



Holly berries pop with vibrant red alongside the bowling green before George Washington's Mount Vernon mansion.



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

Aladdin is a 7-year-old camel from Full Moon Ranch Home in Berryville, Va. He's been part of George Washington's Mount Vernon Christmas program since 2008.

Christmas, By George George Washington's Mount Vernon opens Christmas program with camels, chocolate.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE

They came for the camel. Alberto, Daniela and their daughter Josephine Rendon of Alexandria have yearly passes to George Washington's Mount Vernon, so, "We come here almost every weekend," said Alberto. "We love to walk around and see the animals." On this visit in particular, the animal of note was Aladdin the camel.

Aladdin has been taking up residence at Mount Vernon during their Christmas program since

2008, since he was born. The placard in front of Aladdin's pen in the "Winter Encampment" explains that around Christmas 1787, General Washington "paid 18 shillings to bring a camel to Mount Vernon for the enjoyment of his family and friends."

Though Washington's camel may have come from further afield, Aladdin hails from Full Moon Ranch Home in Berryville, Va.

The Christmas program at Mount Vernon kicked off Nov. 28 and runs until Jan. 6, 2015. Aside from Aladdin, other seasonal attractions include historical lessons in how chocolate was made during the Washington's time (by hand, crushing ground cocoa bean nibs between two pieces of lava rock), evening candlelight tours of the estate and the ability to peek into the usually closed third floor of George Washington's mansion.

"There's a great authenticity to the place, get a sense of what holiday celebrations were like," said Rebecca Aloisi, Mount Vernon vice president of marketing. "There's a lovely festive feeling in the air."

The mansion's third floor was mostly storage space for the Washingtons, though the history interpreters at Mount Vernon believe the General's wife Martha slept in a bedroom chamber there after he died. Visitors can also look up into the octagonal cupola, the iconic apex of the mansion, that was used to help cool the building



(From top down) David, Kaitlyn and Madeline Seydel of York, Pa., enjoyed a chocolate-making demonstration. They were visiting relatives who live in Lorton.

up until the 1990s.

Last holiday season, the "New Room" of the mansion was under significant renovation. Long thought to be primarily a dining room, the estate researchers now believe it was more of a general entertaining space or salon, where Washington spent time well into the night. The renovation was completed earlier in the spring.

Additional seasonal events include the Dec. 12 release of a new batch of aged and unaged whis-

key in the style George Washington himself would have distilled, a Dec. 14 visit from former White House chef John Moeller for cooking demonstrations and a book-



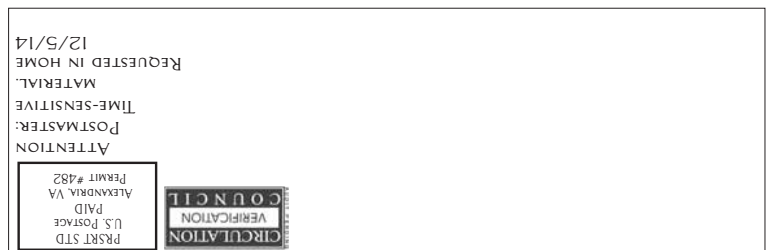
Virginia Taylor of Alexandria (left) and Candace Pellot of Alexandria (right) walked around George Washington's mansion to enjoy views of the Potomac River with Virginia's dog Sophie.

signing, and the first-ever public display of fireworks for Mount Vernon visitors over the Potomac

SEE CHRISTMAS, PAGE 27



Carole Tranavitch of Clifton demonstrates how chocolate was made by hand at Mount Vernon while the Washingtons were alive.





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Sue and Allison Goodhart, and The Goodhart Group are proud to once again sponsor The Campagna Center's Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend!

Taste of Scotland at The Masonic Temple
Saturday, Dec. 6th 6:30-11:00 pm

Heather & Greens Sale at The Center
Friday 9am-5pm & Saturday 9am-4pm

For more information, visit
www.campagnacenter.org/events/scottish-christmas-walk-weekend

All proceeds from the weekend benefit the children of The Campagna Center.



Alexandria \$439,500

Light & bright in Seminary Heights! Updated kitchen with stainless appliances opens to family room. 2 master bedrooms, both with full baths on upper level. Walk-out lower level has rec room with fireplace, den (now used as bedroom), & full bath. Hardwoods on main & upper levels. 2581 Nicky Ln.

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Fairfax County Facing More Budget Strain

County Executive and FCPS Superintendent present adverse forecasts.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE

Days before the traditional loosening of belts for Thanksgiving, Fairfax County officials discussed the need for tightening theirs.

The Board of Supervisors and Fairfax County School Board met jointly Nov. 25 to talk about budget forecasts, prior to Governor Terry McAuliffe's (D) state budget proposal expected in mid-December.

County Executive Ed Long delivered the grim estimate of a just over \$100 million shortfall for fiscal year 2016. That's versus the estimate in the FY2015 adopted budget of around \$37 million.

Long cited lingering effects of the recession, including slow job growth, at 0.4 percent in Northern Virginia versus 2.4 percent before the downturn, as well as 10.8 percent drop year-to-date in home sales. Federal procurement spending has been trending down, and Long is expecting a 3-4 percent decline for FY 2014.

Residential and non-residential real estate values have also been decreasing, 3.3 percent since 2008 and 5.2 percent since 2009, respectively, accounting for tens of millions of dollars of lost revenue for the county.

Even with a projected \$84 million in new



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE GAZETTE

Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Karen Garza speaks Nov. 25 at a joint meeting of the FCPS School Board and Board of Supervisors.

funds from revenues, it doesn't cover the expected increases in disbursements of about \$185 million over the previous year. Those include county employee pay increases and benefits, public safety and human services, and for schools a 3 percent operating increase, capital support, debt service and Full-Day Mondays support.

"There are a lot of challenges going forward to the spring," Long said. "Uncertainty remains in the economy, we don't know what's going to happen with the Sequester."

Since FY2009, the county has cut around \$269 million by cutting positions and programs, but it just isn't keeping up.

"Looking back, there's nothing easy left to cut," said Long. "We're down to the meat of county programs. Cuts are going to be hard, there's no two ways about it."

Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova commented that additional county reserve funds shouldn't be looked to as a resource to cover the shortfall.

"Our reserves are too low for comfort," Bulova said, "and compared to other jurisdictions, we're dangerously low."

FCPS Superintendent Karen Garza followed Long to further explain the challenges facing the vast school system regarded as one of the top in the country.

"Sometimes our challenges get masked by looking at the overall percentage of our size," said Garza. "Forty-nine schools have 50 percent free or reduced lunch or higher. There are some parts of our county where that population and the needs of our students are certainly growing."

Garza referenced growths of 2-3,000 students in the system over the last several years, as well as jumps in the percentage of students who take English for Speakers of Other Languages and or are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Total enrollment is now over 186,000 students.

"The real cost of growth exceeds \$190 million," Garza said. "And of the cuts over the last six years, one-quarter were just the last year."

There are 2,175 fewer people, but at the same time we grew by 20,000 students. That's significant for our system."

Echoing Long, Garza said the cuts are not

allowing schools in the county to keep up with needs and in particular for schools, the needs of teachers.

"We're very concerned with competitive compensation," said Garza. "Our bread and butter is the quality of teachers in classrooms, employed throughout our school system. We're losing our competitive edge and I'm very concerned with where we stack up compared to our surrounding jurisdictions."

She showed starting teachers' salaries hovering around the middle of surrounding jurisdictions, above only Loudoun and Manassas Park City for 10 years experience and a master's degree, and just above Prince George's Maryland for maximum salary.

Even with \$53.1 million in a transfer from the county, Garza is still projecting a \$63.9 million deficit for FY2016, something she and the supervisors agree should garner some attention from the state.

"We recognize and believe the state has to do something more to help us," said Garza. Lee District Supervisor Jeff McKay weighed in as well. "We're funding 70.6 percent of the FCPS budget, which is significantly higher than almost everywhere else in the state," he said. "If we received adequate funding from the state, we wouldn't be having this conversation. It's a huge emphasis moving forward. If we're not looking at the long-term, these issues will continue to compound."

Garza and Long will spend the next few months finalizing their budget plans. Garza's proposal for FY2016 should be released Jan. 8, 2015 and Long's plan for FY2016-2017 should come up at the Feb. 17, 2015 Board of Supervisors meeting.

Geer Lawyer Expects Hearing Before New Year

Out of 128 requests for the production of documents made by the Geer family lawyer Michael Lieberman, all but two have been denied by Fairfax County.

In September, Lieberman filed a \$12 million lawsuit against the county for the wrongful death of Springfield resident John Geer. Geer died in August 2013 after being shot by Fairfax County Police.

The names of the officers involved in the shooting have yet to be released, as well as any explanation of why Geer was shot, or why he didn't receive first aid immediately.

"Their intentions are very clear," Lieberman said of the county, "to not give any information until the court orders them to do so, do nothing voluntarily. This is their policy, to stonewall."

A spokesman from Fairfax County declined to comment.

Lieberman said the explanation he's received for the continued blockade is that a criminal investigation is currently underway.

Fairfax County Chief of Police Edwin Roessler said in a September interview that the case was being handled by the Department of Justice. However, U.S. Attorney Dana Boente's office has continued to decline to comment.

"We have eyewitnesses to the incident who've never been called in front of a grand jury," said Lieberman. "How do we know they're not even done? After 15 months, I think you give up your right to withhold this type of information. We have a right to know, just like in Ferguson, just like everywhere else."

Lieberman is expecting to have a court hearing before a judge in the next two to three weeks.

"Hopefully we'll get some answer sometimes soon," he said. "We pay for this, these folks are responsible to us. Where is the Board of Supervisors on all this? Is this the way they want their county run? They won't adopt a citizen review board, that's clear, so how are you doing to be answerable?"

— TIM PETERSON



PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHAEL LIEBERMAN

John Geer standing in his doorway in Springfield, minutes before he was shot by a Fairfax County Police officer.

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OLD TOWN



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1023 N Royal St, Unit 206. Luxury 1 bedroom, 1 bath condo with 2 GARAGE SPACES! Conveniently located just a couple of blocks from the riverfront, shops and restaurants. Desirable open floor plan with high ceilings, oversize windows, crown molding and rich hardwood floors. Gourmet kitchen with granite island, breakfast bar, 42" Cherry cabinets and SS appliances. Secure lobby and rooftop deck. *Christine Garner 703-587-4855*



Rosemont **\$1,150,000**
121 W Maple Street. Classic 4 bedroom, 2.55 bath brick colonial with 4 finished levels ideally located just a few blocks from King St. METRO, shops and restaurants! Full of 1920's charm, yet updated with modern amenities including a New Master bath. Spacious rooms with crown moldings and refinished hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces (1 gas), a family room addition and large kitchen with island. Inviting screened side porch, fenced yard with patio and off-street parking. *Christine Garner 703-587-4855*



Del Ray **\$1,099,000**
106 E. Alexandria Ave. Beautifully updated 5 Bedroom, 3 bath home with approximately 3,500 sq. ft. of living space and a 2-car garage. Great location just blocks from the Braddock Rd. METRO, shops and restaurants on "The Avenue." Gracious room sizes, spacious eat-in kitchen, 4 upper and 1 main level Bedrooms. *Christine Garner 703-587-4855*



Old Town
\$3,850/month
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Barbara Rosen 703-407-6481



Alexandria **\$515,000**
2012 Hoover Ln. Cul-de-sac location, Stratford on the Potomac subdivision, wonderful location! 4 bedroom, 2.5 bathroom, brand new kitchen, S/S appliances, granite counter top, white cabinets, all new windows, all hardwood flooring refinished with Cherry Oak staining, deck off family room, one huge lower level unfinished, one original owner home.
Suki Woodward 703-727-1061



Alexandria **\$469,000**
8605 Cherry Valley Ln. Wonderful home & community. Large 4 BR, 2 1/2 BA well-maintained colonial with hardwood floors, spacious finished basement, 2-car garage. Near Potomac River and scenic G.W. Parkway with bike, jogging, walking trail.
Mike Downie 703-780-2727

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Alexandria **\$399,900**
1200 Braddock Pl Unit 112. New listing and priced to sell! 2 bedroom, 2 bath with reserved parking space. Outdoor patio to grill on, and just 2 blocks to the Braddock Road Metro. New carpet, paint, stainless appliances and new HVAC. Ready for move-in.
Dawn Gurganus 571-237-6151

OPEN SUNDAY 2-4



Alexandria/Montebello **\$310,000**
5902 Mt Eagle Dr #715. 1,305 SF (+ enclosed balcony) condo is NO VA's best-kept secret! Enjoy the resort-like amenities (café, indoor & outdoor pools, tennis, bowling, Metro shuttle, etc.). A gated community just 2 lights from Old Town! Many updates, including renovated kitchen w/new granite & backsplash; new lighting & paint; wood floors. Vacation from home on the 35+ wooded acres that is like a winter wonderland when it snows! *Cindy Baggett 703-593-1418*

OPEN SUNDAY 1-4



Falls Church **\$512,000**
7422 Brad St. Start 2015 in Your New Home! Sunny contemporary 4 lvl SFH w/4 BR, 2 BA. Convenient main lvl BR en suite. LR w/FPL & access to slate patio. Kit/DR area w/flr-to-ceiling cabinetry, dbl ovens, Corian w/access to fenced bkyd & pergola w/hot tub. Wall of Windows. Expansive Hardscaping. Home Generator. New Siding. In-ground irrigation. Meticulously maintained. Nearby Mosaic Dist. Inside Beltway with easy access to I-495/I-66/50 & 7 miles to D.C.! *Sandy McConville 703-402-1567*



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PHOTO COURTESY OF ELIZABETH REES

St. Aidan's Episcopal Church youth (from left) Ryan Coneway (Fort Hunt Elementary School, 6th Grade), Caroline Richard (Stratford Landing Elementary School, 5th Grade), Kevin Coneway (Fort Hunt, 4th Grade), Sophia Rees-Hoofnagle (Fort Hunt, 5th Grade) and Dylan Rees-Hoofnagle (Fort Hunt, 2nd Grade) help with the fifth annual Christmas tree sale.

Tree Sale Breaks Sales Record

In five years of selling Christmas trees, St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Alexandria has never sold more than this year. According to Ted Boling with the church, they surpassed last year's numbers by over 40 percent each day on Friday, Saturday and Sunday after Thanksgiving. "We attribute it to great weather and a great reputation for fresh, full Fraser firs," he said.

Boling hopes this year's effort to eclipse the total \$18,000 raised by the sale in 2013. Ten percent of the funds are designated for the St. Aidan's Day School and or PTA programs at nearby schools including Stratford Landing, Fort Hunt, Waynewood and Belle View Elementary Schools.

According to the Rev. Elizabeth Rees, the other 90 percent of the tree sale revenue supports the many community outreach programs of the church. These include cooking dinner at the Ventures in Community Hypothermia Program at Rising Hope on Sunday nights in February and March, providing weekend food bags once a month for 16 students in need through the Fort Hunt Elementary School Care and Share program, seasonal programs offering gifts and food for families in need, and annual giving to support Good Shepherd Housing, Rising Hope and UCM.

St. Aidan's Episcopal Church is located at 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria.

— TIM PETERSON

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Tuesday, January 13 7-8 p.m.



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Mount Vernon Gazette



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COMING SOON



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Mid \$300's

3425 Ramsgate Terrace

Contractor/Handyman special. Great potential for 5 bedroom, 3 bath, 2 level split. Needs extensive work but lots of potential. Will be priced in mid 300's. 5 minutes to Fort

Belvoir, 15 minutes to Huntington Metro & Old Town Alex. Contact Rex with questions.

OPEN SUNDAY



Alex./Riverside Estates
\$509,900/\$2,600

8506 Wagon Wheel Road

Totally remodeled 4 BR, 3 BA Split - Replacement windows, new kitchen w/granite, SS, ceramic tile floors, 3 brand new baths, refinished hardwood floors, freshly painted, 6-panel doors. Family room on lower level with walkout

to large fenced backyard. Deck overlooks backyard. Minutes to Ft. Belvoir - Walk to Mt. Vernon Estate, elementary and high schools.

RENTAL



Alex./Riverside Estates \$2,550
8318 Orange Court

Reduced. Beautiful 4 bedroom, 3.5 bath Colonial with Carport in wonderful Mt. Vernon Community. 3 finished levels. Newer kitchen and baths, gleaming hardwood floors, screened porch, deck, large corner lot. Separate laundry and storage rooms. Scenic

commute along G.W. Pkwy and Potomac River - 5 minutes to Ft. Belvoir, 15 to Old Town, Alex, 35 to Pentagon/D.C. - Walk to Elementary and High Schools.

RENTAL

Alexandria • River Towers
6641 Wakefield #405 • \$1,350

Beautifully updated & immaculate 1 BR in popular River Towers in fabulous location right off the G.W. Parkway & Potomac River. Remodeled bath & remodeled kitchen w/granite & SS. Freshly painted. Lovely wood floors. 2 walk-in closets. RENT COVERS HEAT/AC.

UNDER CONTRACT



Ft. Hunt/Plymouth Haven
\$839,900

8632 Plymouth Road

Beautiful brick front Colonial with 2-car garage in fabulous location of Plymouth Rd. in Ft. Hunt with Waynewood Elementary. Built 1989. 4 Bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths. .56 acre. Study on main level. Beautiful back screened porch. Spacious master bedroom suite

w/sitting room. Kitchen and breakfast area open to living room with wood-burning fireplace and brick hearth. Approximately 3,000 sq ft above ground. It's lovely!

UNDER CONTRACT



Alex./Riverwood \$798,000
3716 Carriage House Court

Spectacular 6 BR/3.5 BA Colonial in Prestigious Waterfront Community of Riverwood. 4,000+ sq ft of remodeled living space. Loaded with upgrades, must see to believe, plus a beautiful In-Law Suite on main level. Stunning hwdw floors, light and bright w/great flow - perfect for entertaining. Quiet, private

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*Weekly Schedule will be posted on
<https://www.facebook.com/BucketListBoutique>.

*Small groups (up to 15) are welcome to book the space during
the week for charity nights or social gatherings).

Wine and cheese will be provided and donations will be made to designated charity.

HOME SALES

In October 2014, 118 homes sold between \$2,300,000-\$90,000
in the Mount Vernon area.
This week's list represents those homes sold in the \$2,300,000-\$160,000 range.
For the complete list, visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

Address	BR.	FB.	HB	Postal	City	Sold Price	Type	Lot AC	PostalCode	Subdivision
7723 SOUTHDOWN RD	6	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$2,300,000	Detached	0.74	22308	WELLINGTON	
6124 VERNON TER	4	3	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$1,270,000	Detached	0.19	22307	BELLE HAVEN	
3806 WASHINGTON WOODS DR	5	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$1,015,000	Detached	0.34	22309	WASHINGTON WOODS POTOMAC	
8119 YORKTOWN DR	5	4	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$917,782	Detached	0.15	22308	HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE	
5222 BURKE DR	5	3	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$915,000	Detached	0.50	22309	MT VERNON TERRACE	
3807 WOODLEY DR	6	5	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$845,000	Detached	0.58	22309	WOODLEY HILLS	
2308 LAKESHIRE DR	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$840,000	Detached	0.25	22308	MANORS AT MOUNT VERNON	
7119 MARINE DR	5	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$750,000	Detached	0.33	22307	MARLAN HEIGHTS	
3171 WOODLAND LN	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$750,000	Detached	0.51	22309	WOODLAND PARK	
7216 STAFFORD RD	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$725,000	Detached	0.38	22307	HOLLIN HILLS	
1107 NEAL DR	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$720,000	Detached	0.29	22308	COLLINGWOOD ON POTOMAC	
2314 CREEK DR	4	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$699,000	Detached	0.32	22308	STRAITFORD LANDING	
6910 PARK TERRACE DR	5	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$689,000	Detached	0.31	22307	WESTGROVE	
8801 BLACK ALDER DR	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$680,000	Detached	0.29	22309	WOODMILL ESTATES	
7405 RECARD LN	3	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$675,000	Detached	0.39	22307	HOLLIN HILLS	
2000 MASON HILL DR	6	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$670,000	Detached	0.43	22307	MASON HILL	
1939 SHIVER DR	6	4	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$650,000	Detached	0.41	22307	HOLLIN GLEN	
2100 WITTINGTON BLVD	5	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$650,000	Detached	0.42	22308	PLANTATION ESTATES	
5904 MOUNT EAGLE DR #508 and 507	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$625,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
1620 COURTLAND RD	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$625,000	Detached	0.46	22306	HOLLINDALE	
9304 ALLWOOD DR	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$621,000	Detached	0.51	22309	MT VERNON PARK	
821 EMPRESS CT	5	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$585,000	Detached	0.51	22308	WAYNEWOOD	
8647 GATESHEAD RD	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$560,000	Detached	0.35	22309	MT VERNON MANOR	
8914 BATTERY RD	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$550,000	Detached	0.26	22308	POTOMAC VALLEY	
4512 GAGE RD	5	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$540,000	Detached	0.26	22309	MT VERNON VALLEY	
8133 BAINBRIDGE RD	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$530,000	Detached	0.23	22308	HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE	
5815 QUEENS GATE CT	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$525,000	Detached	0.44	22303	NORTON SQUARE	
1907 SHANNON CT	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$525,000	Detached	0.30	22306	HOLLINDALE	
7520 CORNITH DR	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$525,000	Detached	0.35	22306	MILWAY MEADOWS	
9026 MCNAIR DR	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$525,000	Detached	0.50	22309	WOODLAWN MANOR	
4306 LAUREL RD	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$522,000	Detached	0.42	22309	MT ZEPHYR	
8707 SUDBURY PL	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$517,500	Detached	0.47	22309	SEDGEWICK FOREST	
1228 FALSTER RD	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$515,000	Detached	0.29	22308	COLLINGWOOD ESTATES	
6718 STONEYBROOKE LN	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$510,000	Detached	0.28	22306	STONEYBROOKE	
2227 CANDLEWOOD DR	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$510,000	Detached	0.34	22308	WILLIAMSBURG MANOR NORTH	
7022 POLINS CT	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$499,000	Detached	0.25	22306	HUNTLEY	
1602 BALTIMORE RD	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$485,000	Detached	0.23	22308	HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE	
9118 VOLUNTEER DR	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$485,000	Detached	0.47	22309	MT VERNON FOREST	
2415 POPKINS LN	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$482,000	Detached	0.50	22306	WHITE OAKS	
3700 WOODLEY DR	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$480,000	Detached	0.53	22309	WOODLEY HILLS	
8636 BRADDOCK AVE	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$470,000	Detached	0.30	22309	MT VERNON HILLS	
7591 GREY GOOSE WAY	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$467,500	Townhouse	0.05	22306	GROVE AT HUNTLEY MEADOWS	
1816 COLLINGWOOD RD	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$464,000	Detached	0.34	22308	TINKLE A H	
2506 MASSEY CT	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$450,000	Detached	0.15	22303	FAIR HAVEN	
2203 PENNSYLVANIA BLVD	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$450,000	Detached	0.29	22308	VERNON ON POTOMAC	
920 CROTON DR	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$441,500	Detached	0.25	22308	WAYNEWOOD	
2957 HUNTINGTON GROVE SQ	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$439,000	Townhouse	0.04	22306	HUNTINGTON GROVE	
2781 CARTER FARM CT	4	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$433,000	Townhouse	0.04	22306	HUNTINGTON AT MT VERNON	
5832 EDGEHILL DR	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$425,000	Townhouse	0.08	22303	JEFFERSON MANOR	
5901 MOUNT EAGLE DR #918	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$425,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
2857 FAIRHAVEN AVE	2	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$420,000	Semi-Detached	0.08	22303	JEFFERSON MANOR	
2451 MIDTOWN AVE #319	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$412,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MIDTOWN ALEXANDRIA STATION	
5902 MOUNT EAGLE DR #908	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$410,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
5904 MOUNT EAGLE DR #1514	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$410,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
2451 MIDTOWN AVE #826	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$400,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MIDTOWN ALEXANDRIA STA	
2803 SIDE DR	5	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$399,500	Detached	0.15	22306	MEMORIAL HEIGHTS	
8284 JAKE PL	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$396,000	Townhouse	0.03	22309	MOUNT VEE MANOR	
5600 BURGUNDY PL	3	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$395,000	Detached	0.19	22303	BURGUNDY VILLAGE	
8101 ASHTON ST	5	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$390,000	Detached	0.46	22309	MT VERNON WOODS	
2451 MIDTOWN AVE #1019	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$388,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MIDTOWN ALEXANDRIA STA	
6623 CAVALIER DR	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$383,000	Detached	0.17	22307	BUCKNELL MANOR	
2836 FAIRHAVEN AVE	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$371,000	Semi-Detached	0.09	22303	JEFFERSON MANOR	
7410 FAIRCHILD DR	4	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$371,000	Detached	0.19	22306	HYBLA VALLEY	
7122 MASON GROVE CT #34	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$369,000	Townhouse		22306	GROVETON WOODS	
7108 MASON GROVE CT #27	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$366,000	Townhouse		22306	GROVETON WOODS	
3797 SHANNONS GREEN WAY	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$365,000	Townhouse	0.03	22309	MOUNT VEE MANOR	
7829 MOUNT WOODLEY PL	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$358,000	Townhouse	0.03	22306	MT WOODLEY MANOR	
7197 FAIRFIELD CT	2	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$357,000	Attach/Row Hse	0.07	22306	WOODSTONE	
8007 FAIRFAX RD	3	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$356,000	Detached	0.25	22308	HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE	
7114 WESTFIELD CT	2	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$345,000	Townhouse	0.08	22306	WOODSTONE	
8533 WASHINGTON AVE	3	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$345,000	Detached	0.43	22309	MT ZEPHYR	
2203 PENNSYLVANIA BLVD	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$340,000	Detached	0.29	22308	VERNON ON POTOMAC	
3711 HUNTLEY MEADOWS LN	3	3	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$335,000	Townhouse	0.05	22306	HUNTLEY MEADOWS	
8020 ASHBORO DR	4	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$335,000	Detached	0.27	22309	FAIRFIELD	
7831 MARITHA WASHINGTON ST	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$334,000	Detached	0.28	22309	MT VERNON WOODS	
7805 COLONIAL SPRINGS BLVD	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$330,000	Townhouse	0.03	22306	VILLAGE AT GUM SPGS	
1807 MACADAMS PL	3	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$330,000	Detached	0.23	22308	HOLLIN HALL VILLAGE	
8170 FERNLAKE CT	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$330,000	Townhouse	0.09	22309	PINEWOOD LAKE	
7119 STRAWN CT	2	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$329,900	Townhouse	0.05	22306	WOODSTONE	
8042 CENTRAL PARK DR	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$326,000	Townhouse	0.06	22309	PINEWOOD LAKE	
8176 FERNLAKE CT	4	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$325,400	Townhouse	0.05	22309	PINEWOOD LAKE	
5901 MOUNT EAGLE DR #1206	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$325,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
2446 WINDBREAK DR	3	2	2	ALEXANDRIA	\$324,900	Townhouse	0.03	22306	MT VERNON SQUARE TOWNHOU	
4209 MAIN ST	4	3	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$324,500	Townhouse	0.05	22309	CHATEAUNEUF	
2705 WOODWALK CT	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$320,000	Townhouse	0.03	22306	MT WOODLEY MANOR	
5873 BLAINE DR	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$319,500	Duplex	0.09	22303	HUNTINGTON	
5904 MOUNT EAGLE DR #306	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$314,500	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22303	MONTEBELLO	
2243 SWEETBRIAR DR	3	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$311,000	Duplex	0.12	22307	BUCKNELL MANOR	
6911 WESTHAMPTON DR	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$310,000	Duplex	0.10	22307	BUCKNELL HEIGHTS	
4520 GAGE RD	3	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$310,000	Detached	0.26	22309	MT VERNON VALLEY	
2313 FAIRVIEW TER	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$306,000	Duplex	0.08	22303	HUNTINGTON	
7140 COLD SPRING CT	2	2	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$293,000	Townhouse	0.03	22306	WOODSTONE	
7100 COLD SPRING CT	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$280,000	Townhouse	0.05	22306	WOODSTONE	
4514 GAGE RD	3	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$275,000	Detached	0.26	22309	MT VERNON VALLEY	
7190 WESTFIELD CT	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$269,900	Townhouse	0.04	22306	WOODSTONE	
6616 10TH ST #A1	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$256,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		22307	BELLE VIEW	
6616 10TH ST #C1	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$248,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		22307	BELLE VIEW	
6621 10TH ST #A2	2	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$242,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		22307	BELLE VIEW	
5621 NORTON RD	3	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$240,000	Detached	0.17	22303	BURGUNDY VILLAGE	
5621 NORTON RD	3	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$200,000	Detached	0.17	22303	BURGUNDY VILLAGE	
5704 SHADWELL CT #94	2	2	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$179,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		22309	OLDE MILL	
6641 WAKEFIELD DR #311	1	1	0	ALEXANDRIA	\$172,000	Hi-Rise 9+ Floors		22307	RIVER TOWERS	
3806 JOSHUA PL #44D	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$169,900	Townhouse		22309	SEQUOYAH	
8406 CREDOS CT #4	3	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$165,000	Townhouse		22309	PINEWOOD LAWN	
7932 SAUSALITO PL #C	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$164,000	Townhouse		22309	SEQUOYAH	
3805 BURLINGAME PL #34D	2	1	1	ALEXANDRIA	\$160,000	Garden 1-4 Floors		22309	SEQUOYAH	

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OLD TOWN 724-726 South Lee Street | \$1,799,000
 Rare find of two houses combined into one fabulous wide Townhouse, located in the Southeast Quadrant of Historic Old Town, 3-story rear addition features a gourmet eat-in kitchen with fireplace, adjoins the family room. Lower level with Au Pair Suite and rec room. Large expansive landscaped brick walled stone patios with built-in gas grill. 5 bedrooms, 5 full baths plus 1 half bath. 2-off street parking spaces.
CINDY GOLUBIN +1 202 437 3861
COURTNEY GOLUBIN +1 703 989 1873



OLD TOWN 117 Prince Street | \$1,745,000
 Historic Captains Row home with 6BR, 5.5BA and 5,100 square feet. Rare opportunity to restore this classic residence with high ceilings throughout, all brick exterior and 4 fireplaces. Rare walk-out basement with 2nd kitchen and guest quarters. 2 car private parking. Great location on Old Town's famous cobblestoned street.
HEATHER COREY +1 703 989 1183



OLD TOWN 120 S Lee Street | \$1,435,000
 Historic brick townhouse originally built in 1792. Beautifully renovated since 2003, double parlor living and dining rooms, featuring double wood-burning fireplace, antique hardwood floors throughout, two separate private patio gardens and an additional porch off the rear. Five line wood-burning fireplaces. Also available for rent for \$5,000.
CINDY GOLUBIN +1 202 437 3861
COURTNEY GOLUBIN +1 703 989 1873



OLD TOWN 212 South Lee Street | \$1,075,000
 Traditional meets contemporary. Main level living room with wood-burning fireplace, gourmet kitchen, family room and rear deck. Master with walk-in closet, luxurious bath and river views. Walk-out lower level rec room, bedroom and bath. Expansive garden. 3 bedrooms, 3.5 baths.
CINDY GOLUBIN +1 202 437 3861
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BEVERLY HILLS 3403 Old Dominion Boulevard | \$924,500
 Located in the sought-after Beverly Hills section of Alexandria, this gorgeous brick colonial has 4BR, 4FBA, with an open floor plan, hardwood floors, new carpeting, freshly painted, renovated master bath and a cook's kitchen.
JOHN ERIC +1 703 798 0097



OLD TOWN 620 N Columbus Street | \$599,000
 Charming townhouse in Old Town. Recent renovations include new roof, new windows, CAC, washer, dryer, refrigerator, updated baths, refinished floors and finished lower level.
JEANNE WARNER +1 703 980 9106



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**Join Us for the
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Living trees lighted in the memory of loved ones and to honor special friends will be lit at the 33rd Annual Lights of Love Ceremony.

Mount Vernon community family and friends are invited to join us and welcome the holiday season in a very special way.

Ceremony includes Festival of Music by Donald Brideau, MD and Ron Speerl.

Reception follows in the cafeteria.

Saturday, December 6, 2014, at 5:00 p.m.
in the Hospital Main Lobby

Inova Mount Vernon Hospital
2501 Parkers Lane
Alexandria, VA 22306

Admission is FREE

**Special Guest Appearance by Santa Claus
to greet all the children.**

To honor a family member or friend, call 703.664.7260 to make a \$5 donation or for more information about the 2014 Lights of Love ceremony.





Area pastors attending the St. Luke's Community Service were the Reverends Bill Teng, Elizabeth Rees, Brent Thalacker, Tuck Bowerfind, Holly Davis, Andy Morgan and Keary Kincannon.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Community Service Welcomes 200

Hosted by St. Luke's pastor, the Rev. Tuck Bowerfind, Christians from throughout the Mount Vernon area gathered at St. Luke's Episcopal Church on Fort Hunt Road on the eve before Thanksgiving to offer up their thanks.

Joining the St. Luke's Episcopalians were fellow Episcopalians from St. Aidan's, Methodists from Rising Hope Mission Church, Presbyterians from Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, Anglicans from Christ

the Savior Anglican Church and Lutherans from Nativity Lutheran Church.

About 200 attended.

"The choir and organ really filled the sanctuary in a beautiful way," said Rising Hope's pastor The Rev. Keary Kincannon. A Methodist, he said he greatly enjoyed the beautiful formality of the St. Luke's Episcopal service.

— ED SIMMONS, JR.



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OPINION

Be Part of Children's Gazette 2014

Annual edition showcases youth art and writing.

During the last week of each year, The Gazette devotes its entire issue to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

EDITORIAL We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email or delivered on CD or flash drive. Writing should be submitted in rich text format (.rtf). Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

We welcome student's original ideas. Here are some suggestions:

- ❖ Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.

- ❖ Short answers (50 to 100 words) to some of the following questions: If you could give your parents any gift that didn't cost money what would that gift be? What are you most looking forward to in the upcoming year? What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite toy? What makes a good parent? What makes a good friend? What is the best or worst thing that ever happened to you? What is the best gift you've ever given? Ever received?

- ❖ Your opinion (50 to 100 words) about news, traffic, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

- ❖ Poetry or other creative writing.
- ❖ News stories from school newspapers.
- ❖ Photos and text about activities or events.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, individuals and homeschoolers.

Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student's full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Email submissions for the Children's Gazette to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. To send CDs or flash drives containing artwork and typed, electronic submissions, mark them clearly by school and hometown and mail to Children's Gazette, 1606 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Please send all submissions by Dec. 10. The Children's Gazette will publish the week of Dec. 27, 2014.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bulova: No To Review Board

To the Editor:

The following letter was addressed to state Sen. Linda "Toddy" Puller.

Thanks so much for your letter regarding the creation of a Citizen Complaint Review Board to investigate complaints against the Fairfax County Police Department. I appreciate having this opportunity to respond to your con-

cerns on this matter.

Statistically, Fairfax County is the safest jurisdiction of its size in the United States and I am very proud of our public safety professionals who help to make that happen. In Fairfax County, our police officers enjoy a strong and positive partnership with the community they serve and protect. Each Police District has a Citizen Advisory Committee that meets regularly. At these meetings, residents of the area have the opportunity

to learn of safety issues in their community and share information that is of concern to them. Additionally, the county's Neighborhood Watch programs operate with strong support from and collaboration with our Police Department.

As chairman, I have made it a point to ride throughout the county with the Police Chief on National Night Out and I can tell you that the community's trust and appreciation of our police officers

is enormous. Most recently, Chief Roessler established a Police Department Diversity Council, consisting of representatives of our county's minority populations, to help ensure law enforcement's sensitivity to the many cultural differences that exist within our community. I believe the culture that our Police Department has nurtured is significant and has helped to keep our crime rate extraordinarily low.

All of that having said, some recent incidents in Fairfax County generated some concerns and complaints. As you have pointed out, the Board of Supervisors has received requests from several organizations and individuals to create a Citizen Complaint Review Board. In response to these requests, our board has given some consideration to the pros and cons of creating such a Citizen Board. You point out in your letter that the District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department supports our creating such a board. However, you may be interested in knowing that D.C., which has a higher crime rate than Fairfax County, has such a review board but it does not deal with complaints related to police-involved shootings.

Currently, complaints regarding the Fairfax County Police Department are dealt with internally. In more significant cases, outside investigators including the Commonwealth Attorney's Office and the County Attorney's office are used to review the facts.

To help in our deliberations, our

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 11



PHOTO BY SALLY B. MACGLIN/THE GAZETTE

A Dog-Walk Tour

A mid-September Saturday tour at Mount Vernon Estate took an excursion to the horse barns, where Cheryl Grunwald (left) watches as Ashlee Connett, her dog Finley (orange), Kieth Steinnerd, and his dog Guster (black), introduce themselves to the black and white horse in the stall. In the back (far right) are Bob and Karen Brown.

Mount Vernon Gazette

www.MountVernonGazette.com

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A Connection Newspaper



LETTERS

FROM PAGE 10

board directed the county's Internal Audit Office to conduct an analysis of the Police Department's administrative investigation process. The intent of this audit was to examine whether the process works as intended. This audit was fully supported by members of the Board of Supervisors. When the final report was released in April 2013, board members chose not to create a Citizen Complaint Review Board. We believe the processes in place meet the needs of our community and protect the interests of Fairfax County residents.

Our board will continue to be open minded regarding possible improvements that could be made to ensure public confidence in law enforcement. The review board, however, is not something that we are planning to pursue. Thanks again for contacting me. I will be sure to let you know if our board takes this issue up in the future.

Sharon Bulova
Chairman
Board of Supervisors

Supervisors' Responsibility

To the Editor:

The following letter is addressed to the Board of Supervisors.

The Fairfax County Police Department

that you oversee is lacking in accountability and transparency. It has to step up and practice accountability and transparency now. You appointed its chief and you have the duty and obligation to make certain that he best serves the citizens of Fairfax County.


The time has come for you to appoint a Citizen Complaint Oversight Board that will accept and investigate citizen complaints of police abuse, misconduct or negligence and provide you and/or the Chief of Police with its findings and recommendations.

In the recent shooting death of an unarmed man by a Ferguson, Mo., police officer, the authorities are responding with a positive proposal. The mayor of Ferguson was quoted in the media that his city will appoint a Civilian Review Board to review complaints about police procedures.

In view of the John Geer shooting death by an unidentified Fairfax County police officer on Aug. 29, 2013 that remains unresolved — it is incumbent upon you to act now to appoint a Citizen Complaint Oversight Board as a sign of hope and healing for your constituents and the citizens of Fairfax County. You have that duty and obligation. This is the appropriate time to appoint the Citizen Complaint Oversight Board. Let your conscience be your guide. Do the right thing.

Nicholas Beltrante
Executive Director
Virginia Citizens Coalition for police
Accountability, Inc.

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Open Sun 2-4PM Waynewood | 916 Dresden Ct, Alexandria, VA
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Open Sun 2-4PM The Prescott | 1115 Cameron St 115, Alexandria, VA
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Battling Holiday Bulge

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

With the merriment of the holidays comes food, friends and fun. But from office parties to family dinners, opportunities for overeating and weight gain abound. In fact, the National Institutes of Health reports that the average American gains an extra pound every year that he never loses. Those pounds add up over a lifetime of holidays, but a few local nutritionists offer the skinny on weight-gain culprits and strategies to keep them at bay.

The ubiquitous holiday office party is one of the top challenges: overflowing with decadent sweets, rich entrées and often alcohol, it's the one time of year where colleagues and friends can bond over food.

Sitting next to someone who has healthy eating habits can make you think twice about the foods you choose to put on your plate, however. That is just one of the techniques that Potomac, Md.-based nutritionist Sharon Goldberg offers clients who want to avoid overindulgence.

"You should always stand far enough away from the table so that food is not at



Nutritionists offer tips for avoiding weight gain.

Decadent holiday desserts can lead to weight gain. The National Institutes of Health reports that the average American gains an extra pound every year that he or she never loses.

PHOTO BY
MARILYN CAMPBELL

arm's reach," she said. "Wait until all of the food is on the table and try to eat the healthy options first. If you eat more of a broth-based soup, for example, there will be less room for fat-laden dishes and you'll be less likely to eat them."

Keeping track of what you've consumed by leaving a small amount on your plate will also lead to eating less, said Goldberg.

"If you can see the fatty foods that you've already eaten you'll be less likely to eat more."

Someone in the office will inevitably display homemade chocolate truffles in a communal area for all to eat, or keep her candy dish overflowing with red and green confections. Keeping a private stockpile of healthy foods that you enjoy will help com-

bat the temptation to splurge, said Andrea Newman, a nutritionist based in Mount Vernon.

"Another thing you'll want to do is avoid lunch rooms and other places as much as possible when they are filled with fatty food," she said. "If you don't see it, you'll be less likely to crave it."

If you do decide to splurge, she continued, you can make up for it by taking the stairs instead of the elevator, going for a walk during work or adding time to your workout.

Shopping is a major part of the holiday season, but it is an activity that can leave you tired and hungry, said Mary Jane Glaser, an Alexandria-based nutritionist. "After a few hours of shopping, a lot of people are starving so they decide to hit the food court," she cautioned. "First, eat a healthy and filling snack before you go shopping and pack some healthy snacks to eat while you're shopping."

Keeping a food journal, weighing yourself frequently and trying on a slim-fitting outfit at least once a week to ensure you can still wear it comfortably are other tools Glaser recommends in the battle against holiday bulge.

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Diffusing Family Tensions

Local experts offer suggestions on how to handle family dynamics during the holidays.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

Last month, Linda and Tom Bullen traveled from Boston to Arlington, to celebrate Thanksgiving with their son Matt, daughter Rachel and her partner Grace Knight.

But Rachel Bullen, who spent weeks creating a menu and coordinating a table setting that would please even Martha Stewart, was deflated by one question from her mother.

“Do you think you might be eating too many carbs?” Linda Bullen asked as her daughter scooped up a second helping of potatoes.

“What I eat is none of your business,” Rachel Bullen responded. She spent the rest of meal fuming in silence and feeling humiliated in front of her partner and brother.

Family dynamics — and the drama that often ensues —

are often unwelcome, but frequent guests at family gatherings during the holiday season. While spending time with family can be a source of comfort, it can also be fraught with anxiety. And the more people and dynamics involved, the more effort it takes to create or maintain harmony.

“During the holidays, people who live far apart and are not part of one another’s daily lives often come together,” said Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D. “As a result ... people cover lot of territory, catching up in a short amount of time, instead of gradually as things naturally happen throughout the

year. People give opinions without understanding all of the details.”

Being aware of the feelings and emotions of others can help minimize family conflicts, however.

“Sensitivity allows us to tune in to what others might be feeling at a particular moment or in a particular situation,” said Katherine Knapp, Ph.D., a marriage and family therapist based in Burke. “It helps us make wise decisions about things that might say or decide not to say.”

For example, Linda Bullen was concerned about her daughter’s weight.

“Some people just have a need to feel appreciated. Everyone has different needs, but others, including family members won’t know those needs unless we tell them.”

— Katherine Knapp, Ph.D.

“Rachel recently lost about 25 pounds,” she said. “As a teenager she’d been overweight and had self-esteem issues.” She thought she was being a supportive and helpful mother.

Knapp says this is where sensitivity can reduce interpersonal tension, particularly

during the holidays.

“When family members are sensitive to each other’s feelings, they think before they speak about how what they say might affect another person’s feelings,” she said. “Even innocent comments or questions can damage a relationship when we speak from our own perspective and don’t consider what another person might be feeling.”

The pressure to create a perfect holiday can exacerbate pre-existing difficulties as well.

“People are often stressed during the holidays, especially those preparing meals, hav-

ing out of town guests staying in their homes,” said Isenberg. “Guests can be stressed too, as they are staying in someone else’s home, don’t have their own space, and are operating according to someone else’s agenda. So tensions are already higher, and patience is shorter.”

The ability to be flexible and recognize that even the most organized plans can fall apart, will reduce pressure as well, said Pamela Daniels, a licensed clinical social worker and psychotherapist based in Lorton. “Flexibility allows us to roll with the punches,” she said. “Rigidity can be a recipe for disaster, especially during the holidays.”

FAMILY MEMBERS can help ease tension by expressing their needs up front.

“Some people just have a need to feel appreciated,” said Knapp. “Everyone has different needs, but others, including family members won’t know those needs unless we tell them.”

Rachel Bullen needed her mother to recognize and validate the effort that she’d put into preparing a healthy Thanksgiving dinner and an aesthetically appealing table, and to maintaining a lifestyle that had kept her fit.

“I’ve always seen my mother as thin, beautiful and the perfect hostess,” said Rachel Bullen. “And she can always find something wrong with everything that I do, but she can find no wrong with my brother.”

Recognizing that such old patterns and dynamics may be rekindled during big gatherings can help family members navigate



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Stacie Isenberg

“Consider topics to discuss with certain family members and how you will politely steer away from topics you’d rather not discuss.”

— Stacie B. Isenberg, Psy.D.

difficult relationships.

“Even though there may be months or even years between visits, people’s triggers and sensitivities are the same unless they’ve previously worked through them with their family members and reached an understanding about the best ways for them to interact,” said Isenberg. “The judgmental parent or uncle will still be judgmental and the inquisitive grandmother who pushes boundaries will still do so.”

Prior to spending time with family, she suggested, it’s a good idea to think about the actions, words or situations that ignite tensions and decide how they can be avoided.

“Consider topics to discuss with certain family mem-

bers and how you will politely steer away from topics you’d rather not discuss,” Isenberg explained. “If you anticipate that there will be a topic or way of interacting that is too difficult to be avoided with subtlety, you may want to consider gently approaching it prior to the holidays. For example, tell your parents you don’t feel comfortable discussing your relationship with your significant other in front of the extended family and ask them not to mention it during dinner, and provide them with an answer to give when relatives inquire.”

Rachel decided to begin seeing a therapist to help strengthen her relationship with her family. “Hopefully Christmas will be less tense,” she said. “If not this Christmas, then next.”

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Ann Logsdon & Emily Capelli 703.568.8433
FAIRFAX CITY \$398,000 OPEN SUNDAY 1-4

10328 SAGER AVE, #312 Rarely available 1BR/den in Providence Square. Light, bright unit features open floor plan, custom plantation shutters, fully equipped kitchen with granite counters and low, low utilities. 2 garage spaces convey.



Mary Taylor 703.785.5619
ALEXANDRIA / Old Town \$565,000 OPEN SUNDAY 12-2

1443 DUKE ST Charming 2BR townhome with original pine hardwoods, beautiful architectural detailed moldings thru-out. Gas fireplace in living room, spacious dining room and kitchen, with granite, opens to brick patio. Short walk to Metro and Whole Foods.



Val Klotz 703.303.9744
ALEXANDRIA / Stoneybrooke \$499,900

Turn-key home tastefully renovated from top-to-bottom. Open kitchen to dining and living rooms. Deck and fenced back yard off kitchen. LL has 1BR/1FBA, great for guests, and 2nd family room with fireplace. Perfectly sited on cul-de-sac on 1/4 acre. 2 car garage. 5BR/2BA.



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ENTERTAINMENT



Michael Sharp, Peter Boyer, and Tracey Stephens play all the characters in "A Broadway Carol."



Peter Boyer (Scrooge) and the Cratchits (Tracey Stephens and Michael Sharp) in MetroStage's Annual "A Broadway Carol."

PHOTOS BY COLIN HOWDE

'A Broadway Christmas Carol'

Holiday tradition returns to MetroStage.

BY CAROLYN GRIFFIN
METROSTAGE PRODUCING
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Five years ago it was decided that MetroStage needed to establish a holiday tradition. "A Christmas Carol" was taken (Ford's Theatre). "Nutcracker" with major New York companies and the Washington Ballet was already booked. So "A Broadway Christmas Carol," originally developed at Round House Theatre in Silver Spring and running for seven sold out seasons until 2004, seemed the perfect choice. A small cast, a musical featuring Broadway show tunes, a classic story with a twist and ultimately a very funny play with a heart and a

soul and a lot of silliness and madcap antics seemed to be the perfect way for this theatre to usher in the holidays.

In its fifth season at MetroStage, "A Broadway Christmas Carol" is definitely a certifiable, indisputable tradition. Patrons return every year introducing more friends and family to this alternative holiday entertainment. Adults love identifying the 34 Broadway shows represented in the score (there is a cheat sheet in the lobby for after the show in case you couldn't identify a song or two) and children can enjoy it on a completely different level given the fast paced rollicking fun and lightning fast costume/character changes. One young man declared it "awesome" as he came out to the lobby at intermission last weekend.

This is a holiday entertainment that is wickedly funny and captures the heightened



Tracey Stephens returns as Bob Marley (in the body of Mae West).



Want (Tracey Stephens) and Ignorance (Michael Sharp).

spirit of the holidays while at the same time telling a story with a very serious message of love, kindness, and generosity among family and friends, and an old miser's ultimate redemption. And it is told (and sung) by some of the best vocal talents in the area and played by one of the best pianists in the business. The combination of comedy and storytelling performed by exceptionally talented actors with incredible vocal ranges

will prove the talent, the comic timing, and the exceptional vocal prowess of this cast. A little something new is added to the script every year, and this year is no exception.

If you know one Broadway tune or hundreds, your spirits will soar and you will be primed and ready to take on the holidays after spending a few hours at MetroStage with the Crachits, Fezziwigs, Belle, Fred, Marley and the rest of the Dickens' gang.

NOTES FROM THE PRODUCER

cast, a musical featuring Broadway show tunes, a classic story with a twist and ultimately a very funny play with a heart and a

CALENDAR

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

ONGOING

Mount Vernon Virtual Tour.

Website users can now transport themselves to George Washington's Mount Vernon in a click of a mouse or touch of a screen through a new virtual tour. Featuring 29, 360-degree panoramic images, more than 200 points of interest, and dozens of in-depth videos highlighting architectural details, objects and anecdotes, the tour recreates the

experience of being at the estate in an unparalleled way.

Tavern Toddlers. Weekly open playtime continues every Monday throughout holiday season. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Gadsby's Tavern Museum, North Royal Street, Alexandria. Caregivers, toddlers (walkers through 3 years) and visiting relatives are welcome to play, read, dance and color in the historic ballroom. No reservations required. Each week costs \$7 for a group of three, which must include one adult, and additional people are \$3. A three-visit pass costs \$18. On Monday, Feb. 16 Tavern Toddlers will be closed due to President's Day. www.gadsbystavern.org or 703-746-4242

Art Exhibit. Through Jan. 2 at 1717 King St. and 300 S. Washington St. BB&T Bank hosts an exhibition of portraits of African American and women Living Legends of Alexandria at its Old Town branches. Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Fridays 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Visit www.AlexandriaLegends.com.

"Beyond the Board" Art Exhibit. Through Feb. 22. Prudential PenFed Realty, 4900 Seminary Road, Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans' presents "Beyond the Board." A portion of artists' sales go to the PenFed Foundation, supporting active military families, veterans and their families. Visit www.thedelrayartisans.org/shows/gww/ for more.

New Exhibit. Mount Vernon invites

visitors to explore George Washington's design for the grounds of his estate, through a new exhibition, "Gardens & Groves: George Washington's Landscape" at Mount Vernon through Jan. 12, 2016. Gardens & Groves is the first museum exhibition to focus specifically on Washington's landmark achievements as a landscape designer combining rarely-seen original documents, artwork, and books with period garden tools, landscape photography, and a scale model of the Mount Vernon estate. Included in admission \$18/adult; \$17/senior citizen; \$9/child age 6-11; children under 5 are free. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

Alexandria Cars & Coffee invites car enthusiasts to meet for coffee at

Hollin Hall Shopping Center in front of Roseina's, 1307 Shenandoah Road. Owners of classic cars, hot rods, exotic cars, motorcycles and more meet to share car stories and drink coffee. Group meets the first Sunday of every month. 8:30-11 a.m.

George Washington's Mount

Vernon has joined Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and James Madison's Montpelier to expand the "Presidents Passport," Virginia's premier presidential trail. As an added bonus to this year's program, visitors to the Alexandria Visitors Center at 221 King St. showing or purchasing a ticket to any of the three presidential estates will, upon request, receive for free Alexandria's "Key to the City" pass, which grants access into nine historic sites and

ENTERTAINMENT

museums in Alexandria—a \$26 added value. Visit www.PresPassport.Monticello.org.

Fifty Years of Collecting. Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sundays noon to 5 p.m. Fort Ward Museum 4301 West Braddock Road. An anniversary exhibit of objects from the Fort Ward collection. Free. Visit www.forward.org or call 703-746-4848.

Dinner for the Washingtons. Noon at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. A walking tour that goes behind the scenes to find out how food was prepared and served before the era of microwaves and TV dinners. \$5 in addition to estate admission. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ for more.

Second Thursday Music. Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. 7 pm. Second Thursday of every month. Visit nvfaa.org to view concert calendar and listen to upcoming Second Thursday Music artists.

The Monday Morning Birdwalk has been a weekly event at Huntley Meadows since 1985. It takes place every week, rain or shine (except during electrical storms, strong winds, or icy trails), at 7 a.m. (8 a.m. November through March), is free of charge, requires no reservation, and is open to all. Birders meet in the parking lot at the park's entrance at 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Direct questions to Park staff during normal business hours at 703-768-2525.

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Photography Workshop. 10:30 a.m.-noon at Multiple Exposures Gallery on 105 N. Union St. Photographers and enthusiasts of all skill levels are invited to share work, ideas, and

questions at this free workshop held on the last Sunday of each month, except December. No reservations. Call 703-683-2205.

Life Drawing. Del Ray Artisans offers a range of open life drawing sessions for anyone to develop life-drawing skills further. Just drop-in for the session and bring your supplies to draw or paint our live models. Fee ranges from \$8-\$12. All skill levels are welcome. Del Ray Artisans is located at 2704 Mount Vernon Ave. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org for a schedule.

WEDNESDAY/NOV26-SUNDAY/DEC.28

Broadway Christmas Carol. Runs through Dec. 28 at MetroStage, 1201 N. Royal St. Enjoy the show Wednesday-Thursday, 8 p.m., Fridays, 8 p.m., Saturdays, 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$50. Visit www.metrostage.org for more.

DECEMBER

Tree Sale. Weekends through December, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. Enjoy music, warm drinks and cookies by the fire, while surrounded by frasier fir trees. Sales benefit of community outreach programs and local schools. Choose to have 10 percent of the sale amount go to St. Aidan's Day School or a local, public elementary school. St Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria. Visit www.staidanepiscopal.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 28 -TUESDAY/JAN. 6

Christmas in Mount Vernon. 9 a.m.-4 p.m. 3200 Mount Vernon

Memorial Highway, Mount Vernon. Mount Vernon decks the halls with themed Christmas trees on the estate and festive greenery in the Mansion. Visit www.mountvernon.org/christmas for more.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 3-MONDAY, JAN. 5

"Friend Me" Exhibit. Through Monday, Jan. 5. Opening reception Thursday Dec. 11, 6:30-8 p.m. The Art League Gallery, Studio 21, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Jeweler Whitney Staiger melds together her friends' public avatar with an aspect of their private selves on her handmade brass cameos in a solo exhibit. www.theartleague.org 703-683-1780.

THURSDAY/DEC. 4

Live Music. 7:30 at the Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone perform. \$45.00. Visit peternoone.com or www.Birchmere.com for more.

THURSDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 4-6

Thompson Basketball Tournament. Thursday-Saturday, 3 - 9 p.m. at St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School, 1000 St. Stephen's Road, Alexandria. This longstanding tournament matches boys varsity teams from eight schools for three days of high school basketball. Visit www.sssas.org for more.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/DEC. 5-6

Live Music: Dar Williams. 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere, 3701 Mount

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 21



PHOTO BY JEANNE THEISMANN/THE GAZETTE

Women's Holiday Art Market

Sunday, Dec. 7 from 1-5 p.m. at the Charles Houston Recreation Center, 905 Wythe St. Wrap up your holiday shopping early, courtesy of the Friends of the Alexandria Commission for Women. Select from an outstanding array of handcrafted gifts created just for you, by over 40 local female artisans. Jewelry, pottery, scarves, purses, clothing, paintings, photography, canine treats, and more, will be available at this benefit for the programs supported by the Friends of the Alexandria Commission for Women and the Commission for Women. Gift cards for the Operation Elf program would be welcome. Free – includes light refreshments, wine for adults and an elegant raffle. Call 703-746-3132 or visit <http://tinyurl.com/AlexHolidayMarket>.

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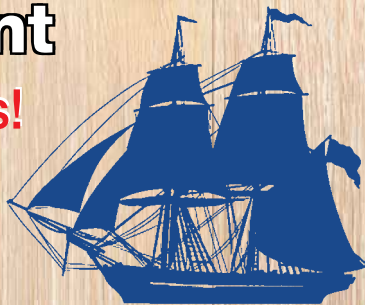
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LTA Stages 'A Christmas Carol'

Charles Dickens' classic story to run from Dec. 5-20.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE GAZETTE

The Little Theatre of Alexandria is presenting Charles Dickens' classic, "A Christmas Carol," from Dec. 5-20. The story follows Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly Victorian humbug, who travels with ghostly guides through Christmas past, present and future to find the true meaning of the holiday. Complete with special effects, Victorian carols and Tiny Tim, "A Christmas Carol" is a must-see for the entire family.

Director Rachel Hubbard said the play is near and dear to her heart, and her goal was to convey the timeless message of this well-loved classic. "Each of us has the opportunity to be redeemed from a life of inward focus to one of outward focus," she said. "We, like Scrooge, may pause to reflect on past happiness, consider for a moment those less fortunate than we, and determine to become more charitable, caring, and socially conscious in the year ahead."

She added, "I would be delighted if the audience, while enjoying 'A Christmas Carol,' allows themselves a moment for personal reflection on the glorious memories of Christmases past, the joys that can be found in the present, and the optimism for a better and brighter future."

Producer Eddy Roger Parker said "A Christmas Carol" has become sort of a tradition at LTA, and for many people it is a family tradition. He said the play's central message centers on redemption and hope. "And that is something we all need to hear especially these days," he said.

Parker, who is co-producing along with Jayn Rife, said "I wanted to help tell that story." The underlying message of the play, he added, is "that there are two roads that we can go by but it's never too late to change the one we're on."

Mike Baker Jr., who plays the role of



Robert Heinly (Marley) and Michael Baker (Scrooge) star in LTA's "A Christmas Carol."

Scrooge, said that having done the "Musical Scrooge" at LTA before, he was able to act and sing as a means of portraying the complexities of this character. "The ghosts are the equivalent of today's therapists," he said. "They help [Scrooge] make sense of who he is. It is never too late to change, counsels Marley, and I agree."

He said, "If just one audience member opens his or her heart freely, then the 17 performances were worth it for me."

Melanie Bales plays the role of Mrs. Cratchit, a woman devoted to her husband and family, and determined to see the good in those around her.

"However, when confronted with the attitudes of her husband's employer, Ebenezer Scrooge, she is utterly dismayed," said Bales. "She cannot comprehend that someone could actually be so miserably awful to others."

She added, "She truly admires Bob Cratchit's ability to work under those conditions for so many years and seeks to make up for his unpleasant work environment with a happy, loving home life."

Ben Gossart, who plays the role of Peter Cratchit, one of the older more responsible children, said, "This is a very feel-good show, and I hope that this show truly brings out the Christmas spirit in everyone."



John Shackelford (Gentleman One) stars in LTA's production of "A Christmas Carol."

He said that a challenge of working on "A Christmas Carol" is finding the perfect chemistry between the adult and child actors. "It's a little weird for us kids at first, but eventually you throw yourself into it and it becomes very natural."

Eva Gary plays the role of the Spirit of Christmas, a sort of bridge from the year 2014 to the 1840s. "I hope the audiences will come away from the play feeling 'glad tidings of comfort and joy,'" she said. "I hope the play helps them to let go of the stress that the holiday season can sometimes bring and embrace the warm generosity of Christmas."

John Dabeck, who plays the dual roles of Dick Wilkins and Alfred Topper, said, "My characters are both fun loving and kind. Dick is more of a family man whose focus is to support his family and make them happy."

He also said, "I hope the audience really enjoys the show and takes away a sense of love and Christmas spirit. We've all worked really hard and the greatest payment would be to have families come in, see the show, and leave with a sense of happiness and joy from the world we brought them."

Larry Grey plays the role of Mr. Fezziwig — a happy, foppish man, with a love of family and friends, and sense of fun and fair-



John Dabeck (Topper) and Clare Baker (Lillian) star in LTA's production of "A Christmas Carol."

ness. "When the Ghost of Christmas Past takes Scrooge to revisit his youthful days, he is taken back into Fezziwig's world."

He added, "Fezziwig is also a capitalist, but he moderates profit maximization with kindness, generosity, and affection for his employees ... Everything he does is motivated by his love of people and desire to make the dark world of the times a little brighter."

Grey said that the final encounter with the Ghost of the Future showed Scrooge that in order for others to care about someone, that person must first care about others. "That is the message I hope the audience gets," he said. "Life must be lived, and lived for others."

Penelope Gallagher, who plays the role of Fan, Scrooge's little sister, said: "I hope that audiences find the show reminds them of the true spirit of Christmas — being kind to people, loving your family, and just being a good person."

The Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St., Alexandria, is staging "A Christmas Carol" from Dec. 5-20, 2014. The show runs Thursdays-Fridays at 8 p.m.; with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 3 and 5 p.m. Tickets are \$15. Call 703-683-0496 or visit thelittletheatre.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT



GAZETTE PACKET FILE PHOTOS

Santa lights the Del Ray Holiday Tree and residents pose for photos.



Children gather close to the stage during the singing of holiday songs led by The Rainbow Lady Kate Moran at Del Ray's 2013 holiday celebration.

Del Ray Lights Up for the Holidays

The annual Holiday on the Avenue will take place on Saturday, Dec. 6. 6-9 p.m. Discover the holiday spirit with a visit to Del Ray for the annual holiday tree lighting and a special appearance by Santa Claus, who will lead carols and sit for photos with children. The celebration continues with an evening stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue, which will be illuminated by thousands of candles called "luminarias." In the true spirit of the holidays, the community will be collecting items such as canned goods, diapers and towels for the Carpenter's Homeless Shelter. Visit www.visitdelray.com for more.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 17

Vernon Ave. Dar Williams, honoring the 20th Anniversary of "The Honesty Room." \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com or www.darwilliams.com.

Annual Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend & Parade, 9 a.m. onwards at Campagna Center, 418 South Washington St., Alexandria. Tour historic Old Town homes decorated for the season, wander through a marketplace full of unique seasonal gifts, purchase greenery for your holiday decorations, enjoy fine Scotch at the Taste of Scotland, and take in the sights and sounds of the unique Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. Proceeds will benefit educational programs that provide vital pre-K education, after school programs, tutoring and mentoring, family support services and English classes, all serving 1,700 Alexandrians daily. For schedule of events and to purchase tickets visit www.scottishchristmaswalk.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 6

Scottish Walk Parade, 11 a.m. Old Town Alexandria, parade begins at St. Asaph and Wolfe Streets. More than 100 Scottish Clans, pipe and drum bands, Scottish dancers, reenactment groups, Scottie dogs, dignitaries and, of course, Santa Claus will march through the streets of Old Town. Visit www.campagnacenter.org/events/scottish-christmas-walk-weekend or www.visitalexandriava.com/events/44th-Annual-Campagna-Center-Scottish-Walk-Parade/983

A Soldier's Christmas at Carlyle House, Noon-4 p.m. at Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St. The Christmas event will feature reenactors from the First Virginia Regiment, as well as costumed interpreters from historic Carlyle House who will highlight colonial life in Alexandria during the holidays at the time of the American Revolution. Visit www.carlylehouse.org.
Holiday Open House, 4-7 p.m. at Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. During the Torpedo

Factory Art Center's Holiday Open House, artists will keep their studios open late for visitors to find handmade gifts. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

Boat Parade, 5:30 p.m. near the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. Enjoy the 15th Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Visit www.visitalexandriava.com/holidays for more.

Holiday on the Avenue, 6-9 p.m. at Mount Vernon and E. Oxford avenues. Discover the holiday spirit with a visit to Del Ray for the annual holiday tree lighting and a special appearance by Santa Claus, who will lead carols and sit for photos with children. Visit www.visitdelray.com for more.

Holiday Concert, 7 p.m. Convergence, 180 North Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Exciting holiday concert featuring the Alexandria and George Mason University Potomac Arts Academy Encore Chorales. Free. Visit www.encrecreativity.org

Dance in the Gallery: A Demonstration of Scottish Country Dancing, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. Free. The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society, Northern Virginia branch, presents a demonstration of social dancing of Scotland. www.nvfaa.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 7

Nutcracker in a Nutshell, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Embassy Suites, Old Town Alexandria. Metropolitan School of the Arts of Alexandria and Lorton will present their pint-sized, 30-minute version of the Nutcracker for younger audiences, along with a breakfast. Tickets are \$38 for children, 10 and younger, and \$48 for adults. Visit www.metropolitanarts.org for tickets.

Music in the Gallery, 2 p.m. Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria. The Mount Vernon Flutes perform holiday classics. www.nvfaa.org

Holiday Concert, 3 p.m. at Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria. Celebrate the holiday season as Washington Metropolitan

Philharmonic, Maestro Ulysses James and the NOVA Community Chorus directed by Dr. Mark Whitmire join forces to present Holst's charming and festive fantasy of well-known carols. Contact 703-998-6260.

"Advent Cantata," 4 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center, Northern Virginia Community College, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. Presented by New Dominion Chorale, works by Benjamin Britten and Thomas Beveridge. General admission \$30; \$25 seniors; \$5 students, children; \$20 groups of 10 or more. Free parking. Call Margaret Volpe at 703-442-9404, visit www.newdominion.org or email info@westernpresbyterian.org.

MONDAY-TUESDAY/DEC. 8-9

Musical Audition, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Audition to be a Beverly Hillbilly. Children ages 13-18 are welcome to audition. Visit www.mvcc.org for more.

MONDAY/DEC. 8

A Peter White Christmas, 7:30 p.m. The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. \$49.50. Visit www.birchmere.com for more.

TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY/DEC. 9-10

Live Music: Aaron Neville, 7:30 p.m. at the Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Christmas with Aaron Neville. \$59.50. Visit www.birchmere.com for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 9

Santa Will Visit, 1-3 p.m. at CVS, 1636 Belle View Blvd, Alexandria. Guests will receive a free photograph with Santa and goodies. Call 703-768-7044 for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 11

"Friend Me" Opening Reception, 6:30-8 p.m. The Art League Gallery, Studio 21, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Jeweler Whitney Staiger

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ENTERTAINMENT



Scouts from Troop 600 at Stratford Landing Elementary School carry the lead banner for the Campagna Center in the 2013 Scottish Walk parade on Saturday morning.



Gadsby Tavern Museum Society member Danny Smith appears as Father Christmas in Gadsby Square during the 2013 Scottish Walk festivities.

44th Scottish Walk

The Saint Andrew's Society of Washington, D.C., partners with the Campagna Center and the City of Alexandria to host the annual parade. The iconic Scottish Christmas Walk Parade takes place on Saturday, Dec. 6 at 11 a.m., when more than 45 Scottish clans dressed in colorful tartans will parade through the streets of Old Town, joined by pipe and drum bands from around the region, as well as terriers and hounds. More events Friday and Saturday include a Taste of Scotland (Dec. 5), Deck the Halls with Santa (Dec. 5), Heather and Greens sale (Dec. 5-6), Holiday Marketplace (Dec. 6) and the Campagna Center's Holiday Designer Tour of Homes (Dec. 6). Free for parade, holiday marketplace and heather & green sales; \$110-290 or Taste of Scotland; \$35 for Designer Tour of Homes; \$20-\$35 for Deck the Halls with Santa. Visit www.scottishchristmaswalk.com for more.



A group of Scottish Highland dancers practice their dance steps before heading off down the 2013 parade route with the Washington Scottish Pipe Band of the St. Andrew's Society of Washington.

GAZETTE PACKET FILE PHOTOS

CALENDAR

melds together her friends' public avatar with an aspect of their private selves on her handmade brass cameos in her first solo exhibit. Exhibit runs through Monday, Jan. 5. www.theartleague.org 703-683-1780.

Whiskey Store Tour 2014. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Featuring Tab Benoit with Tommy Castro and Samantha Fish. Tickets \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com.

Second Thursday Live: The Aloha Boys. 7 p.m. Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. \$10 admission. The Aloha Boys have played Carnegie Hall, The Birchmere and The Kennedy Center. They bring the warm aloha spirit on a cold day. www.nvfaa.org

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/DEC. 13-14
Historical Candlelight Tour. Saturday, 6-9 p.m. and Sunday, 3-6 p.m. at various locations in Old Town. This holiday event blends chocolate and history through special tastings, seasonal decorations, period music and tours highlighting chocolate through time. Visit www.historicalexandria.org for more.

SATURDAY/DEC. 13

Civil War Christmas. Noon-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock Road. Visitors will meet a Civil War-era Santa at this family-fun holiday event exploring how Christmas was observed during the Civil War. Visit apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar.

Holiday Concert. 8 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Visit www.alexandriachoralsociety.org for more.

Annual Tree Trim. 2-5 p.m. at The

Gum Springs Historical Museum, 8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria. The public is invited to this annual tree trim. Call 703-619-6967 for more.

Nutcracker in a Nutshell. 3 and 7:30 p.m. Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, Northern Virginia Community College, Alexandria campus, 3001 North Beauregard Street, Alexandria. A condensed version of the classic holiday ballet performed by The Ballet Arts Ensemble of Fairfax. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to any of the performances for the U.S. Marine's Toys for Tots program. Tickets are \$25 and are available in advance at www.thecenterforballetarts.com or 703-273-5344. Tickets will also be available at the door.

SUNDAY/DEC. 14

Colonial Favorites. 2-4 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. The Colonial English Handbell Ringers will return with their annual concert at the Lyceum, featuring a group of 12 performers. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org for more.

TUESDAY/DEC. 16

Chocolate Class. 12:45 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Learn how chocolate goes from cocoa bean to beverage in the 18th century. Participants will participate in the process and taste a final product. Tickets are \$8 per child. Call 703-746-4242 or visit shop.alexandriava.gov for more.

THURSDAY/DEC. 19

Carbon Leaf. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 20

Kwanzaa Celebration. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at The Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. The museum's annual program explores the history and significance of Kwanzaa. Learn about the principles of Kwanzaa, a seven-day cultural celebration. Tickets are \$5. Visit www.alexblackhistory.org for more.

Art at the Center. 5-7 p.m. at 2804 Sherwood Hall Lane, Alexandria. Enjoy light painting. Bring a book or toy to donate to Rising Hope. Call 703-201-1250 or visit www.artatthecenter.org for more.

Christmas Illuminations. 5:30-9 p.m. Sip hot chocolate while watching fireworks over the Potomac. Advance ticket purchase is suggested. Tickets are \$30 adults, \$20 youth (6-11), children five and under are free. Visit MountVernon.org for more.

Orchestra. 7 p.m. at The George Washington Masonic Memorial Theatre, 611 King St. The Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia presents "Holidays in Paris." Visit www.sonovamusic.org for more.

SUNDAY/DEC. 21

Skincare Treatments from Garden and Kitchen. 1-2 p.m. Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Mellenie Runion of Truly-Life Eco Gifts explains how to use simple ingredients for a healthy skincare regimen. www.nvfaa.org

MONDAY/DEC. 22

A John Waters Christmas. 7:30 p.m. The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. \$49.50. Visit www.birchmere.com for more.

MONDAY-WEDNESDAY/DEC. 22-24

Breakfast with Santa. 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Union Street Public House, 121 South Union St., Alexandria. Have breakfast with Santa and Mrs. Claus before they take off for the big night. \$10 per child (age 0-12) and \$15 per person (age 13+) includes a continental breakfast, visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus and tax. Tickets required. Limited amount for every seating. Reservations www.unionstreetpublichouse.com/breakfast.

SATURDAY/DEC. 27

Live Music. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Performance by Southside Johnny and The Asbury Jukes. \$39.50. Visit www.birchmere.com for more.

Sunday/Dec. 28

Hank Williams Tribute Show. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$29.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 31

First Night Alexandria. Events take place throughout the day at numerous venues around the City of Alexandria. Visit www.firstnightalexandria.org.
Live. 8 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Watch Seldom Scene, Bumper Jackson and The Hello Strangers perform. Tickets \$39.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SATURDAY/JAN. 3

Hal Ketchum. 7:30 p.m. at The

Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$35. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SUNDAY/JAN. 4

Evening of Musical Comedy. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$49.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

FRIDAY-SATURDAY/JAN. 9- JAN. 10

Concert. 8 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Ricky Skaggs and Kentucky Thunder will perform. Tickets \$39.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

FRIDAY/JAN. 23

Junior Brown. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$25. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

SUNDAY/JAN. 25

Jeffrey Osborne. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave. Tickets \$69.50. Visit www.birchmere.com or call 703-549-7500.

TUESDAY/JAN. 27

New Exhibit. 12:35 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Meet the curator of The Lyceum's new exhibit, Explore the Attic, and learn how an exhibit goes from concept to script to objects on display. Call 703-746-4242 or visit shop.alexandriava.gov for more.

The Origin of Mount Vernon Watersheds

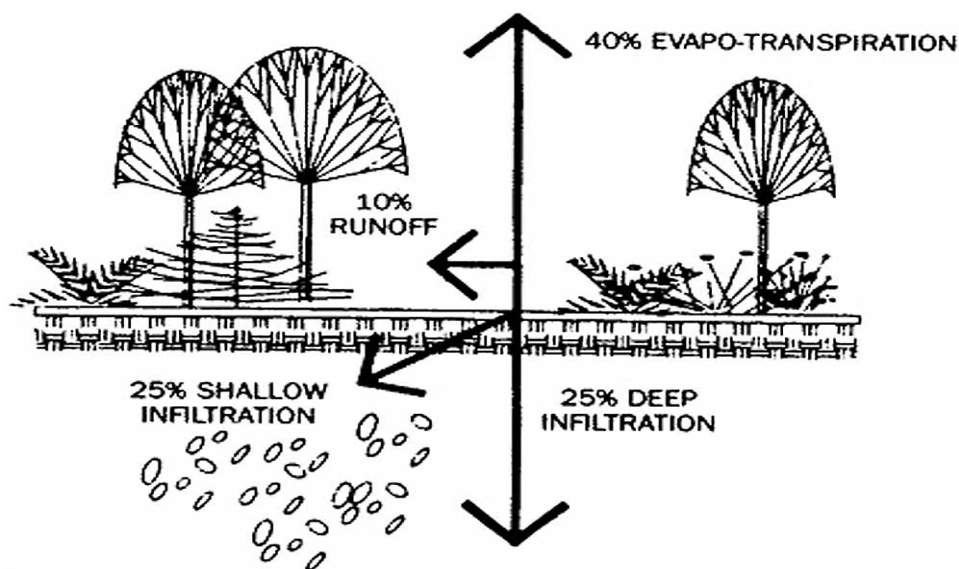
Humans arrive and thrive.

BY MARTIN TILLET

As the ice sheets of the last glacial period were receding farther north just over 10,000 years ago, the landscape of the region was taking on the appearances we are more familiar with today. The geosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and biosphere interacting over time, all contributed to the conditions prevalent today. These four

PART 3 dynamic forces are ever present and continue to influence change as it has been since the early days of the planet. But today, ecologists and other scientists suggest a fifth force referred to as the anthrosphere, the force of human civilization or that part of the environment that is made or modified by humans for use in human activities. They hypothesize that as human technology becomes more evolved, so do the impacts of human activities on the environment.

As the first humans wandered into the recently formed Potomac Valley, the biological organisms adapting to the climate conditions, influenced by the ice sheets to the north were more like those of the boreal forests biome of Canada, a mixture of coniferous forests and grasslands. Forests and plant life in our region was very different from today and animals referred to as megafauna (large game animals such as elk, bison, mastodons and mammoths) wandered across the region in search of food sources. Nomadic hunters followed these herds of large game animals in order to sustain themselves with food, hides and bone. These ancient hunters had little in the way of material culture as a nomadic way of life required the efficiency of packing one's possessions fast and moving quickly. Their technology was flaked stones to serve as spear tips for hunting and blades for butchering. Tools were shaped from bone to scrape and sew animal hides into both clothing and shelter. The presence of any kind of settlement is thus far limited to a site near Winchester, Va., called Thunderbird where there is evidence of hearths used over many successive years by people intent on gathering nearby lithic materials, highly prized for making durable and sharp stone tools. These first inhabitants left little in the way of evidence of their presence beyond occasional isolated stone spear tips. These nomadic hunters represent early humans ar-



Where does the water go? Rain event in an unaltered forest ecosystem.

chaeologists refer to as Paleoindians and their tools as being Clovis culture.

Conditions changed radically around 10,000 years ago as the last of the glaciers began to melt on their final retreat north. The boreal landscape was transformed to a more predominantly eastern deciduous forest ecosystem and has remained so to the present. It was 8,000 years ago when essentially modern ecosystem conditions were reached.

Here in Mount Vernon, the forest would have once been predominant with chestnut and oak trees along with many of the other known native trees found today. The forests had deer, elk, woodland bison, wolves, bears and panthers. Trees covered the landscape as the Chesapeake Bay and large tributaries like the Potomac River evolved into estuaries. The new forests played a role in the evolving estuaries as they contained the lands surrounding them and by intercepting the rainfall and sequestering the release of nutrients into these estuaries. These co-evolving ecosystems were creating an energy flow balance that helped to sustain both systems.

The destructive forces of water entering the watershed was slowed by the forest canopy and soaked up in the sponge-like duff of the forest floor of decomposing leaves and twigs from the trees. Under such conditions, 50 percent of the rainfall seeps slowly through the dead vegetative mat as shallow and deep infiltration while 10 percent of the water is not captured and becomes the runoff that forms the streams and creeks flowing towards larger tributaries. The remaining 40 percent is goes through

the evaporation and transpiration process returning it back to the atmosphere. Most of the sunlight energy captured by the forest canopy seasonally falls to the forest floor as dead leaves and wood where it decomposes and is recycled by fungi, arthropods and microorganisms back into the soil as nutrients that in turn feed the trees and other forest plants.

The next people to inhabit this region approximately 8,000 years ago, quickly took advantage of the combined resources of the co-evolving forests and estuaries. Archaeologists call them the Archaic cultures. There is more evidence of the presence of these hunter gatherers as they frequented the same areas seasonally to take advantage of cycles in both ecosystems and gather the resources necessary to survive. Evidence in the form of axes, adzes and seed grinding stones were added to their tool kits reflecting a more forested environment. The quartz and quartzite cobbles found in streams were used to make stone tips for atlatl darts and sharp knives for hunting and processing food.

Artifacts from Archaic culture camp sites have been found in the Spring Bank community. Residents in the neighborhood will occasionally come upon these artifacts while gardening or digging in their yards. I found several years ago a large grooved greenstone axe head while digging in my own back yard. Stone dart tips have been found on a north facing slope adjacent to Quander Brook suggesting a summer camp site close to a water source with shade most of the day. These dispersed and later sedentary foragers are known to have camped at sites near to rivers in the spring to take advantage of annual fish spawning runs and in the fall to hunt migrating waterfowl followed by upland hunting and mast crop foraging during winter months.

A major innovation occurred about 1,200 B.C. when native people began making fired clay cooking and storage vessels and were building round to oval homes from 10 to 20 feet in diameter and from 16 to 28 feet in length. Storage pits were located along



Paleoindian Clovis culture spear point

the inner wall of the houses and fire pits were in the center. Since the small, but numerous, wall support posts were driven 1 to 2 feet into the ground, the houses probably supported a great weight of thatch or bark covering and storage of belongings in the rafters. This implies permanently-built homes, reflective of a sedentary life style. These Woodland period people slowly replaced their spears and darts with the bow and arrow as a hunting weapon. Evidence for this change is found in smaller projectile points, particularly the triangular shapes. More advances came as people redesigned the grooved axe and used what is called a celt, or ungrooved axe.

By this time, people had learned to nurture native plant species, including sunflowers, gourds, marsh elder, lambsquarter and amaranth. These were plants that appeared in the clearings created by humans with the axe invented in the Archaic period. People also started to raise varieties of squash and later corn that were brought from what is now Mexico where these crops were first developed.

As more and more native groups sought the abundant resources of environments along the rivers, they merged through marriage and trade to form small settlements, called hamlets. Each series of hamlets began to take on a simple tribal identity. Elders guided the groups, along with members whose talents made them leaders in specific tasks. The degree to which these native cultures modified the surrounding ecosystems for use in human activities was of negligible impact to the forests, watersheds or estuaries.

Next Week

Part 4 - European arrival and intensive agriculture and industry impacts our watersheds.

The author is a Mount Vernon resident since 1981. A retired science educator from Prince George's County Public Schools, he taught K-12 science at the Howard B. Owens Science Center in Greenbelt, Md., as well as community college, university and adult education classes in natural history, physical geology, ecology and environmental science.





Mount Vernon junior guard Chanise Ray made a trio of 3-pointers and scored 10 points in the first five minutes of Tuesday's game against Centreville.



Mount Vernon freshman Susannah Anderson (24) scored 10 points and grabbed six rebounds against Centreville on Dec. 2.



Mount Vernon guard Deja King made a pair of 3-pointers and scored six points against Centreville on Tuesday.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE GAZETTE

Mount Vernon's Ray, Anderson Bright Spots in Defeat

Majors drop season opener to Centreville.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

Mount Vernon junior Chanise Ray, making her first varsity start at the point guard position, settled into her comfort zone early in Tuesday's season opener against Centreville.

Ray, traditionally a spot-up shooter, knocked down a trio of 3-pointers while scoring 10 points and helping the Majors build a lead during the first five minutes. But after Centreville made a defensive adjustment, going to a box-and-one to limit Ray's perimeter looks, the first-year floor general struggled to execute her new responsibilities.

"We wanted to take away their [No.] 10," Centreville head coach Tom Watson said. "She lit us up for 10 points in the first [five] minutes, [but] she didn't score another field goal the rest of the game."

Ray finished with a team-high 11 points, but No. 10 and the rest of the Majors struggled down the stretch. The Mount Vernon girls' basketball team lost a six-point

halftime lead and eventually the game, 51-44, on Dec. 2 at Mount Vernon High School.

The Centreville girls' program reached the region semifinals each of the last two seasons, but graduated 78 percent of their offense, Watson said, including star point guard Jenna Green, who plays for William & Mary.

Mount Vernon also entered the 2014-15 season as a young and relatively inexperienced group, having graduated at least three standout players each of the last two seasons. Ray, a third-year varsity athlete, is one player who will need to make a significant contribution at the offensive end for Mount Vernon to be successful. As head coach Courtney Coffer mentioned after the game, however, Ray can help the Majors with more than just her perimeter touch.

"This is her first year ever playing point guard," Coffer said. "She's a shooter, so that's all she wants to do. There are times if you come out hot and you can shoot the ball ... [and] they put someone on you, you

can still run our offense and now you can start driving and making plays for yourself or other people. But in her mind, if she's not shooting, she's not really playing.

"In the second half, what happened when they went to the box-and-one, she's just looking to shoot. Well, they've got somebody on you, so they've taken that

away, so you have to go to different avenues of your game. She just hasn't realized that she can do those things yet."

Ray said her transition to point guard is a work in progress.

"I think I could have switched up my game a little bit, maybe drove to the basket a little bit more," Ray said. "That's definitely something I need to work on. ... It's definitely a lot of work. I'm used to just spotting up and shooting. It's more leading now, more communication, leading the whole team. It's definitely a transition, but it's definitely something I can get used to and my ball handling is getting better."

Six-foot freshman Susannah Anderson finished with 10 points and six rebounds in her first varsity game.

"I was very proud of Susannah Anderson," Coffer said. "... That's a good first game for her as a freshman. That's probably the only bright spot was her and Chanise being able to shoot the basketball pretty well."

Outside of Anderson and Ray at the offensive end, Coffer wasn't pleased with much of anything else he saw from the Majors on Tuesday — something he attributed to a lack of offseason preparation.

"We've got a long way to go," Coffer said. "Will we ever get there? I don't know. The main reason is when other teams were working in the fall, none of our kids were here putting in any work. Case and point: our team last year, they put in work in the fall and we still weren't ready. Imagine where you are when you don't put in work in the fall. We're 10 steps behind everybody. Our defense is god awful."

Mount Vernon lost its 2013-14 season opener to Centreville by 28 points before responding with 14 wins in its next 16 games.

Elisa Solomon scored seven points for the Majors on Tuesday and Deja King added six.

As poorly as Coffer said Mount Vernon played, the Majors led 29-23 at halftime and 36-32 at the end of three. However, Centreville outscored Mount Vernon 19-8 in the fourth quarter to pull out the victory. The Majors made just two field goals in the final eight minutes.

"We can't score," Coffer said. "We can't score the ball right now. Chanise came out and started the game strong, so they went to a box-and-one. Right now, we don't have an identity as far as other kids who have shown that they can step up and score the basketball."

Just how poorly did Coffer feel the Majors played?

"It got so bad, I called a full timeout and before I went over anything dealing with basketball, and this is the honest-to-God truth, I had to look everyone in the eye and I asked them, are y'all conspiring against us as coaches?" Coffer said. "We literally felt like they were throwing the game. That's how bad we are defensively. That is how bad we are offensively. We're just not a good basketball team right now."

Mount Vernon (0-1) returns to action on Tuesday, Dec. 9 when the Majors travel to face rival West Potomac.

"You'll see us winning more games," Ray said. "This was definitely an eye-opener for everybody."

"I was very proud of Susannah Anderson. ... That's a good first game for her as a freshman."

— Mount Vernon girls' basketball coach Courtney Coffer

Holton's Visit Focuses on Improving Student Testing

By SCOTT A. SUROVELL
STATE DELEGATE (D-44)



Two weeks ago, Virginia Education Secretary Anne Holton toured Walt Whitman Middle School and Hybla Valley Elementary School at my invitation as part of the state's effort to change the way we assess school progress.

Virginia school accreditation is largely based on student performance on the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests, tests created in 1995 by then-Governor George Allen.

COMMENTARY

Thirty schools in Fairfax County were accredited with warning and seven of those schools, including Mount Vernon High School and West Potomac High School, are in the 44th Delegate District along the U.S. 1 Corridor.

While standardized tests are one tool to measure student performance, there is widespread agreement that the strongest predictor of student performance on these tests is family income, not teacher performance.

Additionally, the current school performance assessment system has built-in biases against many schools in our area for a

number of reasons. For example, the current method does not factor in student mobility. Schools with high student turnover in low-income areas tend to have many children constantly entering the system who need remedial help. Also, when schools lose their top performing students to gifted and talented focus schools like Stratford Landing, Thomas Jefferson or others to private school, the teaching staff's achievements at the community school get diluted.

Mobility is also not always a function of income. For schools feeding into the Mount Vernon High School pyramid, 27 percent of students are from active duty, military families and many children cycle through Fairfax County from school systems in other parts of the United States. Many other school systems are not as rigorous as ours.

The current system also does not adequately evaluate student improvement. If a school enables under-performing seventh grader to get to grade level by eighth grade,

many consider the school to have done its job. One educator told us about a seventh grader who arrived reading at second grade level. By the end of seventh grade, the child was reading at sixth grade level. However, this youngster failed the SOL, but the improvement was significant — which should be counted?

If we are going to continue assessing schools with standardized tests (a concept which is debatable in and of itself), we must make some changes. First, closing the achievement gap must be incentivized by focusing on student improvement over numerous years. One-year snapshots unfairly stigmatize schools with achievement problems totally unrelated to the school or the staff's competence.

Second, student mobility must be considered. Schools with large numbers of single-family residences are advantaged by large numbers of higher-income families and a stable student population. Schools with larger numbers of students moving in and out should not be labeled as underperforming simply because their population is more transient.

Third, students' performance on tests should not be included in a school's accreditation until the staff at the school have had a meaningful opportunity to assess and

improve a student's performance.

Every time I tour a school, I am reminded of how much I still have to learn about the education process as a parent and legislator. I am impressed by the dedication, energy and professionalism that our educators and support staff bring to our youngsters. Teaching children in one of the most diverse communities and complex learning environments in Northern Virginia is one of the most professionally challenging choices teachers can make. Our education professionals carry these enormous responsibilities with poise and dedication, even though they are underpaid and often under appreciated for the challenges they take on every day, challenges that determine the future of our children's lives.

Testing programs can provide some measure of the educational challenges our schools face and identify the need for resources needed in our underfunded schools. I am working to provide our schools more resources and toward an assessment system that rewards and incentivizes student improvement and not one that just maximizes the recruitment of the best-performing students.

Please send me any feedback at scotturovell@gmail.com. It is an honor to serve as your state delegate.

SCHOOL NOTES

Email announcements to gazette@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos are welcome.

Student publications from 14 Fairfax County public schools recently earned Trophy Class rankings, the top honor in the Virginia High School League (VHSL) Publications Evaluation Service. Trophy Class rankings were awarded to: **Predator**, West Potomac High School, Melanie Mobley, adviser, in the Yearbook division.

Vocal musicians from 14 Fairfax County public schools have been named to the Virginia Honors Choir for 2014. This select choir is open to the top 125 singers from around the Commonwealth of Virginia, and is the highest honor a choir student can attain during their high school career. Thirty-six Fairfax County Public

Schools students were selected for the choir, and six students were named alternates.. FCPS students named to the 2014 Virginia Honors Choir include: **Shana Merker** and **Sam Rainey** from West Potomac High School.

Fifty-nine Fairfax County Public Schools teachers have been recognized with the Gold Star Award from Working in Support of Education (WISE) for their students' performance on the 2013-14 WISE Financial Literacy Certification Test.

The test measures students' knowledge of personal finance and pronounces them financially capable when they graduate from high school. The Gold Star Award designates that the teacher achieved a 90 percent pass rate in at least one of his or her classes on the 2013-14 WISE Financial Literacy Certification Test. FCPS Gold Star Award winning teachers are: **Pete Sienkiewicz** and **John Wiley** of Mount Vernon High School; and

Donald Beeby and **Daryl Mackey** of West Potomac High.

Browne Academy honored America's veterans in a student-run celebration featuring speakers, musical performances, and special presentations. The event was attended by the entire student body, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni.

Emceed by **James Ebron** and **Matthew Lettieri** (grade 7), both of whom have family members serving in the military, the celebration began with a welcome from Head of School Peggy Otey and the Pledge of Allegiance, led by students in fourth grade.

A rendition of "Grand Old Flag" by the preschool was followed by the featured speaker, Lt. Col. Michael D. Gayle (retired), who spoke about the history of Veterans Day and service to one's country. He concluded his speech by asking all those who have served or are serving in the military to

stand and be recognized. The veterans received a standing ovation from the audience.

Performances followed and included "America" by the advanced guitar ensemble; a saxophone solo of "Star Spangled Banner" by **Leila Gbelia** (grade 5); "Yankee Doodle Dandy," a song and dance number by the junior choir (grades 2-3); and "This Flag We Fly" by the concert choir (grades 5-8), featuring solos by **Toi Howard** (grade 8) and **Rachel Driscoll** (grade 6).

Three eighth grade students, **Hailey Chauncey**, **Ian Penny**, and **Sydney Jackson**, then read original essays and poems considering the theme, "What Patriotism Means to Me."

The event concluded with second graders presenting homemade bookmarks to all the veterans and students with family members in the military as a thank you for their service.

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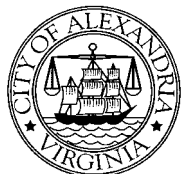
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Sealed proposals for the City of Alexandria per specifications will be received in the office of the Purchasing Division until the date and time designated as follows:

Title: Request for Proposals No. 00000480, Consulting Services for Review of Targeted Reimbursement Processes and Procedures Closing Date and Time: January 8, 2015, 4:00 p.m., prevailing local time.

For general inquiries contact Cynthia Davis, Contract Specialist at 703.746.3921.

The City of Alexandria reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, cancel this solicitation, and to waive any informalities or irregularities in procedure. **THE CITY REQUIRES ITS CONTRACTORS TO BE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYERS.**

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I believe the future is only the past again, entered through another gate.
-Arthur Wing Pinero

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

OBITUARY

CARY, NC: Lillian McCarter Wright Andrews, wife of the late Col. John Taylor Andrews, Jr. passed away on November 15, 2014 in Cary, NC at age 95. Daughter of Rose Wheeler Wright and William McCarter Wright, M.D., she was born in Baltimore, Maryland on October 23, 1919. Her father died when she was five, and her mother kept the family together by running a rooming house during the Great Depression. After a brief time in Los Angeles, in search of employment and the California dream, Lillian married John, a young army officer, on May 23, 1941 and became an "Army wife" for the rest of her life. Although the two were separated for three and a half years during World War II, they eventually traveled the globe (eight states, Germany, and Japan) for the next thirty years.

Lillian was a full-time mother and homemaker. Later, in the 1970s, after studying journalism, she wrote a column for the local press. She also volunteered regularly at her church, the National Symphony, and the White House. During the Presidencies of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, she and other members of the Martha Washington chapter of the Republican Women's Club in Alexandria, VA., were among the staff that answered White House phones and sent congratulatory notices. As President of that chapter, Lillian hosted elegant coffees in support of her favorite GOP candidates. She loved Ikebana, bridge, and entertaining. She was also fiercely loyal to her children and grandchildren and delighted in their company. All remember her warmth and youthful spirit. In the last few years, after Alzheimer's disease made it difficult to walk, she still was inclined to dance.

Besides her husband John, Lillian was predeceased by her sisters Martha Myers, Harriet Wright, and Hathaway Rinehart, and a brother, Michael Wright. She is survived by her children, John Andrews, III (Linda), of Atlanta, GA; Susan Lederer (Lyle), of Sanford, NC; Pamela Andrews (John Little), of Belmont, MA; George Andrews (Jan Carey), of Salida, CO; former daughter-in-law Mary Andrews of Longmont, CO; ten nieces and nephews, ten grandchildren and twelve great-grandchildren.

Interment will take place in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. A Memorial Service to celebrate her life has yet to be determined.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to an Alzheimer's organization of their choice. Suggestions include the Cure Alzheimer's Fund (<http://www.curealz.org/>) or the Alzheimer's Association - Eastern NC Chapter (www.alznc.org).

Online condolences to the family at www.ApexFuneral.com

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

OBITUARY



Kathleen (Kitty) Virginia McDonald, 91, of Mechanicsville, Maryland, died peacefully, at home, on Thursday, November 27, 2014.

Kathleen was born on May 20, 1923 in Richmond, Virginia. She was the daughter of Thomas L. and Nannie C. Hall. She attended school in Richmond where she met and married Wilmot (Buddy) G. McDonald, Jr. in 1946. They moved to Washington, D. C. in 1950, where they both studied Photography. They moved on to Alexandria, Virginia in 1953 where they remained until 1997 when they moved to Maryland to live with their granddaughter. She had a great love for many animals but especially enjoyed cats and kittens.

Kathleen loved children and spent the majority of her life caring for children whose own parents were required to work to support their families. She loved and treated these children as her own. All are grown now but many of the families remained friends with Kathleen and enjoyed commemorating with her from time to time.

Kathleen is survived by a daughter and son in law, Barbara A. and Donald L. Wright of Rhoadesville, VA; two granddaughters, Donna J. and her husband, Craig Belcher of Mechanicsville, MD, and Tracie L. and her husband, Billy Garner of Rhoadesville, VA; two great granddaughters, Desiree M. Wright and Delaney M. Garner of Rhoadesville, VA; one niece, Mary W. and her husband, Joe Wilson of Fredericksburg, VA; and her close friend and care provider, Catherine Rathbone of Valley Lee, Maryland. In addition to her husband and parents, she is preceded in death by two brothers and three sisters.

Family will receive friends on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Brinsfield_Echols Funeral Home, 30195 Three Notch Road, Charlotte Hall, Maryland 20622. A memorial service will follow, beginning at 12:00 p.m. Interment will be held at Mount Comfort Cemetery in Alexandria, Virginia.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial contribution in her name may be made to St. Mary's Animal Welfare League, P. O. Box 1232, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650.

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- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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-William Van Horne

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NEWS



Alberto (left) and Josephine Rendon (center) of Alexandria visit Aladdin (right), the camel-in-residence during George Washington's Mount Vernon Christmas program.

Christmas, By George

FROM PAGE 1

River on Dec. 20.

But during the day, the estate maintains its bucolic calm. "It's brilliant, beautiful and very peaceful," said Michael Fernando, visiting from England.

Virginia Taylor and Candace Pellot were

also out to enjoy the quiet scenery and gardens.

"We just like coming here," Taylor said, "and to see how the gardens are, how much they cut it back."

And, of course, Taylor and Pellot were there to see Aladdin.



A change for the holiday season, Mount Vernon's gardeners moved hearty vegetables to the center of the main garden off the bowling green.



Michael (left) and Katalin (right) Fernando, visiting for ten days from England, headed for a tour of George Washington's mansion.

PHOTOS BY
TIM PETERSON
THE GAZETTE



COURTESY OF
GEORGE WASHINGTON'S
MOUNT VERNON

The oval window in the rarely opened third or "garrett" floor of the Mount Vernon mansion faces out to the bowling green.



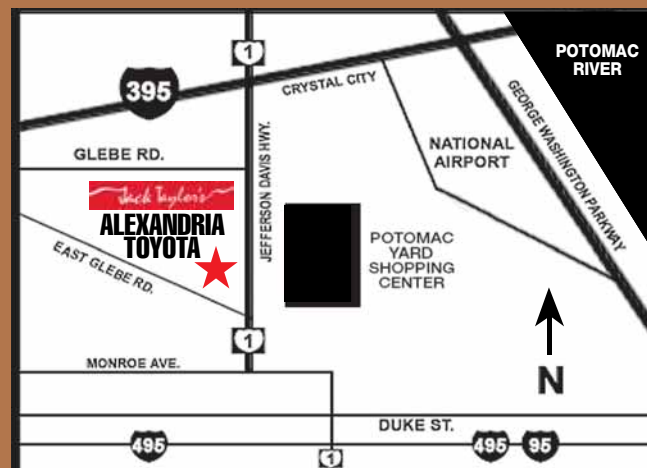
Trees inside George Washington's Mount Vernon visitors' center are covered with ornaments and historical trivias.

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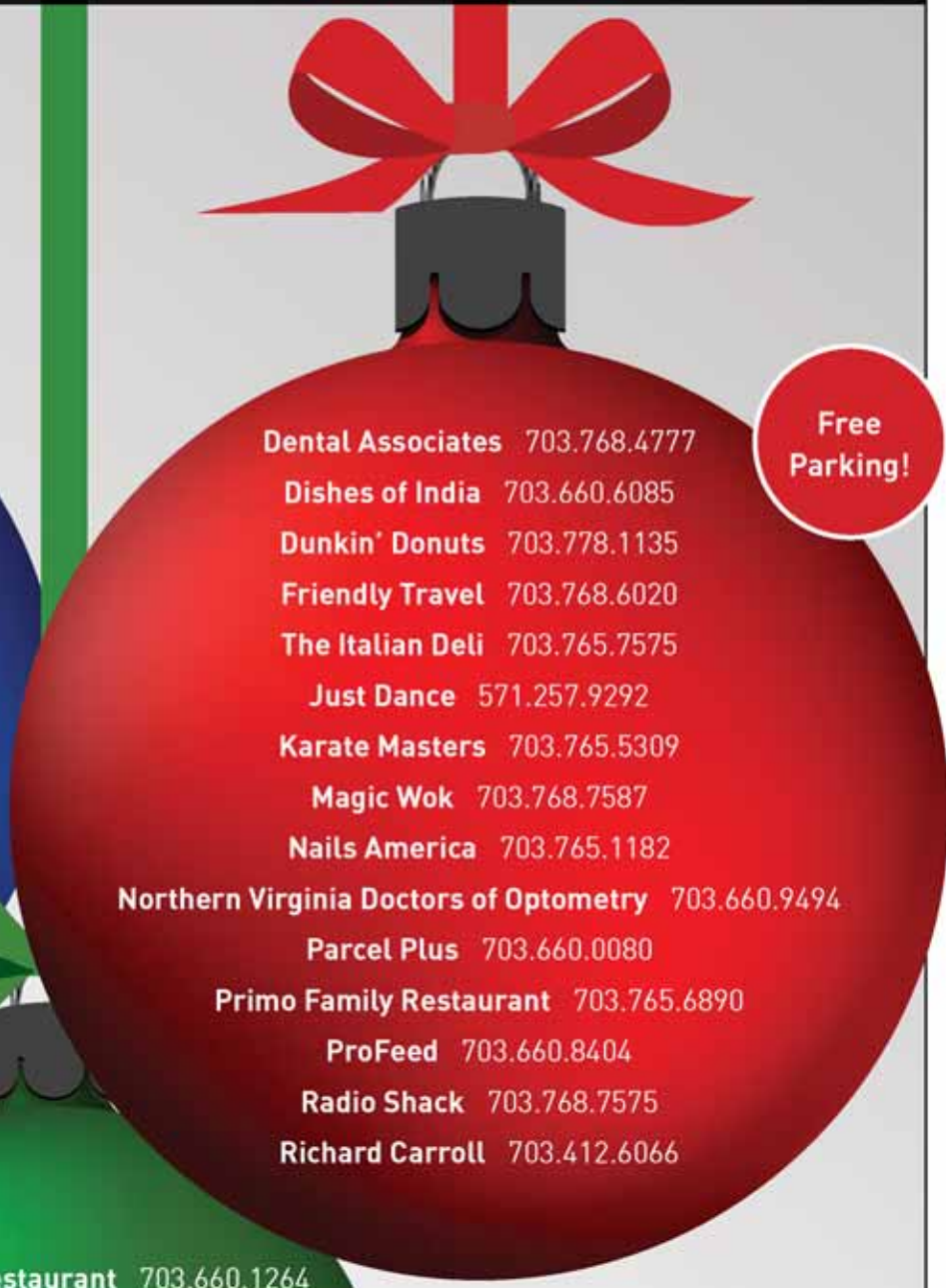
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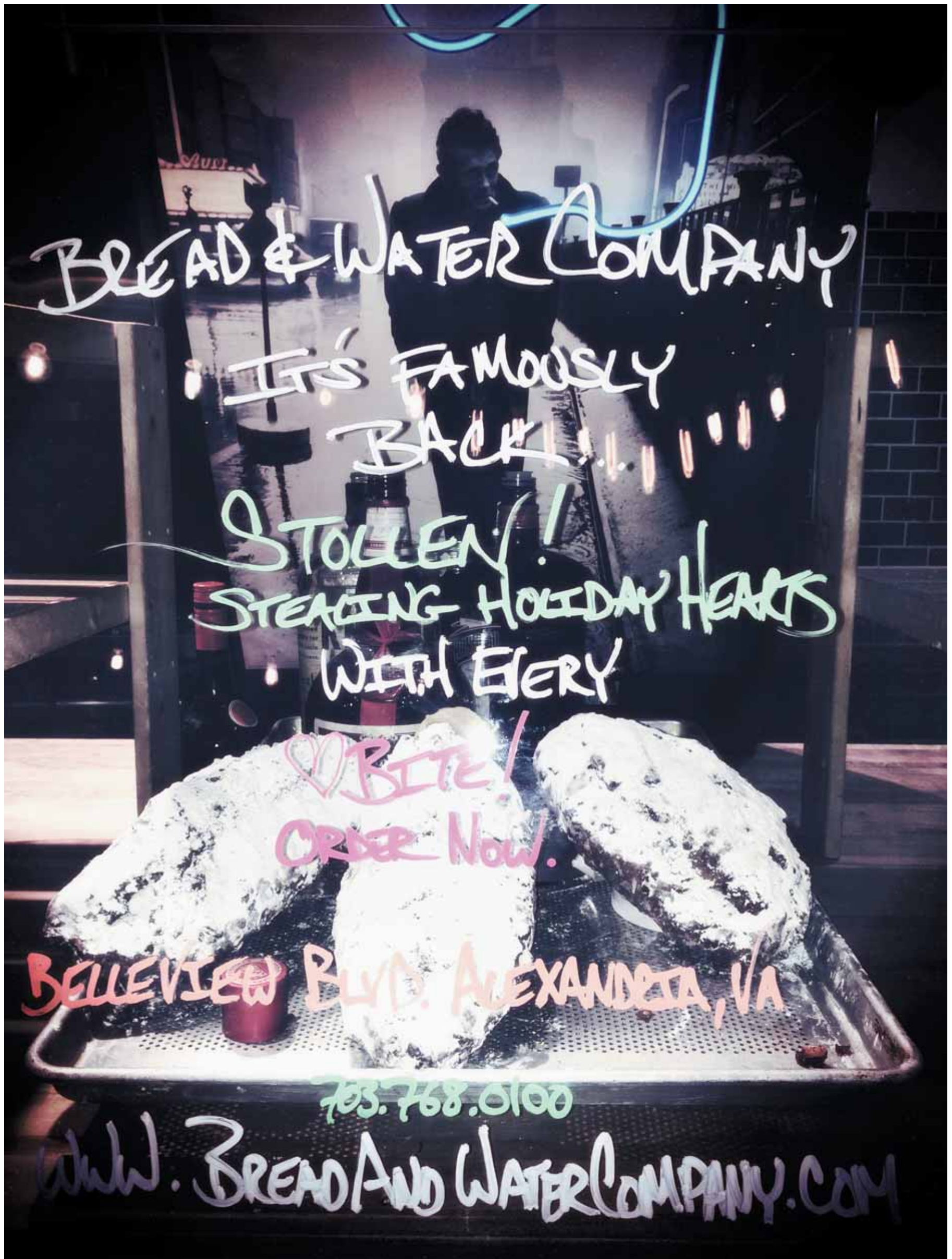
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