

It's Done, Sort of Waterfront plan passes on 5-to-2 vote; opponents vow to overturn.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

After hearing more than eight hours of heated testimony for and against a controversial plan to allow hotels and increase density at three sites on the waterfront, Alexandria City Council members cast a party line vote on the planning document. All five of the Democrats supported the measure, and both Republicans voted against it. The 5-to-2 vote is one vote shy of a supermajority, which means that opponents may be able to overturn the decision if they can persuade a Circuit Court judge of their case.

"We could vote this plan up or



Councilmember Paul Smedberg confers with City Attorney James L. Banks Jr.



Councilmember Del Pepper questions members of the city planning office on the size and number of proposed new waterfront hotels.



Signs and buttons responding to the proposed Waterfront Plan are visible throughout council chambers.

down. But you know what? We have to move on," said Mayor Bill Euille shortly before the vote. "We've got to make a decision. We were hired to make a decision, and by golly I want us to make a decision. Whether it's right or wrong, we just have to move on."

Before Saturday's vote, four members were in favor of the plan and two members were opposed. That left Councilwoman Del Pepper as the wild card, and she used her undecided status Saturday night to broker a last minute compromise. When asked by a reporter earlier this month what kind of

Increased Density

Site	Existing Development	1992 Zoning	2012 Zoning
Robinson Terminal North	91,814	195,296	238,816
Robinson Terminal South	139,141	327,393	380,529
Cummings-Turner Property	70,732	124,760	187,140
Total	301,687	647,449	806,485

Source: Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning

amendments she would like to see to the plan, the longtime councilwoman said it was "none of your business." Apparently her plan would not be part of the public record until late Saturday night, when she finally outlined a pro-

posal at the last possible minute after the public hearing had closed. Instead of allowing three hotels with 450 rooms, Pepper suggested that the plan allow two hotels at 300 rooms.

"There certainly is an objection

that we have heard for a long time and very strongly, a concern about having hotels on the waterfront," said Pepper as she outlined her proposal Saturday night. "And I felt that this was one way of limiting them."

Opponents of the plan dismissed the change, rejecting any suggestion that the change improved the proposal. Although many opponents of the proposal were uncomfortable with overturning the longstanding ban on hotels along the waterfront, most of the angst was the part of the plan that al-

SEE WATERFRONT, PAGE 6

City Students: No. 1 in Poverty

Superintendent proposes \$236 million budget; more students eligible for free and reduced price meals.

BY MAYA HOROWITZ
GAZETTE PACKET

Superintendent of Schools Morton Sherman unveiled his FY2013 budget on Thursday, Jan. 19, describing his plan as "about the best budget we could have come up with. It is the coalescing of the work we've done over the past four years."

The proposed operating budget represents a 2.4 percent increase from the FY2012 approved operating budget, putting it at \$215,691,137. The proposed combined funds budget is a 1.8 percent increase from FY2012, at \$236,331,598.

Requested city appropriation totals \$180.3 million or 3.2 percent above FY2012.

The grants and special projects budget is \$13.7 million, decreasing 8.4 percent compared to FY2012 as a result of the expiration of the Ameri-

can Reinvestment and Recovery Act funding.

City appropriation per student has fallen slightly from \$17,840 in FY2012 to \$17,505 in FY2013 (or 1.9 percent), with student enrollment increasing over 3 percent.

The superintendent said that the local school system has the most diverse student population and the highest number of students eligible for free and reduced price meals (56 percent in FY2012) in Northern Virginia. In light of this, the FY2013 school nutrition budget is \$6.9 million, 6.2 percent more than FY2012.

At 3,178 students, the English Language Learning population has leveled out after several years of growth. The budget allocates 4.5 percent or \$9.8 million to these ELL students.

The special education population has decreased by 260 students in the past four years to 1,478

SEE MORE BUDGET, PAGE 7

West End Worries

Beauregard small-area plan raises concerns about displacing poor residents.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Like the street that bears his name, Confederate Gen. Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard was difficult to manage. The hothead rebel couldn't get along with Confederate President Jefferson Davis, and now his

onymous small area plan here in Alexandria could spark a few skirmishes in the city's western theater. At the center of the debate is the future of thousands of low-income residents who live in a series of garden apartments slated for demolition.

"These people are going to be

SEE WEST END, PAGE 3

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Thank You for Not Smoking

Smoking is still legal in Alexandria, but it's increasingly discouraged.

This week, the City Council voted to authorize more than \$2,000 for the second phase of a program to install signs encouraging people not to smoke. The first phase of the program was approved back in May, when council authorized signs discouraging smoking in all city playgrounds. Now signs are being prepared for 122 bus shelters and 86 city parks. About 25 people in bright yellow shirts attended Tuesday night's meeting to provide a vivid reminder to the elected leaders of support for the program.

"The less smoking the better," said **Jim Kirkland**, a retired Alexandria resident who was wearing one of the yellow shirts Tuesday night. "So I think the signs are a great idea."

More than 100 signs will be placed in 86 city parks at a cost of \$2,000. In addition to that, eight signs will be placed in playgrounds with second entrances at a cost of \$144. According to a September 2011 survey of playground users, 91 percent of respondents said they like the signs, 5 percent said they had no opinion and only 4 percent said they don't like the signs. Republican Councilman **Frank Fannon** found himself in the minority Tuesday night, casting the lone dissenting vote.

"It's still legal to smoke in the parks," said Fannon. "And so I have a concern that we were trying to regulate something that was legal."

Valentine Cards

It's that time of year again. Love is in the air, and property tax assessments are in the mail. This year, the valentine cards are a little earlier. And, according to a recent report of the real-property assessments, the love is a little stronger.

Since the last Valentine's Day, Alexandria's overall real-property tax base increased 3.53 percent or \$1.15 billion from \$32.63 billion in 2011 to \$33.8 billion in 2012. The average assessed value for an existing residential property increased 1.15 percent from \$453,210 to \$458,422. No one has lost much love for the coal-fired power plant that will close this year, but the closure will reduce the effective increase to about 3.37 percent.

Wasteful Spending

The Alexandria City Council is wasting your money again, but this time it means you may end up paying less. This week, council members approved a new waste disposal and service agreement with Arlington County and Covanta through 2019 that is expected to lower annual solid waste bills. The rate is currently calculated at \$84 per ton, and the new fee would be \$42 per ton. Beginning in 2025, the fee would be \$0.

"That avails dollars for some interesting environmental improvements to the plant," said **Rich Baier**, director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. "That would allow us do some interesting work with nitrous oxide or whatever environmental works the council would deem appropriate at that time."

Back in 1984, Alexandria and Arlington entered into an agreement with the Alexandria Sanitation Authority and the Arlington Solid Waste Authority to create the Arlington/Alexandria Resource Recovery Corporation, which built a facility on Eisenhower Avenue. Since it opened, that facility has been operated by Covanta, one of the world's largest waste-to-energy companies. A report issued this month shows that the environmental performance at the plant is 99 percent below the limit for lead, 95 percent below the limit for particulate matter and 91 percent below the limit for dioxin.

"To achieve this kind of performance is pretty remarkable," said Vice Mayor **Kerry Donley**. "At the same time, we're producing electricity reducing our reliance on coal."

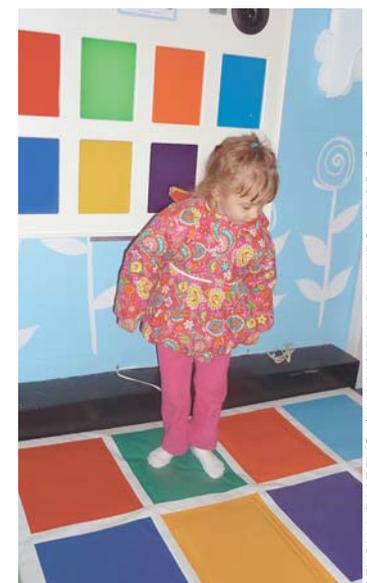
The new agreement allows Alexandria and Arlington to deliver somewhere between 50,000 and 70,000 tons of trash annually. The two jurisdictions would no longer need to subsidize the deliver of other waste generated in Alexandria and Arlington to the plant.

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS



Realtor and long-time Kelley Cares supporter Jen Walker, right, joins members of the Swanson family at City Hall for a photo prior to the Jan. 21 unveiling of the Multi-Sensory Mobile.



Taryn MacMahon, 4, explores the new Multi-Sensory Mobile.

PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

The Kelley Cares Mobile

Multi-Sensory room takes to the road.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The Kelley Cares Foundation unveiled its latest and largest project to date with a ribbon-cutting ceremony Jan. 21 at City Hall to officially open the Kelley Cares Multi-Sensory Mobile.

"The Multi-Sensory Room at the Lee Center is being used six days a week so we knew there was a need," said Lindsey Swanson, sister of Kelley Swanson, for whom the charity is named. "We're very excited about this and hope we are honoring Kelley in a very special way."

The 30-foot multi-sensory room on wheels is outfitted with several multi-sensory stations and will travel throughout the city to provide an opportunity

for special needs adults and children to explore various sensory activities. The Therapeutic Recreation Program as well as the Alexandria City Public School System will utilize the vehicle.

"As a caring community, we reach out when we can and how we can to make this an inclusive community for all our residents," said Mayor Bill Euille. "Thank you, thank you, thank you to Kelley Cares, the Swanson family and all the volunteers for continuing to give back so much."

Following formal remarks, attendees were able to participate in a hands-on walk through of the Multi-Sensory mobile.

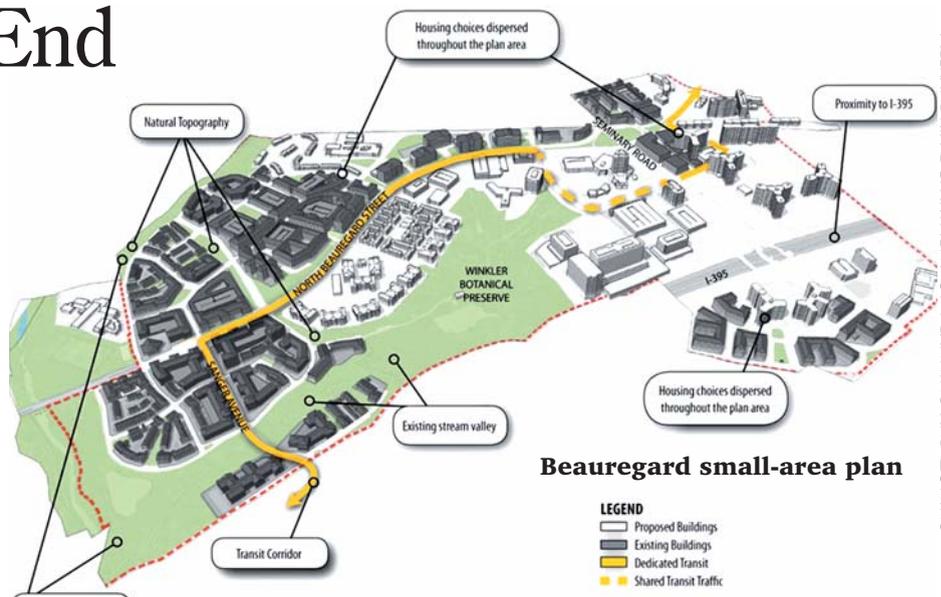
"We lost Kelley six years ago," Swanson said. "It's been our mission to get this on the road for a number of years now and hope it will be used for many years to come."

To help support ongoing programs for the special needs community, the Kelley Cares Foundation will hold its annual 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, May 19 at 8 a.m. at George Washington Middle school. For more information, visit www.kelleycares.org.

West End

FROM PAGE 1
pushed out of the city," said Esteban Garces, an organizer with Tenants and Workers United. "Many of these people make well below 50 percent of the area median income, and there will be nowhere for them to go."

City officials say the small-area plan released this week will offer affordable housing units to those making 55 percent of the area median income, which is \$59,000 for a family of four. City officials say the small-area plan for Beauregard currently under con-



ALEXANDRIA DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

sideration by the Planning Commission would add 700 committed affordable housing units, although to qualify for them will require earning between 55 percent to 80 percent of the area me-

dian income. Although they acknowledge the area currently has thousands of low-income units, they point out that it has no dedicated affordable housing units.

SEE BEAUREGARD, PAGE 7

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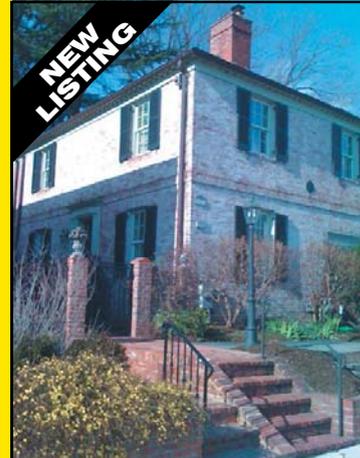
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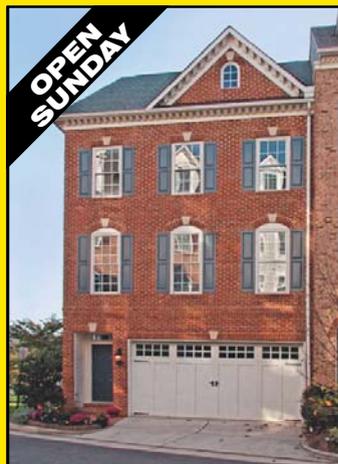
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Making the Most out of Winter

A survival guide for indoor and outdoor enthusiasts.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

We all know the type. Those chipper, cheery souls who bound out of bed in sub-zero temperatures; embrace any opportunity to get outside. But for many people, it's a challenge to stay active during the winter months. Having an arsenal of activities planned can help keep you and your family from spending yet another winter over-eating, feeling depressed and thinking about moving to Florida.

GET OUTSIDE

When most people think "win-

ter fun," they think of outdoor activities like sledding or ice skating. Not much can be done about the sledding until the snow hits, but when it does, most neighborhoods have a favorite spot for kids and families to gather. Bundle up, take a thermos of hot chocolate and go visit with neighbors.



Forget the snowman. Instead build an igloo with Flexible Flyer snow molds.

With or without Mother Nature's cooperation, you can take to the ice at the Mount Vernon Rec Center Ice Skating Rink, which offers open skate times as well as ice and figure skating lessons for children and adults. The ice hockey programs and leagues are some of the best in the state and clinics and pick-up games are also available (703-768-3224).

When the next Snowmageddon



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Torpedo Factory artist Tatyana Schremko takes advantage of one of last year's snow storms to make an ice sculpture.

does hit, head outside and build a snow fort. For something different, build an igloo with blocks made with a snow mold. (Flexible Flyer makes one that will do double duty to build sand castles for that Spring Break trip you are planning.)

Grab your digital camera and develop your photography skills with a photo expedition of the winter landscapes. A walk through Dyke Marsh makes a great place for some solitude and scenic photo opportunities.

Put that patio fire pit you bought



COURTESY PHOTO

The Art League offers a range of classes for children and adults.

last summer to good use by lighting a winter bonfire and making S'mores.

Make snow paint. Simply add food coloring to water and put in a spray bottle. Then go out and paint your yard. Kids especially love this.

The winter months can be the best time to enjoy the local Farmer's Markets. Grab a cup of coffee or hot chocolate and take a walk through Market Square or Del Ray on a Saturday morning to visit with the vendors and regulars who attend.

SEE SURVIVAL, PAGE 29

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Attorney Roy Shannon tells City Council members he is formally filing an appeal of the planning director's determination rejecting the protest petition, calling for City Council members to stay the vote as a result of the appeal.



Shannon delivers the appeal to the planning director, who is seated next to Deputy City Manager Mark Jinks.



Jinks looks back toward Shannon and considers how to respond to receiving the appeal.



Jinks grabs the appeal and moves it to a nearby seat away from the city officials, and two other city officials inform Shannon that the appeal has not been received.

Protesting the Vote

Alexandria officials say City Hall is not open for business during a public hearing.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
GAZETTE PACKET

Is City Hall open for business during a public hearing? Alexandria officials say no, but that could be a matter litigated in the Alexandria Circuit Court. At the beginning of Saturday's marathon meeting on the waterfront, Planning Director Faroll Hamer formally rejected a protest petition from more than 200 people who owned land near the properties being rezoned. The petition requested that a supermajority vote of six members be required to adopt the controversial small-area plan. A lawyer representing three of those landowners and two other individuals ap-

peared before council members later that day in an effort to appeal the decision. "What I have here is an appeal to the (Board of Zoning Appeals) that I'm filing with the planning director," said Attorney Roy Shannon, motioning to a stack of papers nearby. "All proceedings should be stayed as of right now because an appeal is pending before the BZA. I sent it to the members. I have it here for the director. If she chooses to reject it, that's her choice." With that, Shannon plunked the stack of papers in front of Hamer. As the attorney was walking away, Deputy City Manager picked up the papers and moved them to a chair away from the desk used by city offi-

As Shannon was speaking to members of the press outside the chamber, two different city officials came to tell him that his paperwork had not been filed and that he should retrieve it from the chair near a portrait of George Washington. "It was his responsibility to take custody of the documents," said City Attorney James Banks. "The office was not open for the appeal to be properly filed." Supporters of the protest petition say a Circuit Court judge may eventually decide whether or not City Hall was open for business that day. That could mean one potential legal argument would be that City Council acted inappropriately by holding a vote on Saturday because an appeal to the pro-

test petition was pending. That would be a separate argument from whether or not a supermajority would be required. Banks argues that the process is not applicable to the vote because the process was a text amendment and not a rezoning, but Shannon argues that the code in question refers to a rezoning or a text amendment. "That's not a typo," Shannon said. "This is the plain language of the ordinance." The distinction between a rezoning and the text amendment might sound esoteric, but the stakes are high. If a judge sides with Shannon, Saturday's vote in favor of the waterfront small-area plan could be overturned.

Waterfront Plan Passes on 5-to-2 Council Vote

FROM PAGE 1

lowed density to increase from the current level of 300,000 square feet to 800,000 square feet. Pepper's compromise proposal made no change to the increased density called for in the plan. "It's a sham proposal that served as a capstone to a sham process," said former Vice Mayor Andrew Macdonald, who led the opposition. "In many ways, the so-called compromise served to further divide the community."

THE SMALL-AREA PLAN was released in February 2011, initiating a vigorous discussion about everything from density and congestion to traffic and parking. The Planning Commission approved the small-area plan in May, and the City Council was set to vote on the proposal in June. But council members were deadlocked on how to proceed, so they appointed a work group in an effort to find common ground. That group met for six months and eventually reached an impasse over the same issues that divided the council, especially the impact of increasing density. Some members of the work group suggested that the plan not be adopted until a transportation analysis is conducted, a sentiment that was echoed by many of the speakers on Saturday. "This plan is not ready for prime time,"

said former mayor and state Sen. Patsy Ticer (D-30). "There's no compelling need for urgency." The Democratic majority disagreed with that assessment, and many of the speakers on Saturday called on council members to act immediately. Some said they feared "by-right" development, meaning that the current land owners could develop within an envelope of what's legally permissible under current zoning without applying for a special-use permit. That's a scenario that seems unlikely because of the high value of the land, according to the report issued in December by the Waterfront Plan Work Group. Nevertheless, the specter of by-right development was raised numerous times, with speakers suggesting land owners would go forward without new controls created by the plan. "It establishes an integrated framework for modest and sustainable development of key, privately owned sites that, the absence of this plan, will be developed by right by land owners," said Andrew Palmieri, chairman of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. "Do you stand for thriving present and future that honors our past? Or do you stand for stagnation, appeasement and status quo?"

MUCH OF THE PROCESS leading to Saturday's vote was driven by the Robinson

Terminal Corporation, a subsidiary of The Washington Post, which brought a lawsuit against the city when officials first began contemplating a waterfront small-area plan in 2008. The preemptive attack charging that city officials engaged in "illegal spot zoning" by reducing allowable density at Robinson North in 1992, the lawsuit said that the land owner was entitled to develop according to a 1981 settlement agreement. Many speakers on Saturday suggested that the city was being bullied by The Washington Post, suggesting that city officials maintain the 1992 zoning instead of giving the powerful landowners everything they want. "We the voting taxpaying citizen residents of the waterfront reject being used as roadkill, targeted for construction density genocide through upzoning so that The Washington Post Company fattens its bottom line and increases shareholder value," said Alexandria resident Michael Peck. Supporters charged opponents with obstructionism and bullying. Several speakers suggested that many people in Old Town secretly support the plan but are uncomfortable making their support public for fear of a backlash. They accused opponents of the plan with misrepresenting the proposal by describing it as akin to National Harbor or Disney World. "There's too much at stake for you to be swayed by the clamor and divisiveness



City Manager Rashad Young listens as council members begin their debate and questioning of city staff.

whipped up by the lies and distortion of opposition leaders who should be ashamed," said Alexandria resident Bill Regan. "There's plenty of room for opposition, But outright Michele Bachmann lying is not the Alexandria way."

More Budget For Diverse Students

FROM PAGE 1

students. The proposed budget allocates \$24 million or 11 percent of the total operating fund budget.

Sherman focused on the need to maintain small class sizes and low student/counselor ratios at secondary schools. To this end, he is allocating \$71.1 million or 33 percent of the total operating fund. ACPS currently has the smallest class sizes in Northern Virginia and the lowest student/counselor ratio in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

There will be an investment in staff through professional development and salary increases including a full step halfway through the year for teachers.

Student supports such as social workers, psychologists and registered nurses will total \$6.4 million or 3 percent of the operating budget.

High school satellite campuses have been established for Flexible and Extended Learning Opportunities at \$4.1 million. The adult education program is also being redesigned, in light of this year's numbers that, of over 200 enrolled, only 58 succeeded in getting degrees.

Twenty-one central office staff positions will be cut, as well as two teacher positions at the middle school level and four teachers at T.C. Williams. Seven classroom elementary school teachers will be hired.

Due to an increase in Virginia Retirement System (VRS) contribution and the rising cost of health insurance, there will be a 0.71 shift of VRS Group Life rates to employees and an increased VRS employee contribution.

Intercession programs at Mount Vernon and Tucker Elementary schools have been shortened to "create a pool of money so that other schools can have programs that these schools have had," said Sherman. All elementary and secondary school summer learning, except K-Prep, ELL, extended school year and credit recovery, have been cut.

Also in an effort to save money, non-essential travel has been eliminated from school and departmental budgets. A competitive funding process for external partners has been established. Sherman estimates these and other program efficiency savings total \$10.8 million.

"They are wonderful students, remarkable people," said Sherman. "It is a privilege and an honor to serve them. We see it as a sacred trust."

In total, \$14,400,761 has been reallocated in this proposed budget. To learn more, go to <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/budgets>.



PHOTOS BY JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

Mount Vernon Community School vice principal Elizabeth Namba, back left, and Marine Corps Marathon race director Rick Nealis, right, celebrate the Healthy Kids Award with students who participated in the Healthy Kids Fun Run last October. The school received a check for \$1,000 for its top five placement with 115 registered runners.

MVCS Honored with Healthy School Award

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The efforts of 115 Mount Vernon Community School students who braved the torrential rains and cold temperatures last Oct. 29 paid off when MVCS was honored Jan. 19 as one of the top five schools that participated in the 2011 Marine Corps Marathon Healthy Kids Fun Run. "This was the first year that the school participated in the event," said vice principal Elizabeth Namba. "Our PE department of Tracy Tiernan, Kirstin Dundon and Xionara Hernandez worked with counselor Cassandra Ford and parent Summer Jones to coordinate the students, who had a blast in spite of the weather that day."

As part of the Healthy School Award, MCM partner Sodexo presented a check for

\$1,000 to the school's PE program and provided healthy snacks to every student.

MCM race director Rick Nealis was joined by mascot Miles the Bulldog during two separate assemblies, held so that all 711 students could participate, in demonstrating ways for students to keep fit.

Additionally, the National Children's Museum's "Museum Without Walls" team presented programming focusing on physical fitness and activity.

"This is very exciting and we will definitely do it again next year," Namba said. "We want to do as much as we can to keep up healthy initiatives for kids."

The 2012 Healthy Kids Fun Run, a one-mile run for fun for students ages 5 to 12, will open for online registration at noon April 4 at www.marinemarathon.com. Parents can register kids for the event that will be held on Saturday,



Race director Rick Nealis, left, presents the Healthy Kids Award to Mount Vernon Community School PE instructor Kristin Dundon.

Oct. 27. Schools or organizations interested in registering groups of students can contact MCM communications coordinator Amy Beaulieu at amy.beaulieu@usmc.mil or 703-784-2357.

Beauregard Small-Area Plan Raises Concerns

FROM PAGE 3

"The current affordable housing out there is subject to market conditions," said Deputy City Manager Mark Jinks. "The market will, in effect, eliminate nearly all the affordable housing and this plan will preserve a large portion of it."

SEVEN MAJOR LANDOWNERS in the West End have formed a partnership aimed at coordinating redevelopment efforts. The plan calls for more than doubling the existing square footage in 222 acres, redeveloping 6 million square feet to 12.4 million square feet. Upzoning the properties would dramatically increase the value of the land, which would benefit the landowners and developers. In exchange, city officials are asking for \$148 million to fund a fire station, pay for transit infrastructure and create dedicated affordable housing units.

"This is huge," said planning commissioner Donna Fossum during a public forum in September. "I've been on the Planning Commission for 22 years, and I've never seen any redevelopment of this magnitude in the city."

City officials envision the redeveloped area as much more urban, transforming the intersection of Beauregard Street and Seminary Road into an ellipse and instituting a parking maximum of 1.3 cars for each residential unit in the multi-family buildings. The newly redeveloped area would complement a redeveloped Landmark Mall, which planners say would resemble Clarendon Commons or Pentagon Row. Some West End residents say they are uncomfortable with the scale of redevelopment suggested by the plan, echoing concerns of increased density that were at issue in the controversial waterfront small-area plan.

"What's on the table now is more density than we need in the corridor," said West End resident Nancy Jennings. "All it does is give these property owners more value for their land."

The question of what will happen to the thousands of low-income residents who currently live in the area looms over the proposal. Currently, city officials say they have no idea how many of the existing residents make enough money to meet the threshold for qualifying for the affordable housing units. That kind of information would be part of a specific demolition request.

"As buildings are proposed to be demolished, there would be a survey of who is there now," said Housing Director Helen McIlvaine. "Anyone who is living there currently and is on the lease and is successfully living there and is a tenant in good standing wouldn't be precluded from being eligible to move into an affordable housing unit when they are available."

Critics say that's not good enough. "These people won't be able to afford that," said Garces. "They are going to get rubbed out."

Cementing the Districts

Now that congressional redistricting has moved through the House of Delegates and the Virginia Senate, a picture of 2012 is beginning to take shape. And it's looking a whole lot like 2010. That's when Democrats got shellacked, losing three seats in Virginia.

Since that time, the commonwealth's congressional delegation has consisted of eight Republicans and three Democrats. And although Democrats hoped to use their control of the state Senate to create a competitive race against, losing control of the upper chamber last year gave the power to Republicans. One of the first accomplishments of this year's session was to approve the congressional redistricting maps and send them to the governor's mansion.

"This map essentially cements the gains from 2010," said **Kyle Kondik**, political analyst for the University of Virginia Center for Politics. "It will be much harder for either of the parties to flip the seats."

Kondik's analysis of the new congressional districts is that Virginia now has seven safe Republican seats and two safe Democratic seats. That leaves Rep. **Gerry Connolly** (D-11) and Rep. **Scott Rigell** (R-2) as the only two incumbents in competitive seats, although Kondik was quick to point out that both of the seats are only marginally competitive.

"I would anticipate this map encourages the status quo of current representation," he said, "unless there's some major scandal or the presidential election influences the congressional races."

Legislative Two-Step

Sometimes children who are in crisis have to travel all the way to Staunton, which is the location of the nearest crisis stabilization facility. Because these children are potentially a danger to themselves or others, Alexandria leaders say a closer facility is needed in Northern Virginia. That's why members of the Alexandria City Council have identified funding for a regional crisis intervention facility as a priority for this year's General Assembly session.

"It would be preferable for many of these children to be treated at a facility nearer to the community," wrote acting City Manager **Bruce Johnson** in the city's legislative package.

The effort has already made its way out of a subcommittee, but Alexandria legislative director **Bruce Caton** says it's now been referred to the Appropriations Committee. That's not necessarily a bad thing, he says, although it would have been preferable if the bill hadn't been referred to a separate committee.

"Generally speaking, the fewer steps the better," he said. "Sometimes a bill can make it through the Appropriations Committee and other times they'll say there's not enough money. You just never know."

Undermining Labor

With Republicans taking control of the state Senate this year, conservatives finally have control of all the levers of power in Richmond. First on the list — attacking labor.

This week, House and Senate committees approved measures that will limit project labor agreements — collective bargaining agreements that establish terms and conditions for a specific construction project. Republicans have long targeted the agreements as too friendly to labor groups, increasing the cost of building infrastructure along the way. Democrats have typically defended the agreements as a way to increase accountability.

"We're disappointed members of the General Assembly have disregarded an important tool to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely on construction projects," said **Doris Crouse-Mays**, president of the Virginia AFL-CIO.

On the campaign trail, former Sen. **George Allen** has called for the federal government to do the same thing.

"The reason you don't want to have these is that they increase the cost of a project, on average by 22 percent," said Allen in a meeting with Connection Newspapers reporters and editors. "You have less competitive bidding."

— MICHAEL LEE POPE

NEWS

Politics of Notification

Father takes his fight for increased parental notification to Richmond.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

Steve Stuban can't help but wonder if things could have turned out differently. Back in 2010, his son Nick was considered a model student at Woodson High School in Fairfax County. That is, until school officials caught the teenager with synthetic marijuana. Administrators didn't contact the parents until a decision had already been made to suspend the boy with a recommendation for expulsion.

"Nick had been questioned multiple times over multiple days and had been asked to execute multiple written statements," said Stuban. "They had already decided what they punishment was going to be. It was only then that they thought to perhaps contact my wife and I."

Nick Stuban committed suicide in January 2011. And ever since that day Steve Stuban has been fighting to increase parental notification. Last year, he waged an unsuccessful campaign for the Fairfax County School Board. Now, he's taking the fight to Richmond, working with a handful of legislators to create a legal requirement for school administrators to notify parents before they start questioning students in serious cases that might lead to suspension or notification of law enforcement.

"I find it troubling that school administrators have questioned students for hours at a time without parental knowledge regarding issues that could lead to the student's expulsion or incarceration," said Del. Tim Hugo (R-40).

WORKING WITH STUBAN and newly elected Fairfax County School Board member Elizabeth Schultz, Hugo has introduced House Bill 1080. The bill requires school principals to notify parents before questioning students in the case of a "serious violation." The bill defines a serious violation as a violation of School Board policy or a violation that could lead to a student's suspension. The legislation would also force parental notification before school administrators file a court petition.

"I would be concerned that schools might not have the flexibility they need to take swift action in a way that would preserve the security of a school," said Arlington School Board member Libby Garvey. "Sometimes bad cases make bad law."

Last year, a similar effort introduced by Del. Kaye Kory (R-38) passed the House of Delegates but didn't



Steve Stuban

Nick Stuban

make it out of committee in the state Senate. An array of groups lined up against the proposal, including the Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia Education Association and the Virginia Association of Secondary School Principals. Supporters say things have changed over the course of the last year, as more and more parents have come to realize that parental notification is not required under the law.

"Once you finally get through to parents about how the law works, they are incredulous about this," said Schultz, who testified in Richmond as a parent last year and is now advocating for the bill as a School Board member. "We're having to compel people to do what they should already be doing anyway."

STUBAN SAYS he's fully aware that school administrators may try to push back on the legislation as they did last year. But he also pointed out that the bill has a great deal of support, including teachers unions and members of the Fairfax County School Board. And because the issue has received so much attention over the course of the last year, he feels momentum is on the side of the bill. More importantly, he said, the case for the bill is strong.

"You want schools and parents and students to work together as a team," he said. "But right now the process is adversarial in nature."

This week, Stuban appeared with Schultz in Richmond along with several Northern Virginia legislators to begin a public-relations campaign on the issue. Members included Hugo and Kory along with state Sen. David Marsden (D-37) and state Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34). The coalition is hoping that Stuban's personal story and the growing chorus of support for the legislation will be enough to overcome opposition by school administrators. Opponents say the effort may cause more harm than good.

"This legislation sounds overly prescriptive to me," said Garvey. "You never want to impose something on school divisions that restricts how they can respond to situations involving safety."

Construction Work at Simpson Park

As part of the construction of Potomac Yard Park, Potomac Yard Development LLC will rebuild the restroom and storage building at Simpson Park, 426 E Monroe Avenue. PYD's General Contractor, KT Enterprises, will demolish the existing building in January.

The new building will be the same footprint and location as the existing building. At completion, the new facility will provide the public with modern restroom facilities as well as additional space for city

maintenance crews.

During construction, Potomac Yard Development and the Department of Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities will be providing temporary facilities for restrooms to the park users. There will be a construction staging area in the gravel lot immediately north of the existing building. During construction, the dog park and the fields will remain open as scheduled and access will be maintained to the Simpson facilities.

Resolved To Quit Smoking

January is a time to quit.

BY MONTIE MARTIN
GAZETTE PACKET

For people who have re-solved to quit smoking, the New Year's resolution to quit marks both a challenge and an opportunity.

If a person has quit for one day, it increases the chance they can quit forever," said Dr. Stephen Haering, district director of health for the City of Alexandria. "People may have picked Jan. 1 as a quit date, but tobacco is the most difficult addiction we know of to conquer."

People who have decided to quit must overcome chemical addiction, the habit of smoking, as well as the psychological dependency of cigarettes.

Medication in the form of the nicotine patch, nicotine gum or chantix is one way to overcome the chemical addiction. Changing lifestyle patterns that trigger smoking is also important.

The psychological addiction, however, is often the most difficult part of quitting because it is a source of comfort for many. For someone who smokes, quitting is akin to saying goodbye to a friend forever.

"Non-smokers might not understand what you mean when cigarettes are your best friend," said Cathy Turner, director of health promotion at the Virginia Hospital Center. "Can you imagine telling someone you can never associate with your best friend forever?"

People who are resolved to quit because of a new year's resolution are often at odds with the psychological aspect of cessation.

"When the motivation for change is from the social situation, cultural event or outside the person, it is an insufficient way to promote complex situational changes," said Dr. Linda Gulyn, a professor of psychology at Marymount University. "Smoking is such a complex behavior, if you throw away a pack of cigarettes you feel icky and are really punishing yourself."

A relapse is common for people who smoke, and more often than not quitting requires multiple attempts. When someone does decide to quit, even for a day, the experience can prove fundamental as it provides an important exercise in self-awareness.

"You should not feel like it is not successful, look at it as a learning experience. You should never be discouraged, try and continue to try," said Bunny

Caro-justin, a former smoker and spokeswoman for the Virginia Department of Health's Tobacco Use Control Project. "Think about your previous experience quitting, know what works and what does not work."

The benefits of quitting are immediate. According to a 2004 surgeon general report, within 20 minutes of quitting heart rates drop to normal levels; within 12 hours carbon monoxide drops to normal levels; after one month coughing and shortness of breath cease; within two weeks and three months the risk of heart attack is significantly reduced.

To achieve a successful cessation and realize the benefits of a smoke-free lifestyle, people who smoke need support. Supports can come from friends, family, counseling groups as well as the Virginia QUIT NOW hotline.

The hotline, a service provided by the Virginia Department of Health, is available twenty-four hours a day and is staffed by former smokers knowledgeable about the difficulty of quitting. Communication with others helps to overcome the psychological difficulty of smoking.

"Talking to someone is pleasant and rewarding," said Gulyn. "If you say 'this afternoon after lunch I will call this number' instead of reaching for a pack, that is a positive change."

Quit coaches are readily available through the hotline or at clinics, and offer a chance to personalize a cessation strategy. "Using medication and counseling in concert is the most effective way to quit," said Haering.

According to the Alexandria Department of Health, 13 percent of adults in Alexandria currently smoke. Although the percentage is below the state average of 18.5 percent, health officials are deeply concerned for the 15,000 people who continue to use tobacco.

"Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of disease, disability and death because of the adverse effects on every organ system we have," said Dr. Stephen Haering, director of Health for the City of Alexandria. "Anybody that can reduce the amount of exposure is improving their health immediately."

As the single most important thing a person can do for their health, quitting means a commitment to self-awareness.

"It takes more than just a promise on Jan. 1. Find social support, do things with other people," said Gulyn. "Remember a new year's resolution is about adding something positive to your life."

NEIGHBORHOOD

Seminary Valley

Sorry it has been so long since my last column ... one of my neighbors actually thought we had moved away! Perish the thought!

With our real estate tax bills freshly arrived, you might be wondering how recent home sales in Seminary Valley are going. Rob Blitzer helpfully provided some recent statistics for 2011: 22 single family homes sold in 2011, with prices ranging from \$220,000 to \$538,000. Our neighbors know that houses in Seminary Valley, which date from around 1956, are in various states of repair. Some are pristine examples of original ownership, while some original owners might not even recognize their homes as they have been renovated. New construction is fairly limited, with the exception of the new houses arising near Polk Elementary School and the possibility of two new homes on a double lot on Latham Street.

Set your 2012 calendar for quarterly

Brookville-Seminary Valley Civic Association meetings: our first of the year will be next Monday, Jan. 30 at 7:30 p.m. at the Beatley Library. No featured speaker this time, this is more of an organizational/present-your-ideas meeting. The Association's latest activity, the Annual Holiday Party at Polk Elementary School, was a big success, with about 25 children enjoying crafts, cookies and entertainment. Keith and Leslie Kruse organized the event.

Beginning in February, Polk Elementary School will start an ambitious new program. The school is hoping to help out students who normally receive free and reduced lunches with meals and snacks for those times when school is not in session. Our community can help by dropping off food at the quarterly meeting (see above) or at Polk School; recommended items include: tuna packets, pop-top cans of soup, stew or pasta, cereal bars, or shelf-stable milk boxes. For more information, contact Donna at donnagant@hotmail.com or the school's

social worker, Mrs. Whitfield, at 703-461-4180.

One of our own is starting out the New Year with a big adventure. Mia Brown, a 2009 T.C. Williams grad and University of Virginia student, has embarked on a "Semester at Sea." Mia is joining 599 other college students to study onboard (classes run 7 days a week) and will visit ports of call in Dominica, Brazil, Ghana, Mauritius, India, Singapore, Viet Nam, Japan and Hawaii, finally getting to San Diego in May.

We are not sure who won the neighborhood Holiday Decorating Contest ... but the Jones nomination would certainly go to the residents of Paxton and Thayer streets. If nothing else, lots of imagination was on display, as well as neighborly coordination. What a nice way to demonstrate the Valley's spirit and charm. Happy New Year!

— MIA JONES
MAMAMIAJONES@GMAIL.COM

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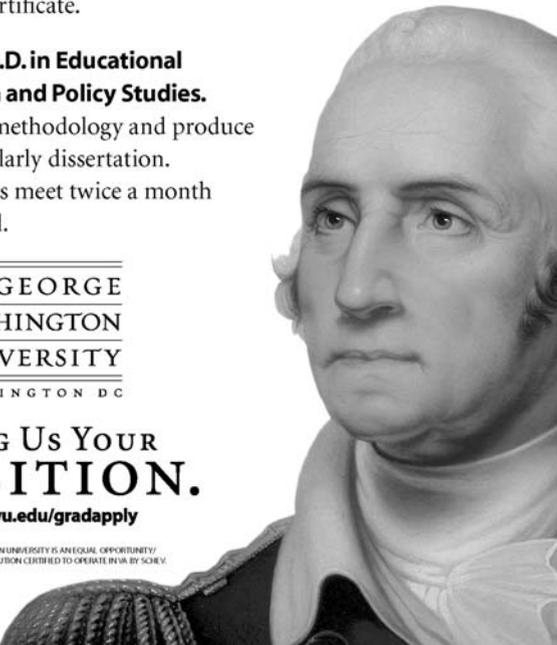
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Budget Plan Invests in Community's Future

By MORTON SHERMAN, Ed.D.
ACPS SUPERINTENDENT



COMMENTARY

I am honored to present to you my FY 2013 Proposed Operating Budget which is dedicated to the amazing students who attend Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). It is my privilege to serve our students and this community.

The proposed budget is designed to move us forward in our school division's transition to academic excellence. I know that you join me in wanting to provide the best possible education to every ACPS student.

I believe that the FY 2013 proposed budget is an excellent budget, which balances the needs of our students, our community's expectations, and the constraints of economic resources.

We have experienced extraordinary changes in our country and in Alexandria over the past four years. I am struck by the urgency of the work we must do as a school division:

- ❖ More children lived in poverty in 2010 (21.5 percent) than in 2008 (18.5 percent).
- ❖ The poverty rate in Alexandria has increased substantially to 9.9 percent.
- ❖ More students are now eligible for free and reduced priced meals with an increase in the division average from 49 to 56 percent. Several schools have poverty rates that increased more than 15 percentage points, including T.C. Williams, Polk, Ramsay, and Cora Kelly elementary schools.

Clearly we must make sure our students thrive at ACPS and graduate prepared to suc-

ceed at work, in the armed services, in college, and in life.

The FY 2013 Proposed Operating Budget of \$215,691,137, is an increase of 2.4 percent, or \$5,121,985 from the FY 2012 Approved Operating Budget. Additionally the FY 2013 Proposed Combined Funds Budget of \$236,331,598, a 1.8 percent increase from the FY 2012 Approved Combined Funds Budget, includes \$13,741,480 in grants and \$6,898,981 in school nutrition funds. The proposal also includes a request for a City appropriation of \$180,351,730, an increase of 3.2 percent from FY 2012.

The proposed budget includes the following to protect our sacred core mission:

- ❖ Maintain small class sizes and low student/counselor ratios at secondary schools. Class sizes remain the smallest in Northern Virginia, and ACPS has the lowest student/counselor ratio in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
 - Total Cost to Address: \$71.1 million.
- ❖ Support for a projected 3,178 English Language Learners (ELL) students
 - Total Cost to Address - \$9.8 million
- ❖ Support for a projected 1,478 special education students
 - Total Cost to Address -\$24 million (excluding special education transportation costs and grant funding)
- ❖ Restructure of intersession and summer school programs to provide funding for extended learning opportunities for all schools, not just modified calendar schools

❖ Investment in staff through professional development and salary increases

❖ Reduction of 21 central office positions and reallocation of funds

❖ Establish a competitive funding process for external partners to ensure effectiveness is measured; reducing funding by \$300,000

❖ Establish high school satellite campuses for Flexible and Extended Learning Opportunities for students and redesign our adult education program

— Total Cost to Address - \$4.1 million

❖ Total program efficiency savings: \$10.8 million

❖ Total cost to address increased enrollment: \$4.0 million

Students: Each of you is amazing with limitless potential to succeed. Every dollar in this budget will be spent on ensuring that you achieve that potential.

Staff: This budget continues our investment in you.

Parents: We are humbled that you entrust your children to us; we will not fail you or them.

To Our Community: Your investment in our students is an investment in our City's future.

To the Board: Over the next few months, you will consider all of the components of this proposed budget and hold public hearings and work sessions. In the end, this will become your budget, which will move ACPS forward in our transition to academic excellence.

We welcome your involvement in the budget process and your feedback at upcoming public hearing sessions. For more information on how to get involved, visit our website <http://www.acps.k12.va.us>.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Explaining Her No Vote

To the Editor:

I voted against the Waterfront Small Area Plan and accompanying text amendment on Saturday. I want to clear up any misunderstanding on why. In reading across

post-vote e-mails from constituents, I was most struck by the following statement that may frame the issue for others so I wanted to share it: "I'm not sure what motivated your decision to vote against a very reasonable, market-driven waterfront plan — political opportunism or a conviction that addi-

tional taxes are a tradeoff for 'historical' preservation." The constituent went on to say, "[f]or the city's sake I hope your cynical vote is mere opportunism and not a deeply held belief on how to sustain an urban economy."

The answer is neither. Public service requires more from me and

my history on council is as a spend-thrift committed to low taxes and a balanced commercial-residential tax base, which in essence, requires more not less development to be realized ... but it

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



3:54 p.m., Jan. 9:
Braddock Road at
Kenwood Avenue.

Winter Snapshots

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET



4:23 p.m., Jan. 9: Braddock Road at Quaker Lane.



7:22 p.m., Jan. 9:
Braddock Road at Minnie
Howard.

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 10

has to be in the right place. In making my decision, I first removed personal passion and individual emotion from the root of my thinking. With all staff reports and work group reports in addition to thousands of emails, I objectively evaluated the facts and the law, considering what decisions would be legally defensible and winnable if the city was sued. As a steward of our resources, that's my job. Second, I considered the will of the people I represent, to the extent that their will would not put the city in a compromised legal or financially deleterious position. The distant third was my own personal views.

My no vote can be summed up with the following: 1) the 1992 comprehensive down-zoning was legally defensible and winnable based on comments made by our city attorney during the work session preceding the public hearing; 2) approval of the text amendment required a supermajority vote pursuant to the petition put forward pursuant to Section 11-808 of the Code; 3) the economic analysis remains presumptively flawed and too incomplete for comfort in that it does not adequately cost out how the plan can be realized without an undue burden on taxpayers, especially given the city's competing priorities for core services and development in other areas of the city (notably, flood mitigation and a host of other feasibility studies need to be completed that will undoubtedly re-

veal a host of issues not previously contemplated that will drive up cost, which is consistent with development history in the city being over budget); 4) an option to seize property owned by the Old Dominion Boat Club by eminent domain is unacceptable but part of the plan in order to open the foot of King Street; 5) a deeply held belief that there can be development, but it must be controlled one project at a time on our waterfront to avoid the chaos experienced with BRAC-133 and to regain public confidence in our planning processes (and yes, though less desired, we can get proffers this way to realize the comprehensive vision that incorporated public art and history); and 6) serious flaws in our processes, including how we have engaged and treated our citizens, with the bulk of my constituents siding against the plan.

Now, as for what I want, what I believe and what I support: I want and support a vibrant waterfront that does have one small boutique hotel, but preserves our strong public art and historic presence and more dense development in more suitable areas of the city where there are more robust public transportation and the capacity for more transportation infrastructure. Unfortunately, the plan we approved is not what I consider the optimal vehicle for accomplishing what I consider best for our waterfront, which adds so much character to our city. And finally, I believe that civility re-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 12

All in the Family

By KATHARINE DIXON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REBUILDING TOGETHER
ALEXANDRIA



In 1957, William's* parents gave each of their sons a plot of land on North Quaker Lane on which to build a home. "I think we only had \$.25 but we got a house built somehow," remembers William's widow, Arminta.

In the fields surrounding their new home, William would pull the neighborhood kids around on sleds by the tractor he owned at their previous home in Farmville, Va. The children would also

COMMENTARY

In the warm months, kids would play kick ball and jump rope together while neighborhood parents watched and caught up on each other's lives.

For many years, the community would throw Halloween block parties — with bands and cookouts and dancing contests. All the neighbors enjoyed this tradition. "You didn't have a lot of money and you didn't have a lot of things, but you were happy," recalls Arminta.

William's brothers and parents also

lived in the same community and his mother was known as the "neighborhood mom." Arminta fondly remembers her mother-in-law often coming over to cook dinner for the family — cooking was not on Arminta's list of "most favorite things to do," so after work she would come home and play with the children, clean up the house, and happily clean up dishes from a home-cooked meal made by her in-law.

Arminta, looking around her home, has "so many wonderful memories in this happy place" and Rebuilding Together Alexandria's volunteers are happy to help maintain her home so she can safely live there with, building more memories.

Rebuilding Together Alexandria is an award-winning, non-profit organization dedicated to repairing and revitalizing homes at no charge for homeowners in need, including elderly, disabled, military veterans and families. To date, in-kind donations of labor and materials have resulted in \$5.5 million worth of value on more than 1,430 properties. If you'd like to volunteer or donate, visit www.rebuildingtogetheralex.org or call 703-836-1021.

* It is RTA's organizational policy to not disclose full names

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 11

mains the core for defining democracy and while we, as a community, have fallen short of that in this debate and allowed passion to rule, in some respects, common sense and common decency, we aren't too far from grace where civility cannot once again be the order of our day and our dealings as we work to make more perfect "One Alexandria."

Alicia Hughes
Alexandria City Councilwoman

Residents Ignored

To the Editor:

There was a time when the opinions of civic associations would have carried some weight at City Hall. That no longer seems the case. Last Saturday, Old Town Civic Association, Rosemont Civic Association, and Seminary Hills Civic Association all joined with Citizens for An Alternative Waterfront Plan (CAAWP) in asking the City Council to defer the vote and improve the waterfront plan. Council ignored their requests and voted 5-2 for a plan favored by a business group called Waterfront4All. No wonder Alexandrians are so dissatisfied with their elected officials.

Anne Peterson

Mockery of Government

To The Editor:

The Alexandria City Council has voted on and passed the waterfront plan that has been opposed by the majority of the residents this council supposedly represents. Why has this majority body of Democrats even gone through the motions of public hearings and spend unknown amounts of taxpayers' money while all along they have known how they would vote on the issue.

This reminds me of another issue that the council recently passed with almost the same opposition mainly the Arlandria Re-development Plan. There seems to be a pattern coming out of City Hall that no matter what is right or what the citizens want, the results is always the same. It's what the Mayor and the Council want that counts.

There is only one way to stop this mockery of government is to replace the majority with clear thinking people along the likes of Frank Fannon and Alicia Hughes or the past Vice Mayor Andrew MacDonald, as these people have had the insight to clearly think out issues and not bow down to the wants of the rest of the council. Just check out the voting record of these people and you will see how they fall in line behind each other.

At least Alicia Hughes and Frank Fannon will question another aspect of an issue then make up their own mind as did Andrew

MacDonald when he was on the council.

Ken Briley
Alexandria

Appreciative Foundation

To the Editor:

The Kelley Cares Foundation would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our friends, relatives, volunteers and sponsors who have continued to support Kelley Cares since our formation six years ago.

The recent rollout of our Kelley Cares Multi-Sensory Mobile, a vehicle with therapeutic equipment that provides a safe and inclusive environment for members of the special needs community to play in, is a testament to what's possible when the community comes together to serve the needs of all members of our city. We also want to thank the Mayor and members of City Council for their support and guidance of our efforts. Many thanks to all of our past sponsors with special thanks to Christine Garner, Everett Hellmuth of Passport Automotive Group and Jen Walker who give so generously to our programs. Also, the unending support of the staff of the Therapeutic Recreation Program, Jackie Person, Brenda Holloway and Jamie Aylor. Their support of this project and past projects including our Multi-Sensory Room at the Lee Center, our gift of a vehicle to the Therapeutic Rec,

and our installation of a Project Lifesaver program have been invaluable. Project Lifesaver has been successful due to the many hours dedicated by Sheriff Dana Lawhorne and Chief Deputy Timothy Gleeson who were so receptive to the program.

We look forward to working on more projects in the years to come including our upcoming Kelley Cares 5K Run/Walk on Saturday, May 19 at 8 a.m. to support the Miracle League of Alexandria's efforts to build a Miracle Field at the Lee Center in Alexandria.

The Swanson Family

Restore Pregnancy Prevention Funding

To the Editor:

At the beginning of the Virginia General Assembly session earlier this month, Gov. Bob McDonnell unveiled his proposed \$85 billion budget for the next two fiscal years. Buried way down in the massive document is a cut of \$455,000 for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative which serves seven Virginia communities, including Alexandria. This funding is crucial to the success of the City's Teen Wellness Center, which is an integral part of the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy (ACAP).

ACAP collaborates with other City agen-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13



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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 12

cies and organizations to reach out to our youth and their parents to encourage better communication, community involvement and greater understanding of pregnancy and other health issues. ACAP strives to help young people see the possibilities in their lives if they avoid pregnancy and fatherhood while they are teens.

From 2001 through 2009, teen pregnancies in Alexandria dropped from 56.4 per 1,000 females aged 10 to 19 to 47.3 — a decrease of 16 percent. Preliminary figures for 2010 indicate that the rate has dropped to 41.6 pregnancies per 1,000 females in that age group, which would be a drop of 32 percent over the 10-year period. We are concerned that this potential loss of funding will hamper efforts to continue to lower the teen pregnancy rate.

While the members of Alexandria's Legislative Delegation are requesting that the funding be restored, the Friends of the Alexandria Commission for Women are taking action to support ACAP by sponsoring a benefit performance of "Josephine Tonight" at MetroStage on Thursday, Feb. 9. This musical biography of show business legend Josephine Baker is being directed and choreographed by Maurice Hines. "We hope to raise awareness of the positive results that ACAP is producing and to provide needed funding for the program," explained Mary Catherine Gibbs, president of the Friends.

A reception at 6:30 p.m. will precede the performance, which will be at 7:30 p.m. The intermission will feature a live auction. Tickets are \$75 each, of which \$40 is tax deductible. Contact Diane Crawford-Batt at FriendsofAlexWomen@gmail.com to make reservations. MetroStage is located at 1201 North Royal St.

Susan Kellom

Alexandria Commission for women

City Needs Ombudsman

To the Editor:

If ever there was a time for Alexandria to have an ombudsman, now is the time with the majority of Alexandria residents lack of trust with our elected officials and department administrators. Van Van Fleet has discussed this issue for years at public council meetings along with letters to the editor. City Manager Young has "reorganized" his office staff, but has not really made any changes in personnel except to appoint Bruce Johnson as his chief of staff to guide and advise him about the workings of Alexandria. Mr. Johnson could not be a better choice to mentor and assist Mr. Young and giving him the title of chief of staff is probably the same as assistant city manager. My understanding of the responsibilities of a chief of staff is to protect Mr. Young and/or any other person in Mr. Young's position from the public, do most of the work and prevent real citizen involvement thus creating an atmosphere of lack of transparency from the City Manager. Former City Manager Jim Hartmann did his reorganization and moved many senior level staff to the

Working To Improve Quality of Life

BY CHARNIELE HERRING
DELEGATE (D-46)

Working to create a better life for the next generation has always been a key component of our American values. There has always been a cost — whether in the form of laws or taxes, and today that is no different.

As we deal with the issues of the Commonwealth, we must also look to the quality of life that we are able to lead. I am a proponent of making our small businesses competitive and not overburden our residents in the process. However, I also believe that we have a duty to protect our environment as we work toward our goals.

One of the primary ways that we will help businesses in the Commonwealth become more competitive is improving our transportation infrastructure. This will help in not only shipping goods and providing services, but attracting and keeping the best talent for our businesses as potential employees make consider quality of life when deciding to move to



COMMENTARY

Virginia to work. Congestion on roads and bridges in need of repair are what Northern Virginian's face every day. This is a major downfall.

To this end, I have introduced legislation that requests on behalf of the General Assembly to make high capacity transit a funding

priority by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. Investing in our transportation future is the only way in which we can ensure sustainable long-term growth in Virginia and ensure a competitive and prosperous future for the next generation.

The cost of working to protect our environment does not always come cheaply. More than just cutting back on traffic through mass transit or conserving energy in the home, we also have to look at the way we power our homes and businesses. While "going green" has been popular as of late, for both people and business entities, we must also look at our sources of electricity in Virginia. We have a voluntary incentive-based program to move to a renewable energy portfolio, but many believe that

it is a high cost measure that does not yield much needed results. While an initial reaction is to make this a mandatory program, I believe that we need to understand the costs that we will impose on ourselves, and the results we can expect from such a program. To that effect, I have filed HJ 27 requesting a JLARC study of initiating a mandatory renewable energy portfolio, with the intent of understanding the costs and benefits of moving toward the use of more renewable and environmentally friendly energy sources as power is produced here in the Commonwealth.

We will face many issues in the upcoming weeks, from proposed changes in our voting laws, to extreme agendas limiting privacy, and even attacks on education. I believe the best way to combat this is a sensible, reasoned approach to dealing with the real issues we face in the Commonwealth.

Charniele Herring (D-46) serves as the House Democratic Whip and represents Alexandria City in the Virginia General Assembly. She serves on the Courts of Justice and Science and Technology Committees. For more information, visit www.charnieleherring.com or on twitter @c_herring.

city manager's office, but he did not reduce high paying positions, reduce salaries, eliminate senior staff positions, did not request early retirement from many senior staff and continued to pay salaries to other staff members making over \$100,000+ who continue to be over-paid.

Now is the opportunity for Mr. Young to do the right thing and appoint an ombudsman position. This could be a full time or part time position wherein an independent, bi-partisan citizens group would be involved in selecting the right person. One only needs to see how our mayor and city council are taking actions on such things as BRAC-133, the Beauregard Small Area Plan, the recent vote to move forward with the Waterfront Plan, Potomac Yard, traffic/transportation issues, along with other development issues. By having an ombudsman, citizens' concerns can be heard by an impartial person, getting some matters resolved, but obviously not all and finally feel part of the future of Alexandria as it develops. It has become clear recently that our elected officials are not listening to citizen concerns and just giving us the "talking points" to make us feel good. But its no longer working and Alexandria residents are crying out for transparency and objectivity from our mayor and council along with staff administrators. If any or all Alexandria residents agree that we now need an ombudsman to represent our interests along with working with the mayor and council, then I would suggest you either email or contact the mayor, all members of the council and city manager Young as soon as possible so that we can get this person in place by February or March of 2012. Spending taxpayer dollars wisely should be a primary priority for

Mr. Young along with making certain that all Alexandria residents have a voice and representation in our city government.

Annabelle Fisher
Alexandria

Fair and Balanced

To the Editor:

I want to compliment the Alexandria Gazette Packet for its fair and balanced reporting on the ongoing saga of the Waterfront Plan. While I have very strong views on this subject I find that your articles have presented all of the proposals, issues and opinions thoroughly and without prejudice.

Michael Smith

No to HOV Ramp

To the Editor:

The Virginia Department of Transportation is proposing to remove large numbers of trees, and other vegetation, along I-395, between Seminary Road and Sanger Avenue. The removal is needed, says VDOT, to widen I-395, so that there will be room for ramp from the HOV lanes, going northbound, to connect to Seminary Road. More than 6,000 feet of sound walls are to be built, including some near the Winkler Botanical Preserve. Along North Van Dorn Street, the more than 3,500 feet of soundwalls will, on average, be 29 feet high.

VDOT is proposing the ramp to "to ad-

dress the high volume of employee travel originating from south of Mark Center," traffic going to the BRAC-133 building. But VDOT has not stated how many vehicles would be expected to use the ramp. Estimates by residents, using available information, are that less than 100 cars going to the BRAC building would use the ramp each way (a.m., northbound; p.m., southbound). That's a very small number for a project costing of \$80 million. Moreover, because the BRAC building has only 3,800 parking spaces for 6,400 employees, it's almost guaranteed that so many employees will prefer driving themselves (compared to HOV and mass transit) that any spaces freed up by more HOV commuters will simply be claimed by other employees. In other words, there will always be 3,800 vehicles going into the BRAC parking lots on any day (minus drivers on vacation, sick, etc.), even with a new HOV ramp.

Though the ramp will not reduce BRAC-related traffic, it will put additional vehicles onto Seminary Road, since HOV traffic headed to other locations (such as Skyline Towers) would have a much better exit than Springfield or the Pentagon. That means that intersections near the BRAC building, expected to be badly impacted once all 6,400 employees are in place there, will be even worse — a perverse result for a project that is supposed to reduce BRAC-related traffic problems. Not surprisingly, the Department of Defense does not support (and certainly will not help pay for) the HOV ramp.

There are far better ways for the State of Virginia to spend \$80 million than on this

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 14

Some Bills Move Forward, While Others Create a Stir

By DAVID ENGLIN
DELEGATE (D-45)



RICHMOND REPORT

With the General Assembly session moving at its typical break-neck pace, several of my initiatives are moving forward, while others are creating a stir.

My top priorities this session include working to expand access to quality early childhood education, and my two bills on that subject won unanimous support from the Students and Early Education Subcommittee last week. House Bill 143 would allow school divisions to enter into public-private partnerships that leverage private investments in pre-k to lower special education costs, reinvesting those savings to further expand pre-k and further lower special-ed costs. House Bill 144 would ensure money the General Assembly has allocated to pre-k is used for that purpose by distributing “leftover” funds from the Virginia Preschool Initiative as grants to localities to expand pre-k access. Each year, some of the money the General Assembly allocates to the Virginia Preschool Initiative is left on the table because poorer localities cannot afford the matching funds necessary to draw down their share. This legislation would ensure they still have access to some portion of those resources.

As a member of the Agriculture, Chesapeake, and Natural Resources Committee, I have been working to promote jobs and economic development through sustainable and locally-grown agriculture, which also ensures our community has access to ecologically conscious, farm-fresh products. Last year, I was the chief sponsor of the Virginia Cider Act, which has helped launch a renaissance in Virginia’s burgeoning hard cider industry. Since the bill became law last July, production of traditional Virginia hard cider — the very kind Thomas Jefferson served at his dinner table — has expanded, and several new cideries are in varying stages of development. This year, I am working to support efforts to market this historic Virginia product by designating the full week before Thanksgiving each year as Virginia Cider Week. On Friday, my Virginia Cider Week legislation passed the House unanimously.

Friday also saw my resolution designating Feb. 28 as Spay Day in Virginia pass the House. The Humane Society asked me to carry this legislation as part of a national effort to shine a spotlight on spaying and neutering as proven methods of saving the lives of companion animals, feral cats, and

street dogs who might otherwise be put down in shelters or killed on the street. The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria admits more than 3,500 animals through its doors every year, highlighting the need for strategies to reduce overpopulation. Four million cats and dogs — about one every eight seconds — are put down in U.S. shelters each year. Often these animals are the offspring of cherished family pets. By designating Spay Day in Virginia, we will focus attention on spaying and neutering as steps individuals can take to address this problem.

Two other resolutions I am carrying have yet to be heard but are creating quite a stir. One would allow Virginia to implement its medical marijuana law, which has been on the books since 1979. For nearly 33 years, Virginia law has allowed medical marijuana for the treatment of cancer or glaucoma. However, to actually implement this policy and allow doctors to prescribe marijuana, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency would need to move marijuana from a Schedule I drug to a Schedule II drug, making it a highly controlled substance that can be prescribed. At the request of Veterans for Medical Marijuana, my legislation would have Virginia’s governor join the governors of Rhode Island and Washington in petitioning the DEA to change how marijuana is designated so we can implement Virginia’s long-standing law. I believe that doctors and

science, and not politicians, should determine medically appropriate treatments for their patients.

My other marijuana legislation is even more provocative. Selling hard liquor through ABC stores brings in as much as \$140 million per year for education, health care, public safety, and other core services. Given that we need more revenue, and tax increases are a non-starter for the Republican majority in the General Assembly, I have proposed that we find out how much revenue we might bring in if we legalized marijuana and sold it in ABC stores. A number of constituents have suggested this to me over the years, but I want to be very clear that this legislation would not actually legalize marijuana. It would simply conduct a study to determine how much revenue potential is out there so we can have an informed and intelligent public policy discussion. While this idea is not without controversy, the response from constituents has been overwhelmingly positive. Moreover, forcing the conversation highlights the dire need for new revenue options in light of Governor McDonnell’s proposed cuts to education and health care services for the poor.

Things move quickly here in Richmond, so I hope you will visit www.DavidEnglin.org or follow me on Twitter at @dlenclin to stay up to date about these and other issues.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 13

project. I encourage readers to learn more about what VDOT wants to do (see <http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/brac/default.aspx?id=50568>), and to sign the online petition that residents have created that documents the reasons why the VDOT Environmental Assessment is unacceptable (see <http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/395ramp.html>).

John Broughton
Alexandria

Flouting Public Opinion

To the Editor:

I would like to thank Councilmember Alicia Hughes for standing by the citizens in Saturday’s waterfront vote, particularly in her remark that she sees her role as an elected representative to implement the public’s wishes on a matter where an informed public has formed a view. This is called the “delegate theory” which views elected officials as standing in for the public, to act as the public would under such circumstances, because all 80,000 Alexandria voters could not fit into the room. Referendum is another iteration of “delegate theory” whereby the public can act as ultimate sovereign and enforce their will over a legislature which has flouted it.

The alternative “trustee theory” that pub-

lic officials are expected to consider the public’s wishes on a matter where an informed public has formed a view, but are nevertheless expected to decide on the merits of that matter as they see best because the public has entrusted them with matters of judgment. I believe that the trustee theory is tantamount to an inversion of our constitutional system where “we the people” are the source of government’s authority and legitimacy.

I would also like to thank Councilmember Frank Fannon for framing the concerns many of us have with the waterfront plan rushed to enactment even though the GenOn/Mirant plant’s retirement greatly changes the underlying circumstances, traffic studies have yet to be done, creative solutions for more public amenities have yet to be seriously considered, and questions have been raised about the flood mitigation engineering approaches contemplated. BRAC at least did a traffic study, even if a skewed one, whereas the city council enacted this plan, claiming the matter had been studied enough, yet as an admission of the opposite, kicked the can down the road on a Union Street traffic study.

Lastly, I am very much worried about Councilmember Rob Krupicka’s “just cause against just cause” characterization of the waterfront plan controversy because such circumstances inevitably lead to imbrolios and often fiascos. The best example of such a “just cause against just cause” is the intractable Israeli-Palestinian Conflict. The UN surely thought in 1947 that it had “stud-

ied the situation sufficiently” when it decided to partition Palestine, but the consequence of the partition has roiled world news and international relations for the 63 subsequent years with no resolution in sight. “Just cause against just cause” circumstances prove the most intractable and require the utmost caution and thoroughest scrutiny. For the city council to believe 2 and a half years is enough study fatuously ignores history’s wise guidance.

Dino Drudi
Alexandria

Later, Later

To the Editor:

I am an Alexandria resident and retired librarian who also worked as a contractor with FEMA’s flood insurance program. I was an opponent of Alexandria’s Waterfront Development “Draft Plan.” I watched Saturday’s hearings for six or seven hours on cable TV. A couple of themes that are important to me were clear:

Many speakers provided specific weaknesses to the “Plan.” For me this is perfectly (and painfully) illustrated by the fact that throughout the process whenever flood control was raised as a question, City officials jumped in with cozy and enthusiastic verbal assurances that “this is our number one priority.” Yet, when they were raised on Saturday — once again — the answer was “we will talk about this later.” Talk about “kicking the can:” The Council kicked it past

the street and into the river!

Second, as I testified at an earlier hearing — and at least three speakers reiterated on Saturday — the “Plan” is a slick brochure full of “mom and apple pie” generalities supplemented by a chaotic collection of appendices, revised and sometimes contradictory footnotes, and draft legislative changes. When speakers asked for specific documents, the City was silent. Speakers then expressed disbelief that the Council could possibly know what it was voting on. Not to mention the voters. The Council’s vote can in no way change a “Draft” into a “Final” document. I challenge the Council to produce a final document.

Bruce Miller
Alexandria

A Lack of Leadership

To the Editor:

I was not at all surprised, sadly, by the 5-2 vote in favor of the City’s waterfront plan on Saturday. What continues to astound me is the total disregard of the Democratic majority on City Council for citizens who don’t agree with them.

The hearing was a shameful pretense. It was an orchestrated event from start to finish to give the appearance that the plan could still be changed. That was never go-

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 24

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317 Mansion Drive Alexandria, VA 22302

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Stunning Colonial on Culdesac. Stratford Elem. 4000 fin sq ft, Steps to Library & Mt Vernon Hospital. 3 finished levels in pristine condition. 2 story foyer. Large kitchen with breakfast area open to family room w/ Vaulted ceilings & fireplace. Beautiful back yard with large deck, quite yard and play set. 4 Bedrooms up and finished lower level with luxury full bath and wet bar. Sprinkler system ~\$719,000 or \$3900/month



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1906 Belle Haven Road Alexandria, VA 22307

New Price in Mt. Vernon



Pristine colonial in culdesac with his and her master baths. 4 bedrooms, 4.5 baths. Hardwood floors on main level. Updated kitchen and baths throughout. Attached 2 car garage. Open floor plan and spacious kitchen opens to family room. Large recreation room, deck and screened-in porch. Fully finished lower level. Custom moldings throughout. ~\$675,000



4309 Sheridans Point Ct Alexandria, VA 22309

The "Light Horse Harry" Lee House



Stately brick townhouse built in 1780 was once the residence of Henry Lee and his family which included son Robert E Lee. Tall ceilings, some original features including plaster moldings, heart pine floors, horseshair ceiling medallion, and front staircase. Currently used as an office and residence, it could be used for either or both and offers seven off street parking spaces! ~\$1,750,000

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Lovely townhouse in pristine condition located in a quiet enclave close to the Potomac River, the bike bath, and Old Town. 3 large bedrooms, 3.5 bath. This townhome is the largest size in the community. Fabulous back yard and patio. 1 assigned parking space. Also close to an Indoor swimming pool, ice skating rink, library and shopping center. Living room fireplace strictly decorative. ~\$585,000 or \$2895/month

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8528 Monticello Ave
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Updated Colonial!
Classic Colonial in pristine cond. & updated throughout! Features inc: 4 large BRs, gourmet kit with custom cabs, granite countertops and SS appliances. First floor family room w/ FP. Updated baths and master suite with private bath. Garage parking, prime location on fenced level lot. Walk to nearby park and Stratford Landing School. OPEN SUN, 1/29, 1-4! GW Pkwy S; R-Collingwood; L-Riverside; R-Penn. Ave.; L-Monticello.

OPEN SUN **NEW PRICE**

3703 Carriage House Ct
\$610,000
Tremendous Value!
MAJOR PRICE REDUCTION! Owner wants immediate sale and has priced accordingly! *Classic Riverwood Colonial*, three finished levels including nicely finished basement. Prime location on cul-de-sac backing to parkland. Many features! Could use a little TLC but at this price-value can't be duplicated! OPEN SUN 1/29, 1-4! GW Pkwy S, past Estate; L-Old Mt Vernon Rd; L-Riverwood; L-Carriage House Ct.

4200 Kimbreele Ct
\$949,000
Updated Custom Home Near River!
Majestic brick colonial on quiet cul-de-sac in prestigious Oxford on the Potomac. Fabulous features include all brick exterior, 3 finished levels, elegant trim detail, luxurious updated kitchen and baths, multi-tiered exterior deck, oversize 2 car garage and private level backyard. Custom home in premier setting is priced to make it a truly astounding value.

NEW HOME

4009 Colonial Ave
\$749,500
New Home-Gorgeous Site!
Pre-construction opportunity-fabulous home by Wakefield Homes on gorgeous half acre level lot on quiet street in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Popular Belle View model with open floor plan, fabulous amenities and quality construction that have made Wakefield Mt. Vernon's leading builder for generations. Exceptional value-priced significantly lower than other new home on street. (Pre-construction picture is of similar house)

NEW HOME

516A E. Howell Ave
\$679,000
Del Ray-Rare Opportunity!
Exceptionally spacious home by one of area's leading builders in prime location. Four stories of luxury featuring bright open floor plan, open kitchen-family room, stunning master suite and private rear yard and deck. Unique combination of close-in convenience with up to date floor plan and amenities. Buy during construction and customize to suit your taste. (Photo is rendition)

NEW HOME **SOLD!**

5205 Polk Ave
\$1,085,000
Pre-Construction Sale!
Only one lot remaining in enclave of brand new custom homes in prime location in Seminary area. Home features high ceilings, open floor plan, gourmet kitchen, stunning master suite and finished basement. Two car side load garage. Private setting however convenient to everything! Pre-construction opportunity to select interior finishes. Exceptionally attractive price for new custom home!

\$529,000
Alex. House #1207
"NEW LISTING"
Bright & spacious describes this 2BR/2BA condo. Great views of the Capitol, the Potomac River & the DC skyline. Stunning renovation of this beautiful home. Gourmet kit w/top of the line cabs, appls, granite countertops & cherry wood flrs thru-out plus marble entrance foyer. A must see! Open February 5th, 1 - 4pm. Call for more details.

Ann Kavalljian 703.626.9171

\$599,000
Alexandria
"NETHERGATE"
Meticulously maintained & renovated 4 lvl Ramsey model w/ hdwd fls & 2FP. LR opens to private flagstone patio. Maple cabs, corian counters grace the kit w/FP. Master Suite offers spa bath, sitting rm & California closets. LL family rm. Walk to Old Town, mins to DC & airport.

Suzanne Backus 703.338.3594

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\$214,000
Alexandria Old Town
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Bathed in warm sunlight, this flat has solid brick construction, kitchen for two, beautiful hardwoods, an excellent floor plan. Easy access to all things Old Town plus transportation. So compare price/square footage & condo fee to other Old Town properties & you've found it!

Dianna Campagna 703.447.0849

\$749,000
ALEXANDRIA
"ALMOST FINISHED"
Fantastic home just south of Old Town is just about ready for new owners. Home features 4BR/2.5BA, open kitchen & family room, hardwoods, formal dining room, 2 car gar, LL finished w/rec rm & walkout. Great price for a NEW HOME!

Dayna Blumel / Kerry Adams 703.597.2252

\$342,500
Alex. House #1005
"PIED-A-TERRRE"
Great opportunity for a pied-a-terre in a wonderful high-rise building w/great views. Featuring a 1BR/1BA w/ blond wood flrs, built-in bookcases, floor to ceiling window/doors leading to expansive balcony. 1 garage space conveys. Incl: is a roof-top pool, sundeck & party room. Easy access to Metro & Reagan Airport. Call for more details.

Ann Kavalljian 703.626.9171

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\$1,200,000
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www.brianandjery.com
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Artist Suzanne Vigil talks about her work, "Ick."



Artist Mike McAteer talks about his work, a coconut cake. McAteer was diagnosed with diabetes last year — the fear of sugar influenced his entry.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFT/GAZETTE PACKET

'Fears and Phobias' Serves Up Diverse Views on Fear

New exhibit at Torpedo Factory runs through Feb. 19.

BY ERIK HEANEY
GAZETTE PACKET

At the Torpedo Factory's new exhibit, "Fears and Phobias," artists were given the opportunity to explore that which makes people afraid or anxious.

On Jan. 12, more than 200 people attended the reception at the Target Exhibit in which they were able to see the 22 works on display and meet some of the artists.

When describing how the Target Exhibit committee chose the theme of fear for its next exhibit, Gallery Director Mary Cook said that they had based their discussion off of the Mayan end of the world, referring to the Mayan myth that the world will end and begin a new cycle on Dec. 21, 2012. "We thought that this would be an appropriate theme for the year 2012," Cook said.

Many artists created their pieces as a means to manage their own fears, while others chose to soften the fears that inflict others. The artwork featured most mediums including pencil, paint, oil, film, sculpture, fabric and photography.

Lia Newman, director of programs and exhibitions at Artspace, in Raleigh, N.C., who had the challenge of narrowing the 500 submitted pieces of art down to the 22



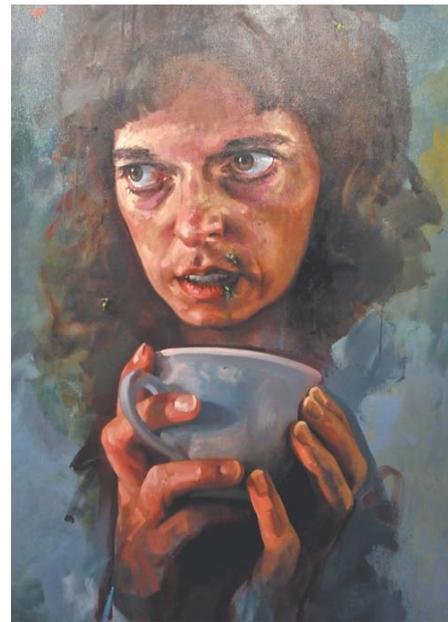
Lauren Garcia Colvin's "Pattern #2" of The New American Toile Series.

works that are currently on display, commented on this diversity: "I was surprised by the huge array of phobias and fears out there." Noting that "fears can be irrational," Newman remarked that many of the works were motivated by a need to reconcile these fears, which is possible because "there is a power in art to work through problems."

Suzanne Vigil, an Alexandria resident and a long-time contributor to the Torpedo Factory, wished to show in her piece "Ick," something that normally revolts but, on further examination, can be quite beautiful.

Vigil explained that her piece was inspired by serendipity, when she happened to come across a magnified photograph of a cockroach. The photograph offered a magnified view of a cockroach, at which Vigil was "astounded at how beautiful a creature it really was. It has such great colors: amber, sienna, burnt yellow."

In revealing how beautiful a cockroach can be, Vigil wanted to provide an "abstract view of a cockroach, and allow viewers to lose the context that these creatures usually exist with, particularly all of the negative attention it gets."



Best in Show went to Ann Piper's "Flytrap."

Iain Muirhead, a Chicago-based artist, painted a 36" x 47" portrait of what appears to be an unassuming middle-aged man. But, in fact, it is a portrait of a convicted sex-offender.

Muirhead said that this was a part of a series of pieces of painting that "were of predators within my own neighborhood, all within a four block radius of my apartment." In displaying his work, he had hoped to encourage parents to learn about appropriate strategies to better "keep their loved ones safe."

With the humorously titled "The South Shall Raise my Bloodsugar," Mike McAteer used art for therapeutic means. Having been diagnosed with type 1 diabetes last year, McAteer explained that "one day I was totally healthy, and the next day I was nearly on my deathbed."

In taking a traditionally appetizing food



Artist Ian Muirhead talks about his work in the show, a portrait of a sex offender. Muirhead said the work was triggered from a family incident involving a niece on the internet.

item and twisting its image, McAteer remarked that it "serves as a dark and humorous metaphor for my life." Moreover, the artist hoped to strike a chord with all those who have a debilitating disease, and raise awareness of the daily challenges for those that have type 1 diabetes.

Newman said that this exhibit is different from many others, because of the inherent challenge of sharing a fear with someone else, let alone making a fear public. The theme "asks artists to take what is internal, and put that up on display," said Newman, "and that takes a lot of courage. That's not easy to do."

'Fears and Phobias'

The exhibit will be on display at the Target Gallery in the Torpedo Factory until Feb. 19. Admission is free.

WINTER FUN



PHOTO BY JAMES ALEXANDER NY

Zurin Villanueva as Josephine Baker in "Josephine Tonight."

Notes from the Artistic Director

BY CAROLYN GRIFFIN

MetroStage is very proud of its work with musicals, especially new musicals. We have had great success with our world premieres and seen them go to New York and to other regional theatres. "ROOMS," a rock romance, has had many productions and will be produced in this area again soon. Our world premiere of "Glimpses of the Moon" has now been published by Samuel French with our theatre, cast, set, props and costumes listed. "Cool Papas Party" has continued to be workshopped in anticipation of a New York run, and "Pearl Bailey ... By Request" has had an extended run in Milwaukee and has been performed in New York as well.

Developing new work is essential. It continues the tradition of live stage productions that go beyond just reimagining the classics. MetroStage has committed to this and has become well known for our work with new material, especially musicals.

This week we open an exciting new musical, "Josephine Tonight," inspired by the early life of the iconic performer Josephine Baker, with book and lyrics by Sherman Yellen ("The Rothschilds," "Rex with Richard Rodgers," "Oh Calcutta!," in addition to "The Adams Chronicles" for television, and much more) and music by the late Wally Harper (best known as arranger and accompanist for Barbara Cook.) The amazing Maurice Hines is the director/choreographer, and the cast includes all

New York actors with many Broadway credits. This is a tremendous opportunity for MetroStage, and we have committed all of our resources to developing this work for our season and for future productions. It is a remarkable story of a young woman in the early part of the 20th century who leaves East St. Louis and lands in Paris on the stage of "La Revue Negre" and the "Follies Bergere," with a few stops on the vaudeville circuit and Harlem in between.

A new musical requires many more hours of readings, workshops, rehearsals, and previews — a tremendous commitment of both time and resources by the theatre. We believe it is worth it for our patrons now and patrons in the future as the work is produced across the country.

"Josephine Tonight" At MetroStage

The premiere of the musical, "Josephine Tonight," book and lyrics by Sherman Yellen, music by Wally Harper, opens at MetroStage Jan. 26, 2012. Inspired by the early life of Josephine Baker, this exciting new musical follows her path from dancing in the streets of East St. Louis to the nightclub stages of Paris. Performances are Jan. 26-March 18, Thursday and Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 3 and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 3 and 7 p.m. Tickets \$45-50. TKTS 800-494-8497/www.metrostage.org, Groups/Info 703-548-9044. At 1201 North Royal St. Alexandria. Fully accessible, free parking.

Designer Steals & Deals

Bargains at 7th Annual Old Town Boutique District Warehouse Sale set for Feb. 4.

Style-mavens and fashion hounds are gearing up for the biggest and popular designer clearance sale of the year — the 7th Annual Old Town Boutique District Warehouse Sale. The one-day shopping extravaganza featuring high-end boutique merchandise will be held at the George Washington Masonic Memorial on Saturday, Feb. 4 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Shoppers will find the best brands of clothing, shoes, jewelry, home furnishings and more up to 70 or 80 percent off retail prices.

Founded in 2005, the annual clearance sale has attracted a large and loyal audience of shoppers traveling to Alexandria from as far away as Richmond and Pennsylvania. The most serious fashion fans line up early in the morning hours to get the first look at the top label merchandise. The Old Town Boutique District will also give away to four lucky shoppers early entry into the Warehouse Sale (must enter on Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/OldTownBoutiqueDistrict>).

PARTICIPATING STORES AND LOCAL DESIGNERS

Andrea D'Ambrosia
Periwinkle
Apple Seed
Red Barn Mercantile
Diva
Stanton Gallery
Fornash
The Little Monogram Shop
Gossypia
The Shoe Hive
Hysteria
Top It Off
J McLaughlin
Treat
La Cuisine
Queen Bee Designs
Lawrence Miller & Co.
Zoe Boutique
Mint Condition
Mystique

A list of participating stores is located at www.oldtownboutiquedistrict.com.

Alexandria Black History Museum Announces Winter Film Line-Up

The Alexandria Black History Museum is continuing its partnership with SankofaSpirit to share its "Movies with a Mission" with local audiences. This monthly series, which began in 2009, continues in 2012. The screenings are held at 4:30 p.m. on the second Saturday of each month at the museum, 902 Wythe Street.

"Movies with a Mission" are free monthly films from and about Africa and the African Diaspora that seek to inform and inspire dialogue. Screenings will be followed by a discussion and gallery walk. Reservations are requested, as seating is limited. For more information or to make a reservation, call 703-746-4356. The following films will be offered this winter:

MARCH 10 - "TAKING ROOT: THE VISION OF WANGARI MAATHAI"

Planting trees for fuel, shade, and food is not something that anyone would imagine as the first step toward winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Yet with that simple act, Wangari Maathai, a woman born in rural Kenya, started down the path that reclaimed her country's land from 100 years of deforestation, provided new sources of food and income to rural communities, gave previously impoverished and powerless women a vital political role in their country, and ultimately helped to bring down Kenya's 24-year dictatorship. "Taking Root" tells the dramatic story of the woman whose simple act of planting trees grew into a nationwide movement for which this charismatic woman became an iconic inspiration. (80 min.)



"Homecoming"

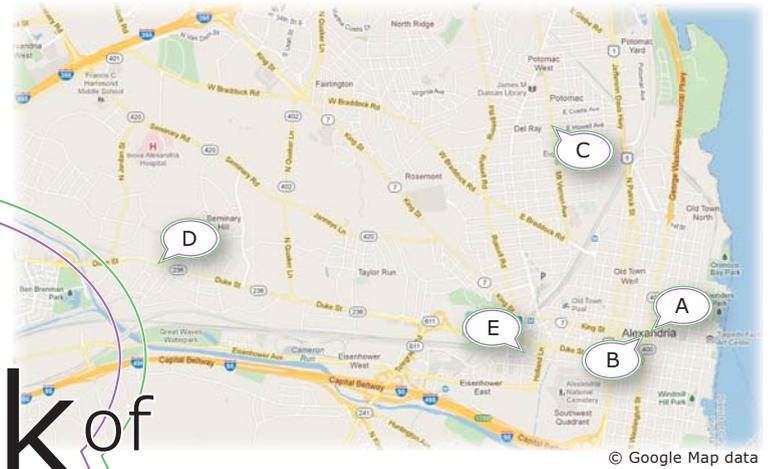
FEBRUARY 11 - "HOMECOMING"

The epic story of African American farming in the South, "Homecoming" chronicles land loss and black farmers from the Civil War to the present. Featuring archival footage and audio tracks including the voices of Malcolm X, Fannie Lou Hamer and Julian Bond, the film also excerpts the testimony of freed slaves, Toni Morrison's Song of Solomon and the writings of August Wilson. Producer/director Charlene Gilbert places her own family farm in Montezuma, Georgia, squarely in the historical context of the black farm movement in America. Narrated by Charles S. Dutton. (111 min.)

The Alexandria Black History Museum is located at 902 Wythe Street in the heart of the Parker-Gray Historic District and is open from Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org or call 703.746.4356.

What's Love Got to Do with It?

Everything, actually. More than a few guys and gals have been seduced by the fine cuisine that Alexandria has to offer. With Valentine's Day just around the corner, The Wanderer is already making plans for that one day of the year when there is no excuse to not focus on romance.



Talk of the Town



A LE REFUGE

Is there any place more romantic for a Valentine's Day dinner than Le Refuge? The intimate Country French restaurant has been dishing up romance across from historic Christ Church since 1983. Owner Jean Francois and daughter Ann Claire Fregnan (above left with Khadija Elkrrnidi) serve up some of the best Boubillabaisse, Fresh Dover Sole, Frog Legs, Beef Wellington and Rack of Lamb. Don't forget to leave room for the sinfully delicious Cr me Brulee and to-die-for Profiterolles.

127 N. Washington St.
703-548-4661
www.lerefugealexandria.com

Photos by Jeanne Theismann



B THE PITA HOUSE

Cozy and intimate is what The Pita House owner Tarek Moukalled and wife Rola do best. The new location on King Street makes it more than date-friendly with several vegetarian options included among the traditional Lebanese fare. The hummus, falafel, dolma, kibbeh and baba Ghanoush will no doubt be the best you've ever had.

719 King St.
703-684-9194
www.thepitahouse.com



C EVENING STAR

A revamped Evening Star Cafe opened last month with a new space outfitted in old trophies and airplane parts. Chef Jim Jeffords, previously at CityZen, brings his southern roots to Evening Star with dishes like Hoppin' John risotto and buttermilk fried chicken with collard greens. Pastry queen Tiffany MacIsaac supplies the southern-inspired desserts like deep fried fluffernutter.

2000 Mount Vernon Ave.
703-549-5051
www.eveningstarcafe.net



E THE CARLYLE CLUB

For an evening of old fashioned romance, The Carlyle Club is the place to be. Sophisticated Art Deco decor, romantic lighting and fantastic cuisine make this supper club one of the most romantic and unique hideaways in the city. Try the Prime Rib, Crab Cakes or Pan Seared Salmon. Now open for lunch on weekdays.

411 John Carlyle St.
703-548-8899
www.thecarlyleclub.com

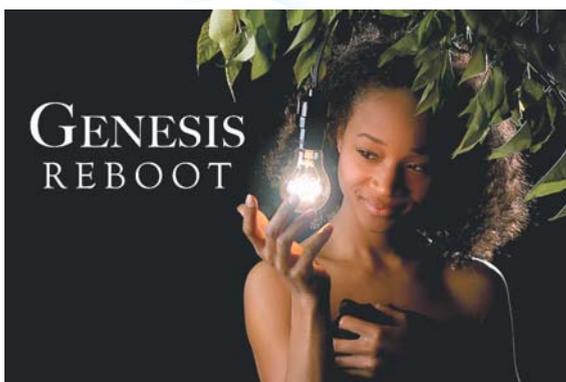


D TEMPO RESTAURANT

Nestled in the West End, Tempo Restaurant is one of Alexandria's best-kept secrets. This elegant, but unpretentious, neighborhood restaurant is where the locals dine. Owner Wendy Albert oversees a menu that displays a blend of northern Italian and French cuisine, featuring fresh seafood.

The Oysters Rockefeller are the bomb.
4231 Duke St.
703-370-7900
www.temprestaurant.com

WINTER FUN



FEB. 9 TO MARCH 3

“Genesis Reboot.” Tickets are \$30. Presented by Syntetic Theater. Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. At Crystal City Theater, 1800 South Bell St., Arlington.

THEATER

FEB. 24 TO MARCH 10

“The Dixie Swim Club.” Port City Playhouse presents a delightful comedy about five women who were on their college swim team and get together for a “girls only” weekend at a cottage on the Outer Banks every summer. Fri.-Sat., Feb. 24-25, March 2-3 and 9-10; Tues., March 6 at 8 p.m.; Sat. matinees March 3 and 10 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18 general admission, \$16 seniors & students, \$14 groups of 10+. At The LAB at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-838-2880 or www.portcityplayhouse.org.

FEB. 3 TO 17

“Laughter on the 23rd Floor.” Show times are Feb. 3, 4, 5 (m), 10, 11, 12 (m), 16, 17. Evenings at 8 p.m., Matinees (m) at 2:30 p.m. Presented by the Arlington Players. At Gunston Theatre One, 2700 South Lang St., Arlington.

NOW THROUGH JAN. 28

“Dreamgirls.” Evening performances on Jan. 26, 27, 28 at 8 p.m. Performances will be held at the Gunston Arts Center - Theater One, 2700 S. Lang Street in Arlington. Seating is General Admission; Tickets are \$20 and are available online for pre-purchase at www.DominionStage.org. Group Discounts available. Reservations can be made online or by calling 571-DS-Shows or 571-377-4637.

NOW THROUGH FEB. 11

Jules Feiffer’s “Little Murders.” Show times are Thursday through Saturday 8 p.m.; Saturday/Sunday matinee at 2:30 P.M. Post-show talk-back on Jan. 19. At Gunston Theatre II, 2700 South Lang St., Arlington. Order tickets online at americancentury.org or 703-998-4555.



JAN. 31 TO MARCH 25

“Really Really.” Showtimes are Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$56 - \$80 and are available by calling Ticketmaster at 703-573-SEAT (7328) or visiting www.signature-theatre.org. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington.



NOW THROUGH FEB. 4

“The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.” Wednesday to Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. Presented by the Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com or 703-683-0496.

EXTENDED THROUGH FEB. 5

“Hairspray.” Weeknights and matinees on Saturdays and Sundays. Directed by Eric Schaeffer, starring national radio host Robert Aubry Davis. Tickets start at \$63. Call 703-573-SEAT or visit www.signature-theatre.org. At Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington.

FINE ARTS

FEB. 3 TO MARCH 18

“City Limits.” Featuring acrylic paintings on canvas by Eric Garner of McLean. Opening reception is Saturday, Feb. 4 from 4 to 6 p.m. and Artist’s Talk at 5 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, Margaret W. and Joseph L. Fisher Art Gallery at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College.

NOW THROUGH FEB. 19

Fears and Phobias. What does it mean to be fearful – to live and cope with a phobia? The 21 artists in the gallery’s latest exhibition explore their own interpretations of various fears and phobias. At the Target Gallery at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. At the www.torpedofactory.org/target

NOW THROUGH FEB. 5

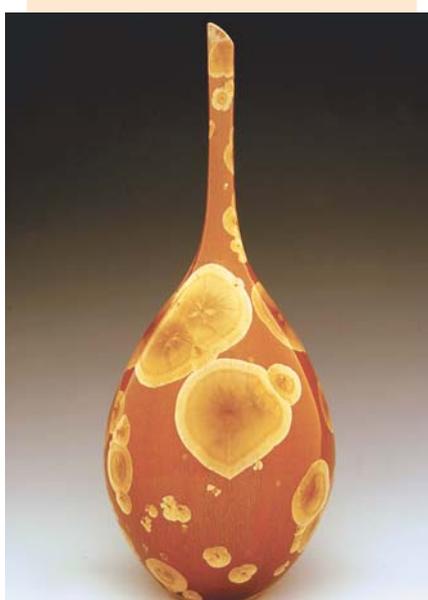
Connectivity: Threads of Community. Will showcase the works of 24 artists. Connectivity explores the many facets of connectivity artists create throughout their lives, and how these relationships relate to their work. At the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria.

JAN. 26 TO MARCH 11

GA Gardner: Interconnections. Gardner uses the vibrant colors and energy of his native Trinidad and Tobago in his paintings and mixed media works to address our often complicated relationship with mass communication. Artist’s reception is Sunday, Jan. 29 from 4 to 6 p.m. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria.

FEB. 8 TO MARCH 4

Gallery West Presents. The 15th Annual National Juried Fine Arts Competition for 2012. The juror is Edward J. Reed, a critically acclaimed, international-award-winning artist. Reception: Saturday, Feb. 11 from 5 – 8 p.m. At Gallery West, 1213 King Street in Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.gallery-west.com.



FEB. 3 TO MARCH 4

“An Affair to Remember.” Embrace artisan handmade creations made with a little love in February at Scope Gallery in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Kiln Club show at the Scope Gallery, 106 North Union Street, ground floor, Studio 19, Alexandria. Call the Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.htm

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Alexandria, VA 22307

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Call Friends of UCM at (703) 403-4410.

To purchase tickets online, please visit
<https://ucm.ejoinme.org/capitolsteps2012>

For more information about UCM, visit www.ucmagency.org.

UCM is thankful for the media sponsorship of this event by the Mount Vernon Gazette.

Mount Vernon Gazette

WINTER FUN

FRIDAY/JAN. 27

Pieta Brown in Concert. 7:30 p.m. With Iris Dement. Tickets are \$35. At the Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-965-3347 or visit www.birchmere.com/calendar

Tim Zimmerman and The King's Brass. 7:30 p.m. Concert features 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, percussion and keyboards. At Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King Street, Alexandria. Contact Louise Wilson, Director of Music at louise@fairlingtonumc.org or www.fairlingtonumc.org or call 703-671-4057.

SATURDAY/JAN. 28

Suits and Boots Party. 5 to 8 p.m. Swimsuits, summer wear and snow boots required. For each game purchased, a portion of proceeds will be donated to Dreams for Kids. At TopGolf Alexandria, 6625 S. Van Dorn St., Alexandria. Visit <http://www.topgolf.com/suits>

America's Historic Kilns. 10 a.m. Independent scholar and potter Brenda Hornsby Heindl of Liberty, N.C., will present "America's Historic Kilns: A Potter's Perspective." Hosted by Alexandria Archaeology Museum and sponsored by the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology. At The Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 North Union St., #327, Alexandria. Call 703-746-4399 or visit www.alexandriarchaeology.org.

Archaeology Talk. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friends of Fairfax County Archaeology and Gunston Hall are co-sponsoring a symposium on Mason Neck archaeology. The program includes talks by Mike Johnson, Christopher Sperling, David Shonyo, Wendy Miervaldis, Paul Inashima, and Douglas Comer. Visit the website at <http://www.gunstonhall.org/grounds/archaeology.html>.

Author Discussion. 1 to 3 p.m. Free. Author and former Chief Historian for the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park, Robert K. Krick, will give a free lecture on "Robert E. Lee and His Detractors in the Age of the Anti-Hero." At the Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1702.

Civil War Ball. 8 to 11 p.m. Live music, dance instruction and period desserts. Tickets are \$45/advance; \$50/door. Period attire, either civilian or military, is encouraged. In preparation for the ball, Civil War-era dance classes will be offered at Gadsby's Tavern Museum from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Thursdays, Jan. 12, 19, and 26. Dance instruction will include the waltz, polka, Virginia reel, and more! Classes are \$12 each or \$30 for the series. Advance reservations for both the Ball and dance classes are strongly recommended. Call 703-746-4242 or www.gadsbystavern.org. At Gadsby's Tavern ballroom.

Art*iculation — Marketing Your Artwork. 1 p.m. Free. Artists need to create marketing and promotional writing, and artist's statements, to present their work. David Hazard, a 34-year veteran of talent and product development, will help you create yours. At The Art League at Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria.

SUNDAY/JAN. 29

Author Marvin Josaitis. 9:15 to 10 a.m. Will discuss and sign copies of his autobiography, *Breaking Grand Silence: A Former Catholic Priest Speaks Out.* At Sharon Chapel, All Saints Episcopal Church, 3421 Franconia Road, Alexandria

Civil War Sunday. 1 to 5 p.m. Explore the Civil War in Alexandria with Civil War Sundays at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 North Union Street, #327. Visit www.alexandriarchaeology.org or call 703.746.4399.

Zumba Explosion. 4 to 8 p.m. Sponsored by RunningBrooke, dance off those holiday pounds and keep your New Year's resolution! Five instructors, two classes. Have fun helping at-risk kids in Alexandria. All proceeds benefit five vital Alexandria-based charities. At the Carlyle Club, 411 John Carlyle St., Alexandria.

Presidential Salon. 3 to 4:30 p.m. Join President James Madison at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, as he discusses and engages guests in political and personal issues of 1812. At 134 North Royal St.,



SATURDAY/FEB. 11

Bishop Ireton Dance. 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Featuring the bands, Black Moon Tonic and Big Bad JuJu. Sponsored by the BI Athletic Boosters Club. Cash bar and hors d'oeuvres. At Bishop Ireton School Gym, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Tickets at door are \$25/person; \$50/couple. Online tickets at www.liveatbishpireton.com.

Alexandria. Visit www.gadsbystavern.org or call 703-746-4242.

MONDAY/JAN. 30

Writer Thomas Kaufman. 7:30 p.m. Will discuss "Steal the Show, the second of his mysteries featuring private eye Willis Gidney. At Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1705.

TUESDAY/JAN. 31

"Let's Talk Baseball." 5 to 7:30 p.m. Alexandria

Aces' co-founder Pat Malone to talk about the 2012 season and the Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League at Al's Steak House, 1504 Mount Vernon Avenue, in Del Ray. Visit www.AlsSteak.com.

Music for Low Strings. 7:30 p.m. Free. Presented by the National Chamber Players. An ensemble of cellists and bassists from the NSO will perform *Prelude* by Shostakovich, *Radu* by Marc Mellits, *Maribel* by Osvaldo Golijov and an

SEE WINTER FUN, PAGE 23

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Alexandria
Gazette Packet

WINTER FUN

FROM PAGE 22

arrangement for six cellos and four basses of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition. At Pendleton Hall, Episcopal High School, 3900 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. Call 703-933-4135, www.episcopalhighschool.org/arts/ncp_ehs

Open House. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The St. Louis School community is invited to attend an open house. Tour the school and talk with current parents and staff. All are welcome. At 2901 Popkins Lane, Alexandria. Call 703-768-7732 or visit www.stlouisschool.org. Wednesday/Feb. 1

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

FRIDAY/FEB. 3

Fridays at Grace. 7:30 p.m. Pops organ concert with Tim Smith's transcription of Saint-Saëns' "Carnival of the Animals," complete with Ogden Nash poems read by a celebrity guest. Also James Hewitt's "Battle of Trenton" with human "supertitles" just like at the opera. At Grace Episcopal Church, 3600 Russell Rd., Alexandria. Optional goodwill offering. Call 703-549-1980 or www.gracealex.org.

FEB. 3 TO 26

Love, Politics & Scrabble. The Games People Play, juried art exhibit at Del Ray Artisans, inspired by the games people play throughout life. Del Ray Artisans' opening reception is Friday, Feb. 3, 7-10 p.m. This juried show explores the numerous games people play in life, whether power, Monopoly, manipulation, poker, Angry Birds, baseball, or gossip. The community is invited to 'get their game on' at Art Games on Feb. 10 and Game Talks on Feb. 25. The exhibit and Marketplace, with artful Valentine Cards, closes Feb. 26. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org or 703-838-4827.

SATURDAY/FEB. 4

Country Western Dance. 8:30 to 11 p.m. The Northern Virginia Country Western Dance Association will hold its smoke-free, alcohol-free dance at Luther Jackson Middle School, 3020 Gallows Rd., Falls Church. BJ Brown will be the DJ. A line dance will be taught beginning at 7:30 p.m. A couples dance will be taught beginning at 8 p.m. Open dancing is from 8:30-11:00 p.m. and includes Two Step, Waltz, line, Swing, Cha Cha, and specialty dances. Couples and singles are welcome. Admission for NVCWDA members \$10; non-members \$12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult \$5; PSDC members \$10. Snacks and drinks will be available. Visit www.nvcwda.org, or call the hot line 703-860-4941.

Genealogy Lecture. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$5. Genealogist Char Bah will present, "Using Oral History, Censuses and Vital Statistics to Start Your Research," a program for beginners. At the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., in the Parker-Gray Historic District in Alexandria. Call 703-746-4356 or visit www.alexblackhistory.org.

Growing Inequality in Wealth. 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The Corruption of the Democratic Process and Resulting Social Injustice. Featured speakers will include Kevin Zeese of the Occupy Movement and Aquene Freechild of Public Citizen. At the Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. To register, click on the "Register for Upcoming Events" banner of www.uusj.org. Questions? 301-588-1951. RSVP by Monday, Jan. 30.

Jane Franklin Dance: The Mouse of Amherst. 3:30 p.m. A performance for children. Tickets are \$10/children; \$15/adults. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Call 703-933-1111, or visit www.janefranklin.com

Jane Franklin Dance: Forty + or Minus. 5 p.m. Tickets are \$20. At The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Call 703-933-1111, or visit www.janefranklin.com.

Wonders of Science Demo. Visit the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum and discover curious objects, from poison bottles to dragon's blood, and find out how they were used. Admission is \$6. Reservations can be made at 703-746-3852. At 105-107 South Fairfax Street in Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.apothecarymuseum.org or call 703-746-3852.

SUNDAY/FEB. 5

Mayor Bill Euille's Super Bowl Party. 5 p.m. Tickets are \$35/person; \$60/two; \$100/family of four; donations accepted. RSVP "Friends of Bill Euille," P.O. Box 25048, Alexandria, VA 22313. At Joe Theismann's Restaurant, 1800 Diagonal Road, Alexandria. Call 703-307-0851.



SUNDAY/FEB. 19

Singer-songwriter Bob Franke. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18/general; \$15/advance. The workshop (\$60 general, discounts are available) will be held Saturday, Feb. 18, from 1:30 to 4 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 19, from 2 to 4:30 p.m. At Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Visit www.focusmusic.org or 703-501-6061.

"Voyage to Germany." 2 p.m. Presented by the Marine Chamber Orchestra. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Northern Virginia Community College, 3001 North Beaugard Street, Alexandria. Call 703-845-6156 or www.schlesingercenter.com.

TUESDAY/FEB. 7

"Poetry and Creative Play: Writing as an Expressive Coping Strategy." 6 to 8 p.m. Featuring Mary Azoy, Licensed Professional Counselor & Poetry Therapist. At Morrison House, 116 South Alfred St., Alexandria. Visit www.morrisonhouse.com or call 703-838-8000.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 8

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett Street, Alexandria.

FRIDAY/FEB. 10

Art Games. 'Get your game on' at Del Ray Artisans' Art Games on Friday, Feb. 10, 7:30-9:30 p.m. where Art Bingo will be played after an artful mixer game. \$7 donation; light refreshments; adults 18 +. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org

SATURDAY/FEB. 11

Bishop Ireton Dance. 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Featuring the bands, Black Moon Tonic and Big Bad JuJu. Sponsored by the BI Athletic

Boosters Club. Cash bar and hors d'oeuvres. At Bishop Ireton School Gym, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria. Tickets at door are \$25/person; \$50/couple. Online tickets at www.liveatbishpireton.com.

Genealogy Lecture.

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cost is \$5. Genealogist Char Bah will examine the family histories of four Alexandria women who were influential in the city's African American community. At the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St., in the Parker-Gray Historic District in Alexandria. Call 703-746-4356 or visit www.alexblackhistory.org.

Swordsmen's Rendezvous. Every half hour between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Admission is \$6/person, ages 5 and up. Reservations are required and can be made by calling 703-746-4242. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal Street, Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.gadsbystavern.org.

Alexandria Coin Show. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. There will be 50 tables with U.S. coins and currency, world coins, banknotes, ancient coins, hobby books, gold, silver, medals, tokens and collectibles. This is open to the public. An educational presentation is provided. Prizes and coins are given away for attendees. At the Hampton Inn & Suites on the corner of the I-495 beltway and Route 1, Alexandria. Visit the Alexandria Coin Club website at www.alexandriacoinclub.com.

Clarinetist Richard Stoltzman. With the ASO and Mozart's Requiem. Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$35/adults; \$30/seniors; \$10/students. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 3001 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria.

FEB. 11 AND 12

Mattress Sale Fund-raiser. West Potomac High School is holding a Mattress Sale Fund-raiser. Profits go to the 2012 All-Night Graduation Celebration and Dance Team. Featured are Pillow-Top, Plus Top, Orthopedic, Latex and Memory Foam Sets. Prices start: Twin \$199; Full \$289; Queen \$299; and King \$499. Email CFSVirginia@gmail.com. The ANGC web site is http://wphs-ang.weebly.com/index.html

ASO, Richard Stoltzman, and Mozart's Requiem. Times are Saturday at 8 p.m.; Sunday at 3 p.m. With Kim Allen Kluge, conductor; Mozart: Clarinet Concerto; Richard Stoltzman, clarinet; Mozart: Requiem; Alexandria Choral Society; The Metropolitan Chorus; Katharine Dain, soprano; Sarah Mesko, mezzo-soprano; Daniel Molkenstin, tenor; Thomas Stork, bass-baritone. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 3001 N. Beaugard St., Alexandria. Tickets \$5 youth, and starting at \$10 students, \$30 seniors, and \$35 adults. Visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.

SUNDAY/FEB. 12

Basket Bingo. 2 p.m. A set of 20 bingo cards and a door prize ticket are included with admission. Proceeds support the Class of 2012 All-Night Grad Party. At Mount Vernon High School cafeteria (door #4), 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road, Alexandria. To purchase tickets, contact Paula Weinberg at MVHSBasketBingo@gmail.com or call 703-298-1593.

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 14

ing to happen. Those from the community who spoke so eloquently and thoughtfully against the plan and asked for more time to consider alternatives and impacts like traffic, might as well have not bothered to speak at all.

Former Councilman Dave Speck came out of retirement from Nantucket to speak in favor of the plan — and was asked all sorts of leading questions that kept him speaking far, far beyond his allotted three minutes. He reminded everyone that once things have been done that no one likes, they are eventually forgotten. That's progress, folks!

The message Speck delivered on behalf of Council was that our taxes will go up if we don't have this development, and we won't be able to support other things like schools. These connections are misleading — designed to prop up the views of a development-hungry Democratic Council. Have your taxes declined lately? This is an example of yet more partisan, misleading rhetoric designed to divide the community further in an election year.

Judy Noritake, chair of the Park and Recreation Committee, spoke for three minutes and was kept at the podium much longer, giving pre-scripted answers to the Council's questions. From Ms Noritake we learned that there is too much green space on the waterfront, and that we must buy more land elsewhere. The need for more open space is always elsewhere, and yet the reality is that on a per-capita basis Alexandria has well below the minimum amount of open space (based on national standards). And the amount of open space we do have per person is declining. As all great cities are learning, open space improves property values and is a great asset that attracts tourists too.

Over 100 people spoke on Saturday. Half were for the plan and were mostly Chamber of Commerce or Waterfront4All members. The other half were citizens, who actually live here, and who asked for more time to study important issues like traffic, density and uses.

This was never going to happen. The majority Democratic City Council had made up its mind long ago — three years ago in fact — and this was a day to pretend that they were listening to citizens. The five Democrats listened all right, but they listened to the "half" that they consider their constituents for November.

The Mayor and Council had a chance to show leadership by helping the community work toward a plan that would bring the town together. Instead, they chose partisan self-interest as their goal. Everyone in Alexandria was a loser on Saturday.

Andrew Macdonald

The Day City's Democratic Party Died

To the Editor:

As an activist labor Democrat on a na-

A New Session for New State Senator

BY ADAM EBBIN
STATE SENATOR (D-30)

With the 2012 General Assembly underway, this is my first report from Richmond as your new senator for the 30th Senate District. As you may know, there have been serious conflicts in the organization of the Senate. With the make up of the Senate split 20 - 20 between Republicans and Democrats, a major dispute arose concerning committee assignments and the ability of the lieutenant governor to break ties. Previously when a tie in the Senate occurred, committee assignments were evenly divided. Unfortunately the Republicans made a power grab as if they had majority party status with full control over committee assignments.

Despite the unfortunate loss of several qualified and veteran Democratic legislators on important committees, Democratic senators intend to keep standing for the families of Virginia.

In spite of the committee structure issue, I was appointed to three committees, Agriculture, Conservation and National Resources, Local Government and



RICHMOND
UPDATE

Laws and Technology.

Among the 16 pieces of legislation I have introduced with local and statewide significance:

❖ SB 257 School Calendar - Would allow local school

boards full authority to set the school calendar and determining the opening of the school year, eliminating the post-Labor Day opening requirement. Already more than half of localities have waivers for this, and it will allow for equal preparation for standardized tests, including the important AP exams.

❖ SB 259 Human Trafficking - Would require the Board of Education to provide awareness and training materials for local school divisions on human trafficking, including strategies for the prevention of trafficking children.

❖ SB 260 VA Public Procurement Act - Authorizes localities to procure construction on a best value procurement basis, factoring in safety and quality as part of their bids.

❖ SB 265 Child Abuse Prevention - Adds athletic coaches and directors to the list of persons required to report child abuse.

I've also introduced two resolutions of note: SJ 52, which would direct the Commonwealth Transportation board to make high capacity transit a funding priority, and SJ 93, to direct the study of the use of solitary confinement by the Department of Corrections. I am concerned about inmates spending years in solitary confinement and then in some cases being released directly into the community.

I was pleased that Governor McDonnell endorsed the authority of local school boards to set their own calendars (as does my bill, SB 257) during his State of the Commonwealth Address. However, I stand with my fellow Democrats insisting that increases in funding for higher education and transportation not be at the expense of public schools, public safety, and other major services that create jobs and opportunity for Virginia families.

This session will present challenges, and I am excited and honored to work to meet them on your behalf. I will keep you informed as the legislative process unfolds and encourage you to subscribe to updates at www.adamebbin.com and contact me at district30@senate.virginia.gov or 804-698-7530

tional scale it pains me to admit that Alexandria's Democratic Party produces elected mutants. Euille, Donley, Pepper, Smedburg and Krupicka betray everything genuine Democrats are fighting for nationally in rust belt and shuttered economies where not having enough goes without saying. Bereft of Alexandria's relative abundance, these less privileged cities and townships produce elected Democratic leaders who actually stand for something besides their own venal self interests and dull, un-inspired thinking, knowing that the future lies in building a vibrant green economy that defends the working people at the bottom, the ones who play by the rules and who shoulder the burdens.

Here in Alexandria, it is elected Republicans who have the courage to stand for honoring our local environment and history, placing citizen's rights over developers, and offering a creative vision for our future that integrates our city instead of triangulating special interest power plays pitting neighborhoods against each other to incite municipal civil war so that a specially selected few benefit at the expense of the resident many. While we are blessed nationally with a Democratic President who has the guts to reject the ecologically destructive Keystone pipeline, our Democratic-controlled City Council displays no such qualities but instead has pandered to the lowest possible payola denominator in voting to approve the density-destructive waterfront plan in Old Town that aids and abets developer-outsourced upzoning.

Enlightened Democrats free of

Alexandria's corrupt machine politics honor Alicia Hughes and Frank Fannon for their vote against the City's poorly conceived developer bonanza waterfront conspiracy. So do all my neighbors as evidenced by our super majority petition that now has standing thanks to our collective efforts and their conscience-inspired votes. We will either have transparent democracy in Alexandria or we will become a ward for Gotham-on-the-Potomac practitioners. The jury is still out.

Michael A. Peck

Michael A. Peck lives adjacent to Robinson Terminal North and leads a two decade-old consulting business registered in Alexandria.

Council Could Have Compromised

To the Editor:

Last Saturday, City Council passed the Waterfront Plan and the Rezoning of three waterfront parcels to encourage development. On one side were citizens, who at their own cost and expense put together a plan which the city said had many good ideas, but when the city added them up, they said they proved unfeasible. So they threw all of them out, and proceeded with the plan they had the whole time. In any negotiation, you always start with a higher price than you are actually willing to pay, so the city had a long list of amenities, and when several of their ideas proved infea-

sible, they simply threw them out and said "look, we made changes." But they held fast to the one tenet of the plan that was most disagreeable, rezoning.

But thankfully, a group of residents gathered the necessary signatures to comply with an official protest of the rezoning. The City Attorney James Banks refused (maybe on the advice of his counsel) to advise the citizens how to submit the protest, or what the city would require. Frankly, I don't think they believed it could be done. This followed a pattern of the city attorney trying to characterize efforts by citizens to make constructive changes to this plan. First he said the plan that we presented was "down zoning" and therefore illegal. When we established that we only wanted to keep the "current zoning" he denied that the city was changing the zoning at all, and therefore citizens have no right to protest. Interesting that when the motion to pass the plan was introduced by Paul Smedberg, he introduced it as the Small Area Plan and Zoning changes. No complaint from the city attorney there.

There was a memo, clearly ignored, like so many other pieces of good advice along the way, by Faroll Hamer, director of Planning and Zoning (there is that word again), and James Banks, talking about the merits of separating the zoning from the conceptual plan. It says "Council, if it chooses, may legally act to adopt the Waterfront Plan without also approving the zoning of specific parcels to those uses and densities an-

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OPINION

Racing Against the Clock When Heart Attack Strikes

BY CHRISTINE CANDIO,
R.N. FACHE
CEO, INOVA ALEXANDRIA
HOSPITAL



COMMENTARY

About every 34 seconds, someone in the United States has a heart attack. On Nov. 18, 2011, that “someone” included Leesburg resident Richard Fleeman. One week shy of his 51st birthday, he had just settled into his workday as a wholesale parts manager at BMW of Alexandria.

“All of a sudden, I wasn’t feeling right, like the flu was coming on,” said Mr. Fleeman. “I started having severe back pain in my lower back, my upper back and then my neck. It dawned on me: I’m having a heart attack.”

A co-worker drove him to Inova Alexandria Hospital’s Emergency Department, where Mr. Fleeman spoke the two words that launched a well-rehearsed, race against the clock involving multiple hospital departments, physicians, nurses and technical staff: “Chest Pain.”

A heart attack occurs when one or more of the coronary arteries that supply blood to the heart become partially or completely blocked, starving the heart muscle of blood, and causing possible heart damage or death.

For patients like Mr. Fleeman with the most severe type of heart attack involving complete blockage, the American College of Cardiology (ACC) and the American Heart Association (AHA) recommend patients receive life-saving balloon angioplasty — an emergency artery opening procedure — within 90 minutes of hospital arrival. Known as “door-to-balloon” time or D2B, the ACC and AHA launched a nationwide initiative in 2006 to educate hospitals about the 90-minute goal.

The Inova Heart and Vascular Institute at Inova Alexandria Hospital joined the nationwide effort and committed resources to improving our D2B times. Those resources included state-of-the-art technology upgrades to five labs in our Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiology (CVIR) Department — where angioplasties are performed — and additional beds in the CVIR admission and recovery area. In addition, staff in our Emergency Department and CVIR developed joint protocols to quickly identify and treat heart attack patients within 90 minutes or less. They also worked with EMS providers in the City of Alexandria to establish communication protocols that flag

incoming heart attack patients, enabling the hospital to mobilize an angioplasty lab team before the patient even arrives.

Today, I am proud to say we have exceeded the 90-minute goal, but we aren’t done yet. We review every heart attack case for areas of improvement; we participate in a national hospital registry that shares best practices for reducing D2B; and, we work with the AHA’s Mission: Lifeline project to train healthcare providers in the

field.

For Mr. Fleeman, it took only 29 minutes from door-to-balloon. An interventional cardiologist performed an angioplasty and inserted a stent to open his one blocked artery. Two days later he went home in time to celebrate his next birthday and a Thanksgiving holiday that, no doubt, held extra precious meaning this time around.

Read more about our cardiac services at inovaheart.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 24

participated by the Plan” Unfortunately, Council chose not to do this even though there were several reasons to do so listed in the memo:

1. ... concerns about the Waterfront Plan’s proposal for zoning to allow hotels and increased density. With more time and discussion about implementation, concerns may be allayed.

2. Two out of three development opportunities on the Waterfront are for Robinson Terminal, and likely not to be developed soon, thereby making zoning action unnecessary now. There is currently interest in the redevelopment of the Cumming Turner block, but that could change (and probably has).

3. Part of the reason for citizen concern is the fact that there are no specific development plans before the City now. It would be easier to support a development concept when there is an actual application and proposal to view.

4. Assuming an implementation group is established with subgroups to work on specific elements of the Waterfront Plan, such as history, parking, and flood mitigation, there would be a ready venue for citizen review of zoning concept when a developer is ready to proceed.

5. There is the potential to achieve more from a developer in a rezoning process, for example through proffers, than through the SUP process. (acknowledgement that there

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 26

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Obituary

GATE CITY, Va.- Jay Dixon, 71, son the late Marjorie L. (Bond) and James Howard Dixon went home to the Lord on January 20, 2012.

Jay Dixon is a retired Vet of 23 years of service with the Army with the rank of lieutenant colonel. During his military career, Dixon served in the 44th Construction Battalion in Korea, was a member and instructor for Special Forces, and a warrant officer aviator flying missions in Vietnam.

After a successful career in the military, Jay served as a consultant to civil and defense government agencies, as a military strategist and information systems designer.

Dixon recently published a novel, his sixth book, "The Secret War," that draws heavily upon his experiences in Southeast Asia.

Jay Dixon is survived by his loving wife Carol Dixon; Two sisters: Mary E. Isaacs and Florence E. Thompson; brother-in-law, George Isaacs. Five children: Kimberly A. Thompson, Theresa L. Seal, James W. Dixon, Eugene D. Dixon, Janie R. Reinhard; Ten Grandchildren, Two Step-Grandchildren, Cousins, Uncles, Aunts, Nieces, Nephews, and friends.

Scott County Funeral Home in Weber City, VA is proud to be serving the Dixon family. Funeral services will be held Monday, January 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. (viewing at 5:00 p.m.). A graveside service will be conducted at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at the Holston Valley Cemetery in Weber City, VA. Friends and family are welcome to attend the celebration of Jay Dixon's life at the Estleville Bed & Breakfast in Gate City, VA. after the burial service.

FROM PAGE 25

are no proffers.)

6. If rezoning does not take place and a property owner seeks development approval under current zoning, staff will apply the Development Guidelines in the Plan to the extent it is able to do so.

For example, there is discretion in the SUP arena to apply such guidelines, although it would be limited to those that are not inconsistent with current zoning.

If the city were truly interested in avoiding litigation, by the protest petitioners, or other legal challenges that may arise, there is an option. The City seems to be going to great lengths to avoid litigation with Robinson Terminal and the Washington Post, and to not have to defend the 1992 comprehensive zoning of the city, that the Washington Post wants to overturn. Wouldn't they want to avoid litigation against their own citizens. Or are the interests of businesses more important to protect? City Council can bring back the vote and remove the zoning, and a compromise can be struck.

Otherwise the city council has chosen to expose the divide between businesses and citizens instead of bridging the gap.

Boyd Walker

Small Area Plan Disaster

To the Editor:

As some of you may know, I voiced an opinion about the proposed Arlandria Re-Development plan that praised the concept, the new tax revenue, the revitalization of the area and the addition of developer funded affordable housing units. As this letter progresses, please keep in mind that as the developer in Arlandria adds affordable units, it is not tearing a single one down.

Just hours ago I returned from the Beauregard Small Area Redevelopment Planning meeting.

As was made public, six different developers are planning a phased demolition of multiple buildings to make way for high end multi-family buildings meant to revitalize the area and, presumably provide housing for the 6,000 or so new BRAC-133 employees; in essence, this is the city's way of sponsoring a multi-company "un-BRAC-ing" of BRAC. And while the city failed miserably in bringing the BRAC-133 building here in the first place, it now intends to spend an additional \$60,000,000 to assist this redevelopment, assuming by 2040 when the project is com-

plete it will have been paid back approximately \$30,000,000 of its initial investment.

The public is being led to believe a number of very positive things, some of which are true but, the lies are not merely lies, they are horrifying.

Some truths and positives:

The site plan is beautiful, connects other neighborhoods, increases tax revenue and adds open spaces.

A new Fire Department housing nearly 30 employees on an Engine, Ladder Truck and EMS Vehicle is priority #1.

A botanical reserve is be instituted.

Additional Mass Transit options are going to be added.

But as is often the case, here lays the "rub."

The developers, specifically one very vocal representative of the multi-billion dollar JBG Companies suggest that by 2040 they will have added more than 700 "dedicated" Affordable Housing Units.

So this begs the question; what is "affordable"?

According to the City and its partner developers, the plan calls for these Affordable Housing units to be available to individuals and families, depending on unit, who earn as a household or individual somewhere between 50 percent and 80 percent of our regions AMI (average median income). For the record, our area's AMI is a little bit over \$100,000 per year. So now we know that the new 700+ Affordable Housing units are to be reserved for individuals who earn nearly 8X the American and Virginia Poverty Line Threshold.

So my first question is this? \$80,000 per year is worthy of dedicated Affordable Housing?

As these building in the Beauregard Small Area Redevelopment Plan are, as the city says, "demolished" and 700+ "affordable units" are built in conjunction with thousands of luxury market rate units, one can only assume that the forced relocation is happening to tenants who may or may not meet that 50-80 percent AMI? Maybe close? We don't know.

The city and its partner developers have refused to survey the area's current residency to assess the AMI of the site as it stands now. The city and their partner developers are toasting champagne over the fact that they believe 700+ "affordable" units will represent the largest single cluster of Affordable Housing in the city. What they do not know is this; it is highly likely that the current residency of the area represents the largest single cluster of affordably priced multi-family units in the city.



Residents help make sandwiches as part of the service projects at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Summit.

In Service to Their Community

BY MCKENYA DILWORTH-ABDALLA
CENTER DIRECTOR
NANNIE J. LEE MEMORIAL
RECREATION CENTER

The Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Youth Summit participant attendance numbers increased this year with families from the community stopping in to help make sure the service projects were accomplished.

There are so many people to thank like Volunteer Alexandria, Americorps, ARHA, 4H

and the staff and senior management of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities. There were more than 100 people who made sure that on MLK Day, the homeless living on the streets of Alexandria had something to eat and a first aid kit by their sides. To paraphrase the late civil rights leader, Dr. King, the quality of one's life, not the longevity, is what is important. Together we made our lives more important — more meaningful by helping others. Thank you for giving back Alexandria!

So as the existing Beauregard Small Area infrastructure is torn down and the developers provide so called "relocation assistance", where do we expect these residents to go? Are there enough units in the city for which a \$30,000/year income qualifies? What about incomes even lower than that? Are there enough units in general?

When I asked what the city will do or recommend should say, 1,500 or so people be displaced without any available housing options, the response was simple ... there was no tangible response. One city official suggested they may just have to move outside of Alexandria.

This is despicable.

Keep in mind that as a Republican candidate for Alexandria City Council I am a huge proponent of retail and residential development, increased tax revenue and the lowering of taxes but, I am never for the dehumanization of our citizens.

I am for Alexandrians first and

right now, as we're mere days away from this redevelopment plan being put into force, it seems the City and I disagree on that point.

It seems the City is aligned entirely with these six different developers and are placing Alexandrians second.

We are about to forcefully remove nearly 2,000 individuals and families from a housing environment they can afford and replace them with around 700 "affordable" units meant for renters who earn enough to drive a Lexus to work.

What does the city say about the forced expulsion of these tenants? "Attrition will take care of most of it."

If you were unsure, this is what attrition really means ... the raising of rents so high that residents can no longer afford to stay.

Be aware Alexandria, you are not a priority. Not right now anyways.

Scott Gordon

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TC Drops Double-Overtime Thriller Against Woodson

Huggins scores 25,
Moss 22 in defeat.

BY JON ROETMAN
GAZETTE PACKET

The T.C. Williams boys' basketball team trailed Woodson by two points midway through the fourth quarter and was in search of a defensive stop when the Cavaliers passed the ball to Peter Murray, who was standing alone at the top of the arc.

Murray, a reserve post who had yet to score, let fly from long range, burying a 3-pointer that left TC head coach Julian King slumping forward in disbelief in front of the Titans' bench.

Murray's 3-pointer was one of 13 for the Cavaliers, whose sharp shooting lifted them past the Titans, 73-70, in double overtime on Jan. 24 at Woodson. The victory improved the Cavaliers' record to 14-3 and helped them retain sole possession of first place in the Patriot District with an 8-1 mark. It also gave Woodson a regular-season sweep against a TC program that has won four of the last five Northern Region championships. Meanwhile, the Titans dropped to 8-8, including 5-5 in the district. TC had won its previous two games against Patriot opponents, beating Annandale and West Potomac.

"We still have a lot of work to do," King said. "We thought we were turning the corner a few games ago. There are just a lot of little things we need to take care of and stop making the same mistakes over and over at crucial times of the game."

One area in which the Titans struggled was perimeter defense. TC ran into a hot-handed Cavaliers team, but King and junior Landon Moss said the Titans could have done more to stop them.

"We knew they could shoot coming in," Moss said. "We just didn't close out hard enough."

Woodson's 3-point shooting wasn't the



T.C. Williams junior Landon Moss scored 22 points and grabbed 10 rebounds during a loss to Woodson.



T.C. Williams senior T.J. Huggins scored 25 points against Woodson on Jan. 24.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/GAZETTE PACKET

only factor that led to defeat for the Titans. TC held a lead in the final minute of regulation and each overtime period, only to have Woodson battle back.

A transition bucket by Daquan Kerman and a pair of free throws by Moss gave the Titans a 70-69 lead with 52.6 seconds remaining in the second overtime. However, Woodson freshman Eric Bowles, Jr. answered with what proved to be the game-winner on a drive to the basket with 37 seconds remaining. The Cavaliers added a pair of free throws and the Titans came up empty.

A Moss 3-pointer gave TC a 64-61 advan-

tage late in the first overtime. The Titans had a chance to extend their lead to two possessions but came up empty on the front end of a one-and-one. Woodson's Alex Boock capitalized, knocking down a 3-pointer with 12.4 seconds remaining to send the game into a second overtime.

A bucket by Damoni Moore gave TC a 57-55 lead late in regulation, but a putback by Woodson's Brandon Stepka sent the game into overtime.

King said the Titans need to learn how to relax and remain confident in times of adversity.

"With all the success we've had, you can't put your head down, you've got to keep working," King said. "Those [Titan] teams that were successful, they weren't great or overly talented teams, they just worked extremely hard and they didn't think they could lose. They were the ultimate competitors. They were very confident and this

group has to learn that you're going to have ups and downs, you've just got to keep playing."

While the Titans fell short, Moss and senior T.J. Huggins played well in defeat. Moss finished with a double-double, scoring 22 points and grabbing 10 rebounds. After TC was held without a field goal during the game's first four minutes, the 6-foot-5 Moss threw down a dunk in transition over the top of a Woodson player, drawing a foul in the process.

"I think he played exceptionally well," King said. "He'll be just as hard on himself as I am because there's a few layups here and there we missed and some great opportunities to get easy scores."

Huggins scored a game-high 25 points and grabbed eight rebounds.

"I think he played a pretty good game," King said. "We just need him to be a little

SEE DOUBLE-OVERTIME. PAGE 28

"Those [Titan] teams that were successful, they weren't great or overly talented teams, they just worked extremely hard and they didn't think they could lose. They were the ultimate competitors. They were very confident and this group has to learn that you're going to have ups and downs, you've just got to keep playing."

— T.C. Williams boys' basketball head coach Julian King



T.C. Williams boys' basketball head coach Julian King talks to the Titans during a Jan. 24 contest at Woodson.



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SPORTS

TC's One-Woman Gymnastics Team

BY JON ROETMAN
 GAZETTE PACKET

T.C. Williams and West Potomac are rival high schools, but one wouldn't have known it on Monday.

During West Potomac's only home gymnastics meet of the season on Jan. 23, the Wolverines and Titans rotated through the competition as a group, checking in together at each event. Actually, there was only one Titan in the bunch — Grace Girard, the lone member of the T.C. Williams gymnastics team. And not only did the Wolverines accept her, they kind of enjoyed having her around.

"She's a really nice girl and she's so good," West Potomac junior Marien Voorhees said. "It's really nice having her. It's easier to see her do skills and be like, 'Oh, that's how you do that.'"

Girard, who attends T.C. Williams' Minnie Howard School for ninth-graders, is a member of the Arlington Aerials gymnastics club and has been participating in the sport for about a decade. After deciding to compete at the high school level, Girard had to wait while it was determined which meets she would attend and which schools she would join for practice.

"My school didn't originally have a gymnastics team," Girard said, "so I had to get it all started. I know other people at other gyms, so it's not like I'm totally alone."

Girard has worked with gymnasts from West Potomac and their head coach, Pete Novgrod, for the last month. Her first high school meet was Jan. 18 at Edison. Rotating with the host Eagles, Girard had a successful high school debut, winning the all-



PHOTO BY RICHARD MAPLE

Freshman Grace Girard is the lone member of T.C. Williams gymnastics team.

around competition.

On Monday, Girard rotated with the host Wolverines and finished ninth in the all-around with a score of 33.7. She placed fourth on bars (8.85), ninth on vault (8.7), 12th on floor (8.45) and 15th on beam (7.7).

"Today was not my best meet, but it's OK," Girard said. "Everyone has bad meets."

Was it awkward competing with the Wolverines, or do they treat you like a teammate?

"They treat me like a teammate," she said. "They cheer for me."

Girard is a club teammate of West Potomac sophomore Monica Thompson, and their friendship helped make the arrangement more comfortable.

"I really like it because Grace and I are good friends at club," Thompson said. "I was excited when she said she wanted to do high school gymnastics. She's practicing with us. I think it's fun. I think the first day it

was kind of weird because she didn't know anyone, but I think everyone's really accepted her."

Novgrod called Girard "a very clean gymnast," and said she had no ceiling in terms of what she could accomplish in the future as a high school gymnast.

"She could be really good in high school," Novgrod said.

The Patriot District meet is scheduled for Feb. 2 at Lake Braddock. Girard said she is more concerned with hitting her routines than winning. As for her sophomore season, Girard plans on her teammates being from T.C. Williams.

"It's fun," Girard said about being the school's lone representative. "I'm going to have more people [compete] next year."

TC Drops Double-Overtime Thriller

FROM PAGE 27

more aggressive. Between Jordan [Byrd], T.J. and Landon, we need to have three guys being in attack mode at all times."

Kerman scored nine points for TC and Byrd added six.

Tommy Stepka led Woodson with 24 points, including a career-high six 3-pointers. Brandon Stepka scored 12 points for the Cavaliers and Bowles, Jr. had added 11.

TC has dropped six of its last eight games, includ-

ing three of its last five against Patriot District opponents. The Titans have six regular season games remaining, including for district matchups, before the start of the postseason.

The "hardest part [about losing games] is that it's happening on my watch," Huggins said. "It's my last year. Me, I'm a senior, and I can't let it happen on my team."

The Titans will host Lee at 7:45 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 27.

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WINTER FUN



PHOTO BY SHANE CANFIELD/LTA

Instructor Mike Baker, Jr., right, teaches an acting class at The Little Theatre of Alexandria.

Survival Guide

FROM PAGE 5

GET ENTERTAINED

The winter months are no excuse to hibernate inside with cabin fever. Now is the time to try some of the many indoor activities that take a back seat to outdoor events during the summer months.

Take a class, like those offered at The Little Theatre of Alexandria, or music or voice lessons at The Alexandria School for the Performing Arts in Del Ray. Both are among the most affordable in the area. The Art League at the Torpedo Factory Art Center offers a range of classes for budding artists. Support the local entertainment scene by taking in a show at MetroStage, LTA or Port City Playhouse. Live entertainment venues like The Carlyle Club and The Birchmere offer a variety of concerts, shows and events.

GET INVOLVED

With the holiday frenzy behind everyone, now is the perfect time to get involved in the community. Volunteer and mentoring opportunities exist in countless areas from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria to Community Lodgings and Carpenter's Shelter. Volunteer Alexandria (www.volunteeralexandria.org or 703-836-2176) can help connect volunteers to opportunities. Still for some, there is only one way to survive the winter months. When asked what he does for winter fun, one city employee (who asked to remain anonymous) responded: "Plan a trip to someplace warm."

That works, too.

Recycled Art

Del Ray Artisans is hosting a series of projects, workshops, and drawing sessions throughout the year at the Nicholas Colasanto Center in Del Ray. Tuesday afternoon it was Collage Cut Ups, an informal group who spent the afternoon working on individual paper collage projects. Above is Millie Mateu forming a picture collage. For more information of the gallery schedule of events visit



LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

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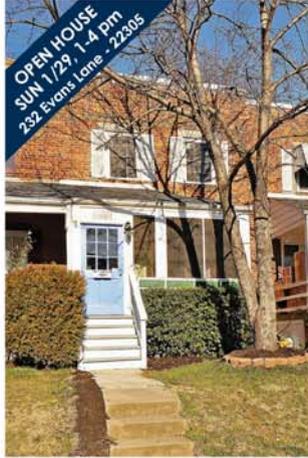
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