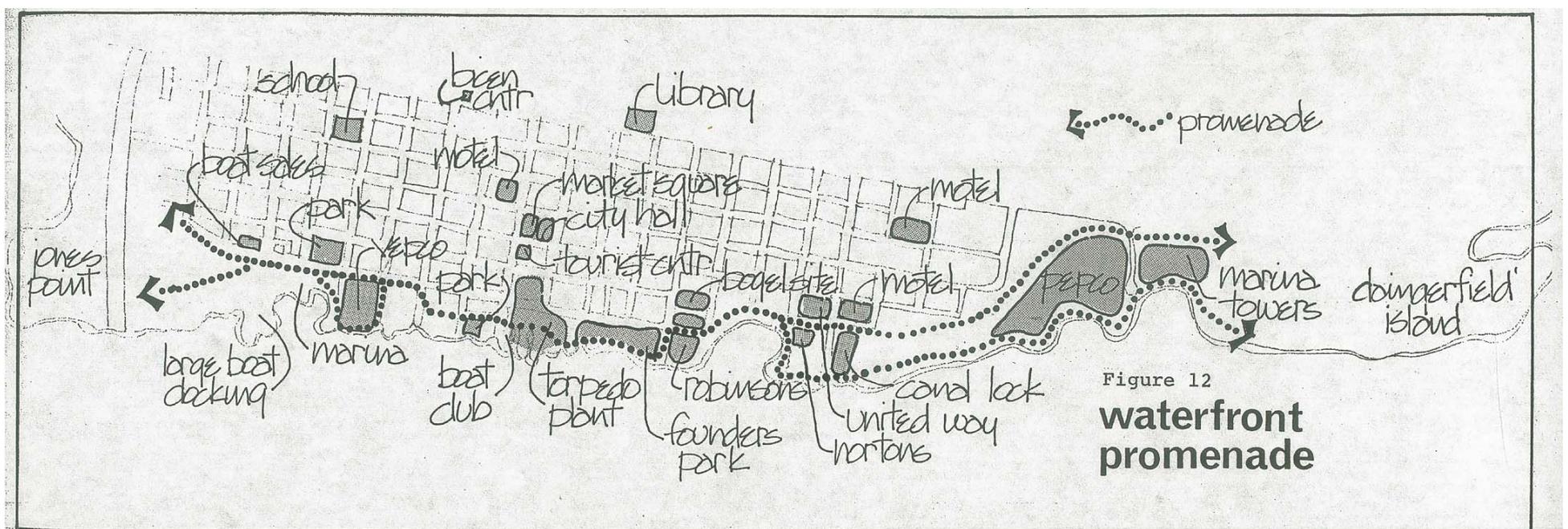


Figure 12
waterfront promenade

ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

A planning document from 1978 shows some areas have changed while others have not.

Nancy Dunning was my friend. Thirty years ago, she envisioned Del Ray as a community full of active citizens, thriving businesses and excellent schools. Not only did she work tirelessly over the years to help create this community, but she inspired many of us to join in her effort. For those of you who did not know Nancy, read this beautiful tribute written by her daughter, Elizabeth. For those of you who did, join me in remembering her contribution to Del Ray and Alexandria.

—Jack Taylor, Alexandria Toyota



*Nancy
Dunning*

The Best Mom In The World

A Eulogy for Nancy Dunning written and read by her daughter, Liz

A lot of people, I think, have moments when they imagine that they have the best mom in the world. I was lucky enough, however, to be absolutely certain – for a long time – that I actually did. My mom was my best friend. We talked just about every day. And, anyone who knows her, knows a couple of things about my mom, one of which was that she was more or less always right. When I was a teenager, that pissed me off sometimes. I mean, seriously, when you're sixteen and supposed to be going through that phase where you know everything, it puts a crimp in it to live with someone who actually does.

But, another thing that you must know if you met my mom was that she wasn't smug about her omnipotence. Like any good superhero, my mom used her powers for good, not evil. To make other people – not just herself – feel good and be better. She taught my brother and I how to do that, too. I hope we were paying attention. I'm pretty sure we were.

My mom also taught me just about everything I know about optimism and joy. Those were things at which she excelled. It started, when my brother and I were kids, with crazy names for things. I bet that you thought that playground on Old Dominion was just the Beverly Hills Co-op. Nope. It was the Super Deluxe Playground. And, back when the Mt. Vernon school playground was that log-thing which is probably now illegal in most states, a trip to the Super Deluxe Playground was an adventure indeed. Every day was an adventure. Whether we were sneaking food into movies when I was younger, or she was singing hilariously bad opera while she made breakfast, my mom made clear that every day had something good in it, something to be happy about. Even if it was just that they'd just started selling Christmas Blend at Starbucks. These small events and details weren't small – they were big. They warranted a phone call. So did a great song on the radio. So did anything that made her smile. These were great calls to receive. Random, sometimes, but great. I mean, who doesn't want to know that she busted the person next to her at the last traffic light picking their nose in the car? Who didn't want to hear her joyful voice, her laugh? She loved to laugh and there isn't a better feeling than making my mom laugh. Because, if you really got her going – and there are lots of ways to do this – she'd just get to that level where she's crying because she's laughing so hard. That's when you know that you've really won. Bonus points are given if you do that while one of you is driving.

Her gift with joy, with optimism, gave her part of her gift with people. She had, what I jokingly called, her secret decoder ring. That was our short-hand – and there is always short-hand – for her ability to listen, really listen, to people when they talk. And, more than that, to understand what they're really saying and, who they are and where they're coming from. That's why she wasn't just people's neighbor, or real estate agent, or neighborhood activist, or columnist, she was their friend. It didn't take much to be my mom's friend. She didn't make you jump a lot of hoops. Or wear overalls and a baseball cap with the same aplomb that she did. (And thank god, because really? Who can pull off overalls and a baseball cap like my Mom? Nobody.) She wanted to learn more about people and know more people. So she lit people up when she talked to them.

And, as a consequence, people mostly did what my Mom wanted them to do, or what she asked of them. Because her ideas were smart. They were filled with the energy and the joy that she carried with her all the time. And they reflected an understanding and awareness of the thoughts and values of everyone involved. So, if you did what she wanted you to do, you were also doing the right thing.

But, mostly, she wasn't a superhero – complete with secret decoder ring – to me. She was my Mom. She was better at that than anything else. She told my brother, and me, and my Dad that she loved us at the end of every phone conversation. That's what our family does. And so, individually, knowing that the last words we said to each other were, "I love you," helps.

There wasn't a day of my life – and there won't be one – when I wasn't sure that my mom loved me, that she believed in me, that she was proud of me. And with or without a secret decoder ring, a cape, or a phone booth to change in, it truly takes a superhero to, in this crazy messed up world, love people so well and so much. So perfectly. It takes all that to be what I have – the best mom in the world.

On December 5, 2003, Nancy Dunning was murdered in her home in Alexandria, VA. Nancy's family, friends and co-workers have not forgotten her and celebrate her life daily.

We will not give up and believe that the person who murdered her will be caught and prosecuted.

A \$100,000 reward available for the individual who comes forth with information leading to the arrest and conviction of this murderer.

If you have any information, we urge you to please call the Alexandria Criminal Investigations Section at 703-838-4711 or e-mail them at <http://alexandriava.gov/dunning>.



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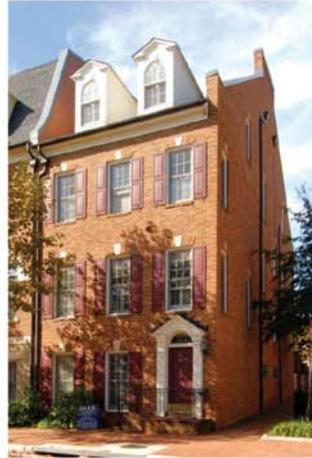
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