Building on Giant’s Bones

Despite traffic concerns, Planning Commission green lights North Old Town development.

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

Currently, the city block between in North Old Town that formerly housed the Giant grocery store sits empty except for a lone ABC store. Surrounded by hotels, restaurants, offices and community centers, the mostly vacant lot stands out, which is partly why city staff and the Planning Commission were pleased with a proposal from EDENS to redevelop the plot for a mix of retail, townhouse-style units, and apartments. The Planning Commission voted to approve the proposal at its March 1 meeting, but not without objections from several local community members.

Building sizes in the new development range from two to six stories, with two levels of underground parking. For those worried about being cut off from the closest alcohol supply, the Virginia

Opportunities For Alexandrians

City job fair centers around entry level positions.

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

If you host it, they will come. With 3.4 percent unemployment in Alexandria though, where Rubio won the plurality of the city with 46.83 percent of the vote. With 18 percent of the vote, Trump fell to third in the city behind John Kasich’s 23 percent.

At Hillary Clinton Rally in Durant Recreation Center

City residents favor Clinton, Rubio, and Kasich.

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

The ballots are hidden, but when he went to the polls at Lyles-Crouch Elementary School early on Super Tuesday, U.S. Sen. Mark Warner made no secret of whom he was supporting.

“I voted for Hillary Clinton,” said Warner. “We need somebody with a sophisticated view of how we deal with terrorism and Russia re-emerging as a superpower.”

Warner said he favored what he saw as Clinton’s strengths in economic recovery and higher education. Warner wasn’t the only one. Throughout Virginia, Clinton won 64.3 percent of the vote, with Sanders coming in a distant second with 35.2 percent. In Alexandria, Clinton won 69.49 percent of the vote. With 16,281 votes, more than were cast for all of Republican candidates together, Alexandria fell decidedly into the Clinton camp.

Among the Republicans, Donald Trump won the state with 34.7 percent of the vote, prevailing over Marco Rubio’s 31.9 percent. That popularity wasn’t reflected in Alexandria though, where Rubio won the plurality of the city with 46.83 percent of the vote. With 18 percent of the vote, Trump fell to third in the city behind John Kasich’s 23 percent.

Alexandria Votes Moderate

City residents favor Clinton, Rubio, and Kasich.

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

The ballots are hidden, but when he went to the polls at Lyles-Crouch Elementary School early on Super Tuesday, U.S. Sen. Mark Warner made no secret of whom he was supporting.

“I voted for Hillary Clinton,” said Warner. “We need somebody with a sophisticated view of how we deal with terrorism and Russia re-emerging as a superpower.”

Warner said he favored what he saw as Clinton’s strengths in economic recovery and higher education. Warner wasn’t the only one. Throughout Virginia, Clinton won 64.3 percent of the vote, with Sanders coming in a distant second with 35.2 percent. In Alexandria, Clinton won 69.49 percent of the vote. With 16,281 votes, more than were cast for all of Republican candidates together, Alexandria fell decidedly into the Clinton camp.

Among the Republicans, Donald Trump won the state with 34.7 percent of the vote, prevailing over Marco Rubio’s 31.9 percent. That popularity wasn’t reflected in Alexandria though, where Rubio won the plurality of the city with 46.83 percent of the vote. With 18 percent of the vote, Trump fell to third in the city behind John Kasich’s 23 percent.
Janet Caterson Price
NVAR Lifetime Top Producer
703.960.5858
jprice@mcenearney.com
www.JanetPriceHomes.com
109 S Pitt St • Alexandria, VA 22314

Celebrating 21 YEARS of service to my clients and my community!

Let me help you make your next move!

OLD TOWN
507 S. Fairfax Street

BELLE HAVEN
6026 Edgewood Terrace

BELLE WOOD
4517 Peacock Avenue

BELLE HAVEN
6006 Grove Drive

BELLE HAVEN
6118 Vernon Terrace

AVAILABLE & OPEN SUNDAY!
Belle Haven on the Green

903 Duffield Lane
$729,000

1792 Duffield Lane
$549,000
America’s first First Lady made a visit to Alexandria Feb. 27, holding court at Lloyd House as part of the Talking With Washington series and celebration of George Washington’s birthday. Portrayed by Mount Vernon character interpreter Mary Wiseman, Martha Washington regaled attendees with stories of her life with the father of the country and the challenges faced as a woman in the 18th century.

“I thought she was lovely,” said 5-year-old Margaret Stoll. “Her great blue dress and fan and bonnet looked very elegant.” Margaret attended the event with her siblings, Timothy, 8, and Eleanor, 3, who learned the proper etiquette for using a fan.

“I liked the fan and the dancing girls on her fan,” Eleanor said.

In the one-hour presentation, Martha Washington shared her observations about her life, including her courtship with George and life on a Virginia plantation.

“I loved her story about Vulcan stealing the ham,” said Timothy Stoll. “If I had seen it I would have laughed my heart out. I also liked hearing about her childhood and siblings.”

Maestro Kim Allen Kluge thanks attendees for their support at the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria’s 29th annual gala Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel.

Entertainment was provided by Bruthers Plus One with man-about-town Shawn McLaughlin acting as auctioneer for a live auction that included a trip to Tuscany, a blue sapphire necklace, a private tour and more.

Maestro Kim Allen Kluge embraces Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria president Phyllis Sintay after a presentation marking Kluge’s final season with the ASO during the 29th annual SOLA gala Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel.

“Orchestra and community members bid farewell to Maestro Kluge on Feb. 27,” the Gazette Packet reports. “The Symphony League of Alexandria held its 29th annual Symphony Ball and Auction Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel, celebrating Maestro Kim Allen Kluge’s 28th and final year at the helm of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Held at the Carlyle Westin Hotel, more than 300 people turned out for the annual black-tie event that raises funds to support the ASO and its programs.”

“Orchestra and community members bid farewell to Maestro Kluge on Feb. 27,” the Gazette Packet reports. “The Symphony League of Alexandria held its 29th annual Symphony Ball and Auction Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel, celebrating Maestro Kim Allen Kluge’s 28th and final year at the helm of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Held at the Carlyle Westin Hotel, more than 300 people turned out for the annual black-tie event that raises funds to support the ASO and its programs.”

Maestro Kim Allen Kluge thanks attendees for their support at the Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria’s 29th annual gala Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel.

Entertainment was provided by Bruthers Plus One with man-about-town Shawn McLaughlin acting as auctioneer for a live auction that included a trip to Tuscany, a blue sapphire necklace, a private tour and more.

Maestro Kim Allen Kluge embraces Symphony Orchestra League of Alexandria president Phyllis Sintay after a presentation marking Kluge’s final season with the ASO during the 29th annual SOLA gala Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel.

Lightning strikes twice... or thrice in the case of the Symphony League of Alexandria’s SOLA gala. But there were no storms, just a marquee season of performances and audiences that have thrived under Maestro Kim Allen Kluge’s leadership which ends with this gala.

“Maestro Kluge has been a leader and a teacher,” Symphony League of Alexandria president Phyllis Sintay said well before the final performance of the Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture, an appropriate coda for Maestro Kluge’s final concert.

“We are so excited to say thank you and thank you and thank you,” Sintay continued, with her arm around Maestro Kluge. “We’ve brought in wonderful guest conductors with new sounds and we have a whole new look from the lobby to the stage.”

Sintay said she is excited to bring in new music, new musicians and new ways of doing things from the stage to the box office. She said Maestro Kluge was a trailblazer, who, at the beginning of his career, was largely the only African American conductor.

“Maestro Kluge was at the forefront of that,” Sintay said. “And we are going to continue on that trail of innovation. We are going to continue on that trail of excellence.”

Sintay said that while there will be an intermission in Maestro Kluge’s career, there is no question his heart is here in Alexandria.

“Don’t be surprised if one day you see him out in the community,” Sintay said. “It might be in an opera or maybe a play.”

Sintay said that while Maestro Kluge is stepping down, the Symphony League of Alexandria will continue to thrive.

“We are on the path of doing more and more, looking at new venues,” Sintay said. “We are looking at ways of expanding our efforts.”

Jeffrey Garrett leads a final performance at the SOLA gala. His final concert with Maestro Kluge was Feb. 9 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel in Alexandria.

Jeffrey Garrett returns as guest conductor for the Symphony League of Alexandria’s farewell gala for Maestro Kim Allen Kluge Feb. 27 at the Carlyle Westin Hotel in Alexandria.

Jeffrey Garrett, the으로마의 하이라이터로 경연을 마친 후에는 앤드류 클러우의 분위기를 잡아내기 위해 고용되었다. 그의 마지막 공연은 2월 9일 카리레 웨스틴 호텔에서 열린 것이다.

Jeffrey Garrett은 앤드류 클러우의 퇴임 음악회에 앞서 앤드류 클러우와의 마지막 공연을 2월 9일 카리레 웨스틴 호텔에서 열었다.

One of the Area’s Fastest Growing Mortgage Lender
Proudly Welcomes Our Newest Team Members:

Michael Duong
Mortgage Loan Originator
NMLS# 484234

Dave Venugopal
Mortgage Loan Originator
NMLS# 454233

Paulo Garcia
Mortgage Loan Originator
NMLS# 483207

TO JOIN THE FOLLOWING TEAM IN THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA BRANCH:

John G涑ting
Regional Vice President,
NMLS# 558402

Stan Schinppel
Area Sales Manager,
NMLS# 449320

Mike McElrath
Branch Manager, NMLS# 463831

Robert Chowden
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 492740

Lee Williams
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 496092

Jim Galloway
Sales Manager,
NMLS# 342098

Debbie Sanders
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 329050

Gary Nesci
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 513506

Sam Atapour
Sales Manager,
NMLS# 199257

Steve Miller
Sales Manager,
NMLS# 159517

Bill Malkoun
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 449771

David Sacknoff
Mortgage Loan Originator,
NMLS# 495829

Rich Hayden
Mortgage Loan Originator
NMLS# 449092

Hal Johnson
Sales Manager
NMLS# 233658

Brian Pawiatt
Sales Manager
NMLS# 232309

We can help you!®
Contact Us Today!

steamshomeloans.com/alexandriava

This is not a commitment to lend. Program restrictions apply. Stearns Lending, LLC also operates under the trade name Stearns Home Loans in all states except for Arizona, Illinois, Massachusetts, and New York.
Stearns Lending, LLC offers many loan products. Stearns Lending, LLC is a California Limited Liability Company headquartered at 4 Huber Centre Drive, 15th Floor, Santa Ana, California 92705; (800) 350-LEND (5363).
Company NMLS# 1654 (www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org). Stearns Lending, LLC is licensed, registered, or exempt from licensing to conduct business in the following states which require license disclosure on advertising materials: Massachusetts Mortgage Lender/Broker License #MCML-514; Licensed by the New Hampshire Banking Department; Licensed by the N.J. Department of Banking and Insurance; Rhode Island Licensed Lender; Virginia State Corporation Commission Lender/Broker License #MCML-514; This information is accurate as of February 22, 2016. © 2016 Stearns Lending, LLC All Rights Reserved. SH#13610221416
City Job Fair Centers around Entry Level Positions

Employers included various military branches and every city service, as well as companies like 7-Eleven, Passport Nissan, and Griswold Home Care. The job fair was aimed at 18-28 year old Alexandrians looking for entry level positions. Some were college students on a break from school or recently graduated looking for a temporary job, others hadn’t attended college and were looking for a starting point for the workforce.

“We need to focus on early level opportunities,” said Michael Johnson with the Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, who helped organize the event. “We noticed some young people were just hanging out. The people we talked to overwhelmingly said they needed employment. So we told them we’d have a job fair. Started with a conversation about ‘what can we do’ and it grew from there.”

William Chesley, deputy director of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, said community-based events like the job fair are some of the most helpful things the city can do for its citizens.

“We met with 20 or so folks who said they needed jobs about five weeks ago, so we pulled things together to make this happen,” said Chesley. “We targeted at-risk youth and young adults. The people talking to us were sincere, so we responded sincerely.”

Juwann Daniels was one of the young men at the job fair looking for potential employment and carried applications from several employers. “They all look good,” said Daniels. “This is a good program, there’s a variety of choices here.”

“I like [the job fair] a lot, there is a lot of good opportunities,” said Jasmine Dixie, who wants to join the Sheriff’s department because it can offer a full career and she can give back to her community.

Deputy Marvin Pitts, who has worked in the Alexandria Sheriff’s Department for 21 years, was at the job fair and encouraged young Alexandrians to apply for a career in the department. Pitts said the job requires a polygraph test, a psychological test, and a medical exam, as well as a background check and meeting physical requirements. Pitts also noted that anyone who joins the department starts with two years or so of working in the jail before they can transfer to another position.

Lee Venable represented the Navy at the job fair, and shared the same pitch that he’d said had made him want to sign up. For Venable, the Navy was a chance to travel and find his independence. He said he was hooked as soon as he saw the list of bases around the world the Navy would pay to send him to, his favorite location so far being a stint in Thailand. At the job fair, Venable said the biggest obstacle has been that many people he talks to are afraid they don’t qualify.

As with the Navy and the Sheriff’s Department, many of the jobs at the fair were long-term positions. Some were thankful for the city for the job fair, but still said there’s room to improve in the future.

Lynel Patton and Tanasia Strother sat at one of the tables where a company had said they’d attend but never showed up. Both expressed an interest in reception or retail work, where they could work with customer service and help others, and both planned on attending a job fair hosted the next day at a new Holiday Inn nearby.

“Ideally, we’d like to see more options,” said Patton. “Most of the jobs here are Army or police, some with nine-month waiting periods. That’s too long for us; it’s not feasible.”

Though limited, there were a few employers at the fair representing more immediate jobs. J.D. Pittman, at the job fair representing Passport Nissan, said there were various entry level positions available.

“We take people for everything from sales associates to [working in] the call centers,” said Pittman. “We train them. They don’t need to have any experience to apply. We’re just looking for people who are eager and with a desire to work.”
Julie Reynes shares something sweet

By Shirley Ruhe

Julie Reynes walks down the ramp and pushes the buzzer at the side door of Harris Teeter on N. Saint Asaph Street. She checks in with Ashley Bigelow, the store’s receiver, who verifies that the quantity of dates matches the invoice. Reynes pushes through a door that brings her out in the back side of the long glass deli case.

She speaks briefly with Luis Rivera, the Fresh Foods manager about the current supply of her packages of dates. “Oh,” she says, “easy to spot.”

They have been featured on the top shelf under an entertainment display in the cheese section. Reynes says that Luis has taught her a lot about the grocery business. Rivera points to the orange-labeled box of Simply Stuffed Dates. “Right now the pecan-stuffed dates are selling the best but it is seasonal.” In the spring when the store features lemons, he thinks it may be the Almond Lemon. Reynes says this is her favorite.

Reynes says she currently produces boxes of four varieties of plum stuffed medjool dates that she gets shipped from California. Reynes used to work out of a kitchen in Alexandria but now uses a D.C. kitchen where she employs workers eight hours a day slicing open dates and filling them by hand with Pistachio Orange, Almond Lemon, Pecan Maple or Hazelnut Chocolate which is the most popular. She describes it as “the most decadent of our dates. We sell 2,000 boxes a month of all the dates combined.” She says that the recipes came from playing around with different ingredients. The current selections have a shelf life of three months unrefrigerated.

When she started Julie’s Datery business two years ago in the Alexandria Farmer’s Market, she was ordering 32 two-pound boxes of dates from Costco. Now she gets a palette of 120 boxes of 15 pound cases of dates. Reynes says this is her third career after working in IT for over 15 years and holding leadership positions in several non-profits. “I always wanted to start a business; I wanted something unique.” For a while she looked into modification of homes for elderly so they could age in place. Then several things came together including a visit to Saudi Arabia where she was met with an abaya feast, then taken to what she thought was a coffee shop and instead to see a store with dates of all kinds. “I fell in love and brought a lot back with me.”

Currently she has dates in 17 Whole Foods stores, three Harris Teeters, six MOM’s and some specialty stores such as Arrowine in Alexandria, Society Fair on S. Washington Street and Glen’s Garden Market at DuPont Circle in D.C. which is her biggest selling market in the D.C. metro area. Eventually she would like to get a distributor outside and expand beyond the Mid-Atlantic region. She also sells the dates on her website.

She says the hardest part is “the path to profitability.” She balances a growing demand with viability. One of the challenges is financial because of the expense of the ingredients. The organic dates are the best and the nuts are good quality and “we don’t have much in terms of filler.” Reynes says she always loved cooking and thought she would end up in the restaurant industry but other opportunities took over and “it took me a while to get back to it.”

She having fun? She pauses and smiles, “Well, it depends on the day, but most of the time.” By happenstance a friend served her gorgonzola stuffed dates for her birthday party. About this same time she dated a guy who had Latvian bread, and he taught her the process of how to set up a business. Reynes reaches in the back of her car to pull out a carton of dates. She works out of her home, but her car serves as a makeshift mobile office since she routinely performs four demos every weekend that necessitate setting up a table with tablecloth, her “sell sheet” and extra dates in case they have run out at the store. In addition, she routinely checks groceries and shops for supply of her product, expiration dates, signage and location of the display. “As you can tell, I’m in my car a lot.” Reynes said sales depend on where the dates are placed in the store. She has just stopped at the Whole Foods on Duke Street where the dates are in a “grape box” section at the front of the store. Reynes thinks featuring them in the produce section of groceries could be a good display as well.

Julie Reynes heads to the side door of Harris Teeter on N. Saint Asaph Street with a case of Simply Stuffed Dates to restock her store supply. Reynes started Julie’s Datery business two years ago at the Alexandria Farmer’s Market.

A Survivor

Mother keeps positive, trusting team of doctors, nurses.

By Ashley Claire Simpson

Cameron DePina of Alexandria was born one day shy of 31 weeks at Virginia Hospital Center on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2014. He was doing well in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) until he developed necrotizing enterocolitis, an infection common in preemies. Cameron was transferred to the level IV NICU at Children’s National Health System for a higher level of care. There, doctors noticed he had an irregular heart rhythm and diagnosed him with supraventricular tachycardia (SVT).

Before Loren DePina of Alexandria gave birth to her preemie son Cameron last year, who arrived a terrifying and alarming 10 weeks early, she assumed that her experience potty-training her oldest son would go down as one of the most challenging times in her personal parenting history. Today, DePina laughs at how much stress she felt during the toilet training process.

Cameron, who was born on Dec. 2, 2014, spent nearly the first two months of his life in hospitals not only due to his premature birth, but also because of his battle with supraventricular tachycardia (SVT), a congenital defect that causes the heart to beat at a rate faster than 100 beats per minute. DePina still marvels at how she and Cameron made it to the other side, today enjoying a happy and healthy life.

Cameron is a typical toddler today, but DePina said she will never forget the terror that SVT struck in her and the rest of her family. In February, National Heart Month, DePina celebrated one year since bringing Cameron home from Children’s National Medical Center.

“It’s hard to believe that Cameron will be 15 months old in three weeks,” DePina said. “He’s doing really well. Over time, he has been taken off all the medications he was discharged with. Since October, he’s been progressing in the right direction without meds.”

She added that she’s convinced that neither she nor her resilient young son would have survived without the team of doctors and nurses at Children’s National Medical Center, including Dr. Charles Berul, division chief of Cardiology and co-director of Children’s National Heart Institute.

Berul, who has been a pediatric electrophysiologist for more than 20 years, said that while SVT is relatively common, with 1 in 200 children affected by the heart defect, it is difficult to diagnose in infants.

“In infants it is more challenging to make the diagnosis, as they cannot tell you their heart is racing,” Berul said. “Poor feeding, pallor and irritability are the signs to look for.”

Luckily, he added, the treatment for SVT is “quite effective,” and that if medication doesn’t work, there is a curative procedure he performs and Children’s National Medical Center.

See Mother, Page 23
Obituary

Alan Neal Rudd

Alan Neal Rudd, formerly of Alexandria, died Feb. 6, 2016. His family, friends, and professional colleagues remember him as a man of great kindness, sincerity, and integrity.

Alan is survived by his loving wife Elizabeth “Pat” whom he cherished faithfully for over 49 years; their daughter Michelle, her husband Eddie, their son Andrew, and Alan’s loyal service dog, “Domino,” all of whom were with him until the end.

Alan, the son of Benjamin W. Rudd and Rita Schlossberg, was born in Boston and came to the Washington, D.C. area at the age of five. He attended public schools and underwent both undergraduate and graduate studies at the American University. In 1966, Alan and Elizabeth were married by the late Rabbi Gerstenfeld at the Washington Hebrew Congregation.

For 35 years, Alan served as an executive at the U.S. Department of the Navy, where he ultimately managed an expert team of professional contracting officials for the Navy’s Undersea Warfare Program. These officials awarded annually billions of dollars in contracts in support of the Gulf War and subsequent top secret missions. Upon his retirement, the Secretary of the Navy presented to Alan and his wife a proclamation of recognition as well as keys to the City of Alexandria.

On Sunday, March 20, at 1 p.m., Rabbi Dr. Tsvi Schur will conduct a Memorial Service in honor of Alan in the Fireside Room at Harborview Towers. Friends are invited to join Alan’s family for the service and open reception at 100 Harborview Drive, Baltimore, Md.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that gifts in memory of Alan be directed to support Dr. Amy DeZern of the Leukemia Department at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center. Make checks payable to Johns Hopkins University. Gifts may be mailed with a memo indicating that the gift is in memory of Alan Rudd to the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center, PO Box 17029, Baltimore, MD 21297-1029. Alternatively, one may make a gift online at https://secure.jhu.edu/form/kimmel.
In Honor of Washington’s 284th birthday

At the George Washington’s birthday celebration on Feb. 22 at the Duncan Branch, Alexandria Library, are (from left) Thomas Darcy (portrayed by Terry Zerwick); a man in service to John Dalton, close friend of George Washington (Danny Smith); John Carlyle (Chuck Aldridge); and Adam Stephen, one of Washington’s lieutenants in the French and Indian War (Philip Smucker).

City Establishes 12-Person North Potomac Yard Advisory Group

At the Feb. 23 City Council meeting, the council voted to establish an Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group. As the city moves forward with its North Potomac Small Area Plan, the group will develop potential amendments in areas such as land use, open space, transportation and connectivity.

The 12-person group will be split between six residents, five city commissioners and committee members, and one at-large business representative. One representative in the residential group will be an at-large resident in Potomac Yard, while three others will come from across the city. All at-large representatives are appointed by the city manager based on nominations through eNews, the city website, and various local civic and community associations.
**Bulletin Board**

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

**THURSDAY/MARCH 3**

40 Hour Eucharistic Devotion. St. Louis Catholic Church, 2007 Popkins Lane, Alexandria, is celebrating Pope Francis’ 24 Hours of Mercy initiative with a beginning on at 7 p.m. Special prayers and devotions will take place from 4 p.m. Friday, March 4 until 4 p.m. Saturday, March 5. For more information visit saintlouisparish.org

**FRIDAY/MARCH 4**

Deadline for Nominations. 12 p.m.

The Alexandria Commission for Women seeks nominations of women, men and youth who have made a significant impact on women and girls in Alexandria. Winners will be honored at the Commission’s 36th Annual Salute to Women Awards Banquet. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/dchs/info/default.aspx?id=82658 for a nomination form or Contact Ellen Lamm at 703.746.3132 or ellen.lamm@alexandriava.gov.

**SATURDAY/MARCH 5**

Use Mediation to Resolve Conflict. 1-3 p.m. at Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. The Alexandria Library and the Northern Virginia Mediation Service will co-sponsor a panel of trained mediators. Differences of opinion and wrong assumptions are a part of daily life, but sometimes they spin out of control. Learn how to resolve these issues through the mediation process. The program will include information on how and when to file a case in small claims courts in Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax to help resolve disputes. Free, light refreshments will be served. Free parking is available. Call 703-746-1770.

**TUESDAY/MARCH 8**

Ad Hoc Monitoring Group/ Waterfront Commission. 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, Sister Cities Room 1101, 301 King St. Contact Jack Browand, jack.browand@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-5504.

Ad Hoc Group on Digital and A-Frame Signs. 7 p.m. at City Hall, Council Work Room, 301 King St. Contact Alex Dambach, alex.dambach@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-3829.

Environmental Policy Commission - Work Session. 7:30 p.m. City Hall, Room 2000, 301 King St. Contact Khoa Tran, 703-746-4076.

**TUESDAY/MARCH 8**

**Herbs: From the Grocery Store to the Garden to the Kitchen.** 7-8:30 p.m. at Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen St. Learn how to shop the produce aisles of the grocery store to supplement seed and plant purchases. Have a taste for ginger and new potatoes? Use a lot of garlic and shallots? This program will cover how to plant, grow and cook with the many vegetables and herbs one can buy at the grocery store. Free and open to the public. Advance registration is requested at mgnv.org. Call 703-228-6414 or email bulletin@connectionnewspapers.com.
Duty, Honor, Country

American Legion celebrates 97 years.

By Jim Glassman
Commander, American Legion Post 24

A s we celebrate the American Legion’s 97th birthday on March 15, duty, honor and country are the three words that capture the story of the American Legion over its more than nine decades in existence.

The duty that we have as Legionnaires is spelled out in the Preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion. It’s our duty to “uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America.”

It’s our duty to “maintain law and order, to foster and perpetuate 100 percent Americanism and to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great War.”

You can see these duties carried out when we honor our Law Enforcement Officers of the Year, when we take positions to support our Constitution and when we teach flag etiquette to young people and sponsor the best youth programs in the country.

Honor is not just the way we live our lives but it is the emotion that most Americans feel when they see a Legionnaire wearing our cap and our emblem. We are proud to be veterans and the overwhelming majority of our citizens are proud of us as well.

It is an honor to assist wounded, injured and ill veterans through our Operation Comfort Warriors program. It is an honor to play a role in awarding a veteran with well-deserved benefits earned by military service.

It is for our country that the American Legion insists that our government deliver on President Lincoln’s promise “to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan.” It is for our country and our communities that we advocate for a strong national defense. It is for our country that we insist that our flag be constitutionally protected from desecration.

It is for our country that many of our comrades made the supreme sacrifice while defending our freedom.

Duty, honor and country are the essence of our service as Legionnaires. They are attributes found among all American military veterans.

Are you a veteran and not a member of the American Legion? You should be. Legionnaires are the reason you have veterans benefits. It is our strong membership that fought to establish a Veterans Administration, won education benefits through the Post 9/11 GI Bill and secured veteran employment rights.

Membership also allows us to support our community through American Legion Baseball, Boys and Girl State, Legion Oratorical contests, Junior ROTC, Junior Shooting Sports and Junior Law Cadet.

At the American Legion celebrates its birthday, I urge my fellow veterans to join us. Remember that a strong membership is important to continue supporting our veterans and active military members and to ensure that the promises made to us for serving our country do not become empty promises.

In Playground Sandbox?

To the Editor:

I am appalled at the actions of some members of our City Council who appear to believe that in-civility is the way to show that you are smart or clever. I do not recall demonstrating their belief in the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America.

I am appalled at the actions of City Council members showed respect for him and his office, even if they disagreed with him.

It would appear now that the mission of at least a couple of our City Council members is to demeanstrate their belief that Mr. Euille is actually still the mayor and to undermine our new mayor as she attempts to chart her course. It is time to realize that the citizens of Alexandria elected Allison Silberberg to be our mayor because they wanted a change.

In Playground Sandbox?

The rapid pace of development we have seen over the past decade has exacerbated transportation problems, overcrowded our schools, and adversely affected our quality of life. As we look around our city and see numerous vacant signs, whether it be for commercial space or residential apartments, we wonder why some are still clamoring for more building. I would argue that not one person at City Hall has ever been able to provide any metric or statistic regarding the net value of our enormous explosion of residential development when it comes to our tax base or costs to the city to provide services to thousands of new residents. I would assume that, based upon our tax bills, the promised tax revenue windfall has been swallowed up in new capital projects for our new residents. Already businesses and residents in the newly created special tax districts are arguing that such additional taxation is unfair to them and diminishes the value of their properties.

Our city faces huge budgetary issues that require the careful attention of all our council members. But as I watch council meetings, I see council members much more intent upon challenging our mayor at every meeting than focusing on the substance of matters before them. I wonder why, for example, Justin Wilson sits at the end of the podium next to the city attorney instead of the seat next to the

Letters to the Editor

The Alexandria Gazette Packet

March 3-9, 2016

www.AlexandriaGazettePacket.com

Commentary

Jim Glassman
Commander, American Legion Post 24

In Playground Sandbox?

To the Editor:

I am appalled at the actions of some members of our City Council who appear to believe that in-civility is the way to show that you are smart or clever. I do not recall demonstrating their belief in the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America.

I am appalled at the actions of City Council members showed respect for him and his office, even if they disagreed with him.

It would appear now that the mission of at least a couple of our City Council members is to demeanstrate their belief that Mr. Euille is actually still the mayor and to undermine our new mayor as she attempts to chart her course. It is time to realize that the citizens of Alexandria elected Allison Silberberg to be our mayor because they wanted a change.

In Playground Sandbox?

The rapid pace of development we have seen over the past decade has exacerbated transportation problems, overcrowded our schools, and adversely affected our quality of life. As we look around our city and see numerous vacant signs, whether it be for commercial space or residential apartments, we wonder why some are still clamoring for more building. I would argue that not one person at City Hall has ever been able to provide any metric or statistic regarding the net value of our enormous explosion of residential development when it comes to our tax base or costs to the city to provide services to thousands of new residents. I would assume that, based upon our tax bills, the promised tax revenue windfall has been swallowed up in new capital projects for our new residents. Already businesses and residents in the newly created special tax districts are arguing that such additional taxation is unfair to them and diminishes the value of their properties.

Our city faces huge budgetary issues that require the careful attention of all our council members. But as I watch council meetings, I see council members much more intent upon challenging our mayor at every meeting than focusing on the substance of matters before them. I wonder why, for example, Justin Wilson sits at the end of the podium next to the city attorney instead of the seat next to the

Letters to the Editor

The Alexandria Gazette Packet

March 3-9, 2016

www.AlexandriaGazettePacket.com
Opinion

Keep Tree Lights On

To the Editor:

I know there are very important projects happening around and in the city but I have an observation I would like to offer.

I sent a similar copy of this letter to City Council Monday.

Over the past 26 years I have been at 1400 King St. and in my store. This year I have heard more wonderful compliments about the tree-strung city lights and how beautiful they are strung this year and that they make the city look better more than ever! To my dismay I don’t think those remarks or the number of those remarks ever make it to the council.

I thought I’d bear you the tidings about their effects on the city, residents, and the tourists. Everybody loves them no contest and that’s why I am writing today.

I would like to tell you that sales are effected by their presence and, as I say, to sell something you light it up. That’s what selling the city has done with those little lights and that is what helps sales and the taxable income grow and is so very important to businesses like me and Bittersweet, Imagine, restaurants like Vermillion and Landini’s and all the other retail outlets as well. And, yes my competition benefits as well. A few years ago I helped raise enough cash to keep the lights lit through June.

Now I am asking the city to keep the lights on this year at least through April to help the city keep the income and sales flowing in an inviting, romantic environment. Did you know that the cost of those lights is less than you can imagine per month. Just thought I’d seed you thoughts about what you can do to help businesses in Alexandria prosper. I think it would be a great idea to send your favorite council member that suggestion for us to work together to sell the city better, to keep businesses here and growing.

David Martin
Gold Works
Alexandria

Letters to the Editor

From Page 10

mayor where the vice mayor has always sat. I presume he is sending a message that he is unhappy that she was elected mayor and wants to physically distance himself from appearing on camera next to her. Is this a way to show a determination to work for the betterment of our city? And John Chapman has apparently decided that the way to govern our city is by posting negative remarks on Facebook. Other council members then “like” these negative posts. This shows an immaturity that should be troubling to all our citizens. Is this junior high school or the governing body of our city?

I would urge our council to get out of the playground sandbox and govern. Stop tossing barbs at each other and come together to build a better city for all of us. If you don’t, I believe the citizens will do exactly what we did with our previous mayor — exercise our right to vote and vote many of you out of office. You may not think we are watching, but we are.

Elizabeth Clark
Alexandria
See Letters. Page 12
March is National Reading Awareness Month, which makes it a good time to review what we can do to best ensure that our kids will become lifelong readers. We know kids need these four things to become strong readers:

❖ access to books at home and school,
❖ opportunities to own books,
❖ opportunities to read from an early age and to associate books with fun and
❖ caring adults who read to them and make reading a part of the family routine.

We want all kids to have access to these conditions but was vague on what was essential to succeeding in school and meeting life’s challenges.

Even parents in the most comfortable circumstances are often distracted by screens and phones; for other families, time, resources and language can be limiting factors.

Right here in Alexandria, 60 percent of children in public school are eligible for free or reduced-pricing lunches — an indicator of childhood poverty. (Kids Count; Alexandria Public Schools, School Nutrition Services)

Here are some ways to ensure we support reading for all kids:

❖ Provide access to books at home, school and after-school and childcare settings. Visit the library, ask for books for birthday presents, comb yard sales and second hand stores for books. Have a book swap with friends and family members. Visit your child’s school library or classroom and borrow books that interest your child. Kids to transparency and community involve them spend time, but low-income children often live in “book deserts,” with only one book per 300 children. (Neuman & Celano, 2001). One of The Reading Connection’s (TRC) primary goals is to provide new, free books to at-risk kids.

❖ While borrowing library books is important, owning books provides a different experience for children. Owning books means that they need not be returned and can be read again and again. But books are expensive and kids outgrow them and wear them out. Children whose families do not require, borrow children’s books miss out on crucial literacy-building opportunities. Last year, The Reading Connection provided more than 13,000 free, new, high-interest books to at-risk kids in metro Washington.

❖ One of the best ways parents can bond with babies, even before they are born, is to read to them. If you can set aside just 15 minutes each day to read with your child, your child will not only gain vocabulary and knowledge, she will gain the memory of a positive experience with books and her parent. Parents who are in acing crisis or at-risk in other ways may not have the time to read with their kids. The Reading Connection’s Read-About program in Alexandria’s Carpenter’s Shelter, Alive! House and The Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority provides volunteers who read aloud weekly with at-risk kids. TRC’s Reading Families Play Groups teach parents how to share books with their children through the Center for Alexandria’s Children and Healthy Families Alexandria.

❖ One of the ways we can show our kids we value reading is by embedding reading throughout the family’s daily routine. This can be challenging with busy schedules and screens and phones competing for attention, especially for single parents or parents working more than one job. Let your children see you reading for fun and a purpose — reading the sports page, checking the paper for sales, reading signs or cooking. Add reading a book to your bedtime or morning ritual. That one book a day will build vocabulary, comprehension and special time with your child. The Reading Connection’s Book Club and Reading Families Workshops and Play Groups help families make reading a part of their routine for keeping books and showing parents how to include reading in other daily tasks. Last year, 96 percent of parents reported that the Book Club helped them make reading a part of their family’s daily routine. These strategies can help every kid become a lifelong reader. Celebrate National Reading Awareness Month by giving them a try.

Let’s create lifelong readers.
Over 80 and Volunteering?

By Betty Gentile
Volunteer at Volunteer Alexandria

A poet/songwriter said, “Oh, how I hate to get up in the morning … Oh, how I hate to get out of bed. But the hardest blow of all is to hear the buzzer call, ‘You’ve got to get up, you’ve got to get up, you’ve got to get up! It’s morning …’ That’s my midnight serenade every Wednesday evening as I drift off to sleep.

You see, Thursday is my volunteer day at Volunteer Alexandria, here in my hometown, and though my heart is willing, the lure of sleep is in until the sun peeks over my window sill is very strong.

On Thursday mornings I wake to the sound of bells. My first sleepy thought is it’s the ice cream truck calling his customers, but no, the truck hasn’t been around in years. It’s my baby Ben alarm clock screaming at my conscience. I jump (or maybe limp) out of bed, begin to dress, make the coffee, create a brown bag lunch, go to the paint pots to brush a rosy glow upon my cheeks and rush to make my schedule of leaving home at 8:30 a.m. to be on the job on time. Now, a promise made is a debt unpaid, and I committed myself to volunteer on Thursdays at Volunteer Alexandria.

Perhaps I should mention that I am a retired domestic administrator and I am 85 years old. My Navy man father called me a “chief cook and bottle washer.” With a handsome ex-Marine sweetheart for a husband, and the speedy arrival of seven little critters, there was plenty of cooking and mucho bottles to wash so my life’s map seemed pretty clear. With so many children in different school locations and being a stay-at-home mother, I was always busy volunteering for lunch time and recess duty to give teachers a down time to eat their lunch in peace. Time flies and life’s ups and downs happen. My sweetheart is long gone now to a better place and the golden sun flickers bright between the tall colonial houses and I put on my shades. I feel so alive.

The women I work with here are very gentle to me. I stated on my first day on the job that I would happily do any kind of work they wanted me to try except roll out the dough and clean up after the mules. I thought it was hilariously funny but they just gave me soft, sad smiles. I am the receptionist and I enjoy greeting every person who enters our doors. I guide them to the person who can help them with their needs, answer all incoming calls, count a thousand pamphlets and papers, cut and bundle paint rags used by other volunteers who paint and sand, trim and weed around the city and help in ways that I can’t even imagine.

Wouldn’t you enjoy more pep in your step again? Wouldn’t you like some extra hum and zing and jango in your life again? Volunteering is one good way to get it. Try it. You’ll like it. Oh, and by the way, don’t spread around the 85-year-old part. One morning, Prince Charming might come into our office and smile and I might smile too … and after all, I’ve been told I don’t look a day over 84. Whoopee!

Executive director’s note: Volunteer Alexandria hosts the RSVP Northern Virginia, a regional volunteer program providing individualized support to connect adults 55+ with service opportunities that impact local needs and result in healthy and vibrant communities. RSVP-Northern Virginia is a local partnership sponsored by Volunteer Fairfax, Volunteer Alexandria and Volunteer Arlington. For details and to volunteer, call 703-836-2176 or visit www.VolunteerAlex.org. If you call on a Thursday, you might even get to talk to Betty.

Letters to the Editor

FROM PAGE 12

“Birders” low, tourists are known to be turned away sometimes because there is a single employee to cover two buildings and the solution is to lock up when called away to meetings elsewhere. Add one more building that the city can’t afford to maintain and shave all the density up against Pendleton Street homes? No way.

Just flip the rendering so the preserved building is on the Pendleton Street and put families back in it — not tables and chairs. — Charlotte Landis

Alexandria

Battling Invasive Plants

To the Editor:

With regards to invasive plant management in Monticello Park, it is a mystery to me as to how some people can self identify as “avid birders” and have no awareness of the importance of a healthy eco-system made up of diverse native plants. It is not simply so-called “fanatics in the plant community” that recognize invasive plants as a huge problem, but rather federal, state, and local natural land managers as well as all the best-regarded conservation organizations, to include the Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society, and the National Wildlife Federation.

On one very basic level, English Ivy and Winter Creeper are a threat to birds because they are a threat to trees. But monocultures of non-native invasives are terrible for another reason — they crowd out the native plants that our birds need to reproduce and survive. Approximately 96 percent of North America’s terrestrial birds rely on native insects to feed their young. These native insects have co-evolved with native plants and are largely unable to eat non-native exotic plants, invasive or not.

As a result, it is clear that caring about birds in any thoughtful and constructive way means also caring about native insects and native plants as well as working to improve the quality of what habitat remains.

So I applaud the city for taking the balanced measures it has taken in Monticello Park. I am familiar with Invasive Plant Control, Inc. through the company’s work in a park in my neighborhood. The professionals from IPC used the least amount of herbicide to do the job. The glyphosate product used was carefully chosen and did not contain the much more concerning “inert” surfactant ingredients that the well-known Round Up product does. Their treatments were targeted enough to kill the...
Explo ringing How To Live an Active and Rewarding Life

Senior Services of Alexandria teams up with AARP

By Mary Lee Anderson

Executive Director,
Senior Services of Alexandria

Everyone wants to live an active and rewarding life, and older adults are no exception. Retirement gives seniors the opportunity to step back, evaluate their priorities, and choose where they want to focus our time and energy. The March Senior Speaker Series Program is designed to provide some tools for making these types of decisions. Senior Services of Alexandria and AARP are co-sponsoring the event, “Living an Active and Rewarding Life,” on Wednesday, March 16.

Participants will learn about AARP’s “Life Reimagined” program, which looks at ways to write the next chapter of your life. Seniors may be in a time of transition from the workforce, parenting, or caregiving, and the “Life Reimagined” program takes a holistic approach to recognizing your enormous potential during the next phase of your life. The program offers unique, interactive exercises that will guide you in this new life phase and help uncover your special gifts.

Many older adults derive a tremendous purpose by focusing on helping others. Volunteer Alexandria and SSA will focus on the many ways to get involved with important work in our community, and how to help those in need. The Alexandria YMCA will share information about the programs they have designed for seniors, and will demonstrate easy exercise tips that we can all incorporate into our daily lives.

We will also hear from Encore Learning about their wide variety of daytime college-level courses, clubs, special events, and activities, and how their members explore new ideas and develop new friendships. Come kick off spring by learning about fun and exciting ways to explore life’s second half.

Living an Active and Rewarding Life will be held on Wednesday, March 16 at Beth El Hebrew Congregation at 3830 Seminary Road in Alexandria from 10 a.m. to noon. Registration begins at 9:30 and light refreshments will be served. The event is free with ample parking. Please register online at www.seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 110.

Letters to the Editor

From Page 13

Invasive plants and leave directly adjacent native plants in good health. In conclusion, I would urge the “avid birders” quoted in last week’s article to learn the basic facts about the habitat needs of the birds they profess to love.

Bonnie Petry
Alexandria

Cheerful Lights

To the Editor:

I want to thank all my Old Town neighbors for keeping their Christmas lights on through the weary winter. The gift is greatly appreciated. The twinkling lights on the trees never fail to make me smile, even in the dark, even in the cold. Likewise the city and merchants along King Street have kept the holiday lights on and brought good cheer to so many.

Diane Henry
Alexandria

Council in Disarray

To the Editor:

For those who saw the City Council’s Public Hearing on Feb. 20, followed by a second meeting on the 23rd, they witnessed a group in total disarray. As of this date, the City Council has not found an alternate solution to the decaying Ramsey Homes in the Historic Parker Grey District. If these City Council sessions are a precursor of future meetings, we are in for a tumultuous three years.

As an example, at the Saturday Public Hearing meeting, Councilman John Chapman’s attempts to demean the new mayor were absolutely uncalled for. His remarks should have been directed to the source of the problem, which is the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority (ARHA). Mayor Silberberg has only brought different parties together to solve the city’s critical issues, which is what former Mayor Bill Euille did in the past. Mayor Silberberg reminded Mr. Chapman that she had been respectful toward him, and that he owed her the same courtesy.

At the second council meeting, Councilman Smedberg reversed his dissenting vote, which proved to be just as contentious. In addition, Councilmen Wilson and Lovain castigated the mayor for questioning the city attorney’s veracity, when it appeared that many of the council members and the city attorney were privy to Smedberg’s intent to reverse his vote. It is very apparent that the six council members are doing everything in their power be unsupportive to the new mayor. This tactic was used previously against the then Vice Mayor Andrew MacDonald who ended up resigning after being endlessly harassed by his erstwhile colleagues.

We are very disturbed that ARHA has all but ignored these 15 public housing units, resulting in their current “demolition by neglect” status. Current residents complain of having no heat, no air conditioning, and malfunctioning water pipes. These public housing units (and others having similar problems) need to be taken away from ARHA and managed by a more responsible entity, since ARHA has been an unsatisfactory landlord. The residents of these units continue to be treated in an inhumane manner, which is an absolute disgrace to our city. It is debatable whether the city and ARHA can work out a viable solution before their next public hearing on March 12.

If the former mayor of Charleston S.C., the Honorable Joe Riley, had been our mayor, he would have ensured that those 15 historic units were rehabilitated in an adaptive-use mode, thus preserving these units and their history. Former Mayor Bill Euille had plenty of time to address this, but he let this unresolved issue carry over to the new council.

Although voters had the chance in the last election to add more rational voices, they chose the status quo, and must now live with it. Since this City Council will never entertain the establishment of a ward system, and since this approach to be a one-party town, there is only one solution. In the next election, everyone must run as a Democrat. In this manner, perhaps voters will be more likely to choose some more responsible candidates, instead of voting for the incumbents. Drastic times call for drastic solutions.

Townsend A. “Van” Van Fleet
Alexandria

Renaming Streets

To the Editor:

In the late 1950s the city’s Civil War Centennial Committee was tasked with a way to “commemorate” the approaching event. The committee proposed the restoration of Fort Ward — one of the Union forts that had surrounded the city from 1861-1865.

And, to pay homage to both sides, the committee proposed that in the area west of Quaker Lane (just annexed from Fairfax County), the north-south streets be named for Confederate generals. City Council accepted this proposal with the condition that the officers were from Virginia and, that only the last name would be used with no military rank attached. Only where the last name did not match the city street alpha-bet grid required by the Planning Department, were non-Virginia names used. Therefore, with these exceptions and later added streets, most north-south streets south of Seminary Road from Quaker Lane to the city’s western border were named for Confederate generals. City Council accepted this proposal with the condition that the officers were from Virginia and, that only the last name would be used with no military rank attached. Only where the last name did not match the city street alpha-bet grid required by the Planning Department, were non-Virginia names used. Therefore, with these exceptions and later added streets, most north-south streets south of Seminary Road from Quaker Lane to the city’s western border were named for Confederate generals. This practice was in effect until the 1970s.

The committee’s balanced effort in paying homage to both sides, resulted in Alexandria receiving its first All American City Award as well as, a Letter of Commendation from the National Civil War Centennial Commission that was appointed by Congress: only six cities received such accolades. This is not a simple change-street-signs issue. The population of Alexandria is now 150,000. If only one-half of these residents (75,000) live west of Quaker Lane and, if only one-half of those 75,000 live on these north-south streets, minimally some 37,000 residents will be affected. They will have to change their address on driver’s permits, vehicle registrations, bank accounts as well as other legal documents. Furthermore, consider the impact on the delivery of mail, 911 emergency/police/fire responses, DMV, IRS, GPS, existing maps, and the city tax office to change the addresses of all of these affected residents. Additionally, consider the impact it would have on hundreds of businesses on South Pickett, Van Dorn, Walkaway, as well as Beauregard Street and Wheeler Avenue.

There are many other streets throughout Alexandria named for Confederates such as Mosby, Morgan and Herbert Streets, Arthur Herbert, one of the founders of Burke & Herbert Bank, was a Confederate officer. Then, Maury Lane and Maury School, named for Matthew Fontaine Maury, a world-renown oceanographer known as the “Pathfinder of the Seas.” Maury was the first to chart the Gulf Stream and other ocean currents, modernizing navigation of the oceans. He was also an officer in the Confederate Navy. History always has its good, bad, ugly and painful sides — this can be found in any conflict. The men for whom these streets were named were veterans who just happened to be on the side that lost a war fought 150 years ago.

I have always been proud of Alexandria for preserving, all facets of its history – both the pleasant and unpleasant. Examples are:

❖ The restoration of Fort Ward, one of the forts that surrounded the longest Union-occupied City of Alexandria, Commander James Harmon Ward was a Union Naval Officer

❖ The Appomattox Statue, erected in memory of Confederate General Alexandria who died in the Civil War, and

❖ The restoration of Freedman’s Cemetery, where sadly not only civilians, but African-American soldiers (U.S.C.T) who fought for the Union, were interred until Congress finally changed the law allowing these men to be re-interred in the Alexandria National Cemetery in 1864.

This is all part of our city’s history and it should all be acknowledged. We can’t change the facts by trying to move a statue or renaming streets — using the tax money of affected residents and businesses to pay for it. The costs could be astronomical to say nothing of the burden placed upon the residents and businesses.

I find it sad that after the passing of 150 years, we are focusing our time and financial resources on trying to change things connected to a tragic war fought in the 19th century — before anyone living today was even born. There are always rights and wrongs on both sides of any war — that is why it is called history. These funds could be better spent on the badly needed work at City Hall and other historic buildings.

Wanda Dowell/Alexandria
The Little Theater of Alexandria (LTA) is presenting the “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)” through March 19. The show where the cast plays themselves is an irreverent, fast-paced romp through the Bard’s 37 plays in 97 minutes. It was also London’s longest-running comedy, having clocked nine years in London’s West End.

Director Joanna Henry said she wanted to direct the play because she loves Shakespeare. “His plays were written for the people, and The Reduced Shakespeare Company’s version brilliantly condenses all 37 of Shakespeare’s plays and parodies them,” she said. “This is a chance to have lots of fun with Shakespeare. His works are presented as a cooking show, a football game, a rap, and a fast-forward Hamlet that then gets replayed backwards. It’s irreverent and fun.”

She added: “This isn’t your normal play with a plot line and character interactions and relationships. Three actors use their real names and play themselves out acting the characters in Shakespeare’s plays. This is Shakespeare as you never expected to see him.”

Long, serious topics are reduced to short, silly comedies, she said. “The comedies are presented in one convoluted reading justified by the idea that they all share the same plot devices. The histories are presented in a football game. The fourth wall doesn’t exist. The actors will often speak directly to the audience and get them involved with what’s happening on stage. My hope is that the audience will be engaged and vocal,” she added.

She added: “One of the biggest challenges was rehearsing without actual people there to be a part of the audience. I actually asked friends to come by rehearsals so our three actors could practice interacting with an audience. Of course, part of the fun is that the cast will never really know what the audience will say or how they’ll react from performance to performance.”

She said she wanted the audiences to be a part of this show. “If you don’t like Shakespeare, this play is for you. If you love Shakespeare, this play is for you. It’s definitely Shakespeare for everyone,” she said. “Hopefully, audiences will leave the theater smiling and thinking, ‘I thought I didn’t like Shakespeare, but this was fun. I don’t want to give too much away, but this play might change your view of the Bard.”

Hans Dettmar is playing the role of himself, Hans Dettmar. “I play 20 characters, including myself, so I guess I can talk about the one I know the best (me!). I’m 6-foot-1, I’m a Leo ... just kidding ... um, well, I do play Juliet from ‘Romeo and Juliet,’” so I also like puppies and long walks on the beach but definitely not moonlight.”

He said some of the challenges were running around the entire show from start to finish. “Some of the trickiest moments come at the very end of the show so you can’t relax until literally after the final bow,” he said. “It makes for an intense experience, but hey, that’s why we do this.”

As far as audience takeaway, he said, “Well, I hope they don’t think our Shakespeare is, to quote the script: ‘dry, boring (and) vomitless.”

Shawn Byers is playing the role of himself, Shawn Byers. “Essentially, in this show, I play myself,” he said. “In the original production, the three playwrights were also the actors in the show. Our director wanted to stay true to this production, so each of us are playing ourselves on stage.”

He added: “In that light, I do play the ‘Shakespeare expert,’ which is quite a hard thing to live up to. While I did take Shakespearean courses, I would hardly characterize myself as an expert. Although, as I think audiences may pick up on, perhaps my character isn’t as savvy as he likes to think.”

He said the main challenge has been the weather. “We had to miss some rehearsals due to the snow storm,” he said. “Another challenge was simulating all of the audience interaction moments in a rehearsal setting. Joanna (the director), however, anticipating this challenge, arranged to have people to sit in on our rehearsals. It’s been a wonderfully fun process having people to interact and play off of in this manner so early in the rehearsal process, and was a brilliant idea from our fearless leader.”

Dave Wright is playing the role of himself, Dave Wright. “So my character is basically me, so I guess I can tell you a bit about David Wright, according to Wikipedia,” he said. “David Wright was born in Norfolk, Va., the oldest of four sons of a Norfolk police officer in the Norfolk Police Department, and Elsa Wright.”

He added: “Wright was the 2001 Gatorade Virginia High School Player of the Year. Wright also earned All-State honors in 1999, 2000 and 2001, and was named Virginia All-State Player of the Year in 2001.”

He said a big challenge was trying to make sure he captures the humor of the show while still remaining faithful to the Shakespearean text. “Also, being a man of larger carriage, just making it through the show is a win for me,” he said.

The Little Theatre of Alexandria (LTA) presents “The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)” through March 19. The show runs Wednesdays-Saturdays at 8 p.m., with a Sunday matinee at 3 p.m. Tickets are $19-$22. LTA is located at 600 Wolfe St. Visit www.thelittletheatre.com for more.
Seventy-three & St. Agnes School will present "Beauty & the Beast: The Musical," March 4, 11, and 12 at 7:30 p.m.; March 5 at 2 p.m. Tickets are $5. See www.sssas.org/artstr or call 703-312-2950. Performers include (from left) Christian Corpening '18 as Lumiere, Darnell Clement '17 as the Beast, Sarah Wilton '16 as Cogsworth, Katie Connor '16 as Chip, Stephanie Guadalupe '17 as Mrs. Potts, and Kyla Carney '17 as Belle.

Art Exhibit: "Contradictions." Through March 26, gallery hours at The Associates Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 N. Union St. Working in the medium of encaustic, Julia Dzikiewicz paints, prints and constructs three-dimensional objects with bold colors embedding crystals, pearls or even metals. Free. Visit www.torpedofactory.org for more.

Art Exhibit: "Partnerships." Through May 15, business hours at VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital, 2660 Duke St. All artwork is available for purchase through Del Ray Artisans. Artists are donating 20 percent of the purchase price of sold pieces in an equal split between Del Ray Artisans and the VCA Alexandria Animal Hospital's charity of choice, Veterans Moving Forward. Free. Call 703-751-2022 for more.

The Beauty and the Beast

Le Refuge was rated #1 in Alexandria on TripAdvisor. Thank you for your continued support.

Le Refuge

Restaurant

Winter Specials

• Split Pea Soup
• Beef Wellington
• Rack of Lamb
• Bouillabaisse
• Dover Sole
• Coq au Vin
• Cassoulet
• Shad Roe

127 N. Washington St., Alexandria • 703-548-4661
Smoke-Free Restaurant
www.lerefugealexandria.com

6TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION FUNDRAISER
MARCH 5 - 20 • ARTWORK $150 EACH
BUILD YOUR COLLECTION WITH WORK BY LOCAL ARTISTS
ART PARTY • ARTWORK $100
MARCH 18TH, 7-10PM • $20 ADVANCE / $25 DOOR
TORPEDOFACtORY.ORG/MARCH150
Alexandria’s Nurses & Hospitals During the Civil War. Ongoing at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. An exhibit on the Life of Clarissa Jones, a nurse at The Lyceum hospital during the Civil War. The true story of a nurse in Alexandria during the war, drawing parallels with characters portrayed in the PBS drama “Mercy Street,” with references to the experiences of other nurses, such as Ann Anderson, who worked in the Manassas hospital, and Jane Woolsey, who served at the Fairfax Seminary hospital. Admission is $2. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/lyceum for more.

Occupied City: Civil War Alexandria Self-Guided Tour. At The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Learn about the real history behind the show “Mercy Street” on this self-guided walking tour. Tour features significant Civil War Alexandria sites all within walking distance of The Lyceum, which was seized and used as a hospital during the war. Tickets are $2. Visit www.alexandria.gov/lyceum for more.

Ancient Art of Movement. Every Thursday, 7 p.m. in the back room of Fontaine www.latascausa.com. 299-9810 or visit Tasca, 607 King St. Watch dancers lessons, a yearly membership to all for those with physical limitations. Adjustments will be made to strengthen core muscles and increase flexibility. Call 571-386-4975 for more.

Woodlawn’s 51st annual Needlework Exhibition opens Wednesday, March 2.

The 53rd Annual Needlework Exhibit Now Open to Public

The 53rd Annual Needlework exhibition opens on March 2 at the Woodlawn Mansion, 9000 Richmond Highway. The show and sale will feature both contemporary and traditional needlework, but this year it will also allow pieces to be sold and picked up after the final day. The exhibit is open every day 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through March 31 except Tuesdays. Tickets are $15 for adults, $6 for students, and free for children under 5. Visit www.woodlawnpopelegehy.org for more.
Renner: St. Patrick’s Day Parade Grand Marshal

John J. Renner, II was installed as the 2016 Alexandria St. Patrick’s Day Parade Grand Marshal on Friday, Feb. 26. Renner is owner of Renner and Co., a 35-person accounting firm that has been honored as the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce 2015 small business of the year, and one of Virginia Business Magazine’s 2016 Best Places to Work. He represented the business community as the 2013 Chair of the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and has overseen the Alexandria City Budget as Chair of its Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee.

The Ballyshanes, organizers of the parade, held its annual Grand Marshal Dinner at the Embassy Suites Old Town. Mayor Allison Silberberg, City Manager Mark Jinks and Councilwoman Del Pepper attended the event. Ballyshanes Chairman Mike Pablo noted that the volunteer organization chose Renner because of his years of service and dedication to the city and many of its non-profit organizations: “The Ballyshanes work year-round to bring this event to Alexandria and its visitors. John’s work as an ambassador for small business and his history of service to Alexandria made him our obvious choice to serve as Grand Marshal.”

After his formal induction ceremony, Renner noted that the Irish in Alexandria, and supporters of the parade have been a boon to the city. Comparing the parade’s power to the horsepower in his classic Chrysler 300 convertible, which has been in the parade many times, Renner noted that March is “a whole month of Irish horsepower that makes our city stronger. This is the horsepower that pays for the services, schools and public safety that make Alexandria the kind of place where we all want to live. Just as Irish Americans made our country strong, Alexandria’s Irish community is making our city strong.”

The 35th Annual St. Patrick’s Day Parade will be held this Saturday, March 5 at 12:30 p.m., preceded by the Annual Antique Car Show at 9 a.m. in the 100 block of N. Pitt St., and the Fun Dog Show in Market Square at 10:30 a.m. See www.ballyshanes.org.

It’s Your Time to Celebrate with up to a $100 Resort Credit!

Make any occasion special with a spring getaway to our 72® resort.

Whether a milestone celebration or the day you ran a mile, we’ll help make your celebration getaway extra special by offering a $100 resort credit per night. Luxurious spa treatments, delicious dining, unique shopping and fun recreation options provide everything you need for a joyous occasion.

Book your getaway today!

GaylordNational.com
or call (800) 965-4000 (refer to promo code ZUA)

Valid through December 31, 2016. Limited number of rooms available for this promotion. Offer does not apply to groups of 15 or more rooms. Offer cannot be combined with any other promotions. Limit one ($100 resort credit per night) per room per night. Information subject to change at any time without notice.
MARCH 7-14
NOVA Restaurant Week. The Arlington Chamber of Commerce again partners with the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging, and Travel Association to present the 2016 Northern Virginia Restaurant Week. Visit www.novarestaurantweek.org for more.

TUESDAY/MARCH 8

Creative Exploration Open Studio. 10-11:30 a.m. at Convergence, 1051 N. Quaker Lane. Learn simple watercolor techniques and doodle designs with your child. Tickets are $30 for parent/caregiver and child. Contact 703-944-4381 or info@metamorphosisaec.com, or visit www.metamorphosisaec.com/mama/classes.


“Her Story: Women in Action for Girl Scout Daisses and Brownies.” 3-4:15 p.m. at the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Girl Scout Daisses and Brownies, and their accompanying adults will participate in hands-on activities and add their own future goals to a timeline of Juliette Gordon Low’s story. Participants will talk with a panel of current and former Girl Scouts and discover how scouting empowered them. Tickets are $6. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org for more.

Making Artful Jewelry. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Convergence, 1051 N. Quaker Lane. Participants will talk with a panel of current and former Girl Scouts and discover how scouting empowered them. Tickets are $6. Visit www.alexandriahistory.org for more.

SUNDAY/MARCH 6
Beau Soir Ensemble. 1 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Violist Jennifer Ries and harpist Michelle Lundy welcome guest flutist David Leonard for a program of music byRespighi, Telemann and Puccini, as well as Irish jigs and Jewish folk songs. Fre, but donations accepted. Visit www.beausoir.org for more.

THURSDAY/MARCH 10
Speak, Sister. 6-9 p.m. at The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Local actors will read from diaries and letters of Harriet Jacobs, Isabel Emerson and Anne Frobel, who lived in Alexandria during the Civil War, and bluegrass band Dead Men's Hollow will play songs of the Civil War. Tickets are $12. Visit www.athenaeumva.org for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 12
Talent Hunt. 12-3 p.m. at Mount Vernon High School, 8531 Old Washington Road. Pi Phi Chapter, Omega Pi Phi Fraternity, Inc. of Alexandria hosts a talent hunt for high school with a $400 first-place prize. Free. Email talenthuntppi@nmu.edu.
t was around 2 a.m. on a frigid winter night when Janet Russell was awakened from her sleep by the sound of woman calling for help. The cries were coming from the front lawn of her Arlington home. She ventured out into the cold to find her 84-year-old neighbor lying on the ground, believing that dozens of bugs were crawling on her skin. “She was having bad hallucinations, and it turns out that she’d taken the wrong combination of medications, some for her blood pressure, and she was administering them to herself.”

MEDICATION ERRORS are not uncommon, according to a recent survey by Home Instead Senior Care. Their survey showed that 20 percent of seniors who take more than five medications had problems taking them as prescribed. Unintentional medication...

“...their medication is something that people generally like to have control over.” — Ian Lovejoy, Home Instead Senior Care

misuse, such as forgetting to take a dose or taking more or less than the required dose, can have devastating results. Home Instead is encouraging families to talk with their loved ones about medication management and are offering suggestions on how to approach such conversations.

“If you notice a change in personality or thinking, or if they’re having a mobility issue or if they seem sluggish, those are signs of medication mismanagement,” said Ian Lovejoy, director of operations of Home Instead Senior Care in Fairfax County. Home Instead has created a program called “Let’s Talk about RxSM” (prescription self medication). This program is designed to inform seniors’ families about the dangers of medication mismanagement as well as offer tips for minimizing the risks and suggestions for starting a dialogue about taking medication as prescribed.

“Our goal is to keep seniors at home and safe,” said Lovejoy. “We want the daughter and the son not to communicate the emotional stress that potential medication mistakes can cause for a loved one,” he said. “If it changes, I update it.”

Trisha Brechling Miller, 57 of McLean, has managed the medications for both her 85-year-old husband, Larry, and her 84-year-old mother. After Larry fell, broke his hip and became immobile, Muller began using a calendar to keep his medication schedule in order. “I have a calendar that helps keep me organized as to what he needs to take and when,” she said. “If it changes, I update it.”

Oyeye suggests a conducting what she calls a medication reconciliation in order to determine whether someone is taking multiple medications for the same condition. “What you might find is that one medication exacerbates or even negates the other,” she said.

Clear lines of communication are necessary, as families often play a critical role in intervening and preventing a possible negative outcomes.

“My husband is on 10 different medications, and we’re able to manage his medications, but there are people who can’t do that. Those people tend to rely on family,” said Sheila Moldover of the Potomac Community Village in Potomac, Md. “They need children or close friends who handle it for them.”

The Potomac Community Village offers programs and services designed to help seniors lead healthy lives and remain in their homes as long as possible.

Gaining empathy from a parent and making it about the child’s feelings is one way to open communication, so Lovejoy suggests that caregivers start by finding a common ground. “It’s important to communicate the emotional stress that potential medication mistakes can cause for a loved one,” he said. “Let your parent know that you are concerned. Your parents don’t want you to be upset.”

For More Information


Photo courtesy of Home Instead Senior Care

A new study shows that that 20 percent of seniors who take more than five medications had problems taking their prescription drugs as directed by their doctor.

“They can go through each medication with the doctor and find out what it’s for. Sometimes, for example, someone might be taking a medication that was prescribed six months ago for a condition that has already cleared up.”

Oyeye suggests a conducting what she calls a medication reconciliation in order to determine whether someone is taking multiple medications for the same condition. “What you might find is that one medication exacerbates or even negates the other,” she said.

Trisha Brechling Miller, 57 of McLean, has managed the medications for both her 85-year-old husband, Larry, and her 84-year-old mother. After Larry fell, broke his hip and became immobile, Muller began using a calendar to keep his medication schedule in order. “I have a calendar that helps keep me organized as to what he needs to take and when,” she said. “If it changes, I update it.”

A Home Instead Senior Care client, is also assisting her mother in creating a medications calendar.

CONVERSATION ABOUT MEDICATION can be fraught with tension. A perceived loss of freedom is one factor that can make getting involved in managing family members’ medication complicated, says Lovejoy.

“It’s just one more thing that they’re losing control over,” he said. “Along with the car and their mobility, their medication is something that people generally like to have control over.

Join us for the Year of Mercy
**News**

**Commission Approves North Old Town Development**

**FROM PAGE 1**

ABC store will remain in place, though the other tenants for the complex have not yet been determined. The application calls for restaurants, small specialty grocery, and furniture or home goods stores as anchor tenants.

Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Government Leadership at George Mason University, wrote in an email that Alexandria’s preference for Clinton and Rubio largely stems from Northern Virginia’s need for federal stability.

“It should be noted that whomever is elected will have a disproportionate impact on [Northern Virginia] — because of the vast federal complex, including DARPA, the Pentagon, etc.,” said Shafroth, “so Virginia voters have tended to be both moderate — in both the Democratic and Republican parties — in their leanings which clearly work to Mrs. Clinton’s and Sen. Rubio’s benefits.”

While Virginia still went for Trump, Shafroth says Northern Virginia still played a big role in making that a closer victory than it might have otherwise been.

“Sen. Rubio has made it a much tighter race than many had predicted,” said Shafroth. “A significant part of the surprise — especially compared to the other, earlier southern states (and Georgia tonight) appears to come from the significant increase in voter registration over the last year in more urban Virginia locales: nearly 50 percent in Williamsburg City, Harrisonburg City, Fredericksburg, Loudoun County, and Charlottesville. That means there are likely disproportionate numbers of graduate and post graduate voters who participated in the primaries — and greater minority voting in the Democratic primary. In contrast, there were few increases, and actually some declines in voter registration in more rural parts of the state — places where, as in Georgia and Alabama, Mr. Trump ran in a commanding fashion. At least to date, Mr. Trump’s appeal does not appear to have excited moderate, conservative voters: if anything, it seems to have scared them.”

**City Residents Favor Clinton, Rubio, and Kasich**

**FROM PAGE 1**

Catharine Puskar, the attorney representing EDENS, argued that residents attending the Planning Commission meeting in protest weren’t representing EDENS, and reading the letter verbatim.

“I think we sometimes confuse people not liking the outcome with inadequate process,” said Puskar.

The mood of the audience at the meeting was decidedly against the development. Criticism of the project centered around transportation and scale concerns. Many of the opponents represented local civic associations, including Tom Soapes, president of the North Old Town Independent Citizens Association. In a seven-page letter sent to commission, Darrel W. Drury, Ph. D, and president of a group called Volunteers in Service to the Improvement of Old Town North (VISION), expressed concern that the project would exacerbate what Drury called the dangerous conditions at the intersection of First Street and North Washington Street.

Planning Commission chair Mary Lyman noted that she had not had time to read the letter before the meeting, and when Joan Drury began to read the letter to the commission, Lyman cut her off and insisted that the public hearing portion not be devoted to members of the group approaching the podium and reading the letter verbatim.

“The implications for traffic congestion in the future are daunting,” said Darrel Drury in the letter. “Several pipeline projects throughout Old Town North that are currently in various stages of development are expected to generate about 5,510 daily trips by the year 2021. This, in turn, will increase the length of the queue at the left-hand turn lane of North Washington Street by about 27 feet. [This project], when completed, would generate 3,964 additional daily trips and extend the left-turn lane queue on North Washington street by another 100 feet.”

Carrie Sanders, acting deputy director for Transportation and Environmental Services, said that staff had reviewed the applicant’s traffic study and found it consistent with the city’s standards.

“You’re going to see traffic conditions increase, but it wouldn’t be substantial,” said Sanders. “Certainly with a new development, we’d see an increase in trips, but those trips will happen regardless of this particular development. The general traffic [in the area] is increasing. [We’re working] to mitigate these with signal timing changes and increasing walkability in this area.”

Sanders said that the city had asked the developer to incorporate a contribution for signal timing changes, which she said would help with the traffic congestion, but that whether that contribution would be implemented before the project was completed was uncertain.

The letter goes on to express concerns about the project’s parking reduction and the fact that the primary loading dock entrance for delivery vehicles and the entrance for the parking garage is on First Street. Among the citizens speaking at the meeting, however, one of the biggest concerns seemed to be that development approval was a foregone conclusion before staff met with local residents.

“This whole thing is rigged,” said Joan Drury.

It didn’t escape the notice of Lyman that many of these complaints were similar to those in the discussion surrounding the nearby Old Colony Inn redevelopment.

“[I] share your concern that the perception that the neighbors are not being listened to,” said Lyman. “We’re hearing same things about Old Colony Inn, so we need to look at that.”

“I think staff is a fine staff,” said Planning Commission member Stewart Dunn, “but it is true that there is a perception that the staff isn’t listening and that there’s a set line on what we’re going to do. That’s what we’re hearing from many of the people here.”

Dunn said he thought it was a good project, but argued that the transportation and citizens concerns made him uncomfortable with approving of it so swiftly. However, despite some similar concerns, Dunn’s fellow commission members did not feel the project approval needed to be deferred.

Planning Commission member Nathan Macek argued that property hadn’t always been vacant, and that the transportation grid had been able to support the busy Giant. Planning Commission member Stephen Koenig said he understood the neighbors concerns, but felt that the project solved more problems than it hurt. In response to the citizens, Lyman said the city would continue to look for ways to make the process more transparent.

“We can promise that we’ll listen, but we can’t promise that we’ll see eye to eye,” said Lyman. “It doesn’t mean we don’t respect your opinion, we just can’t always agree with it.”

In a series of votes, all of which every member but Dunn voted in favor, the Planning Commission approved the redevelopment of the property.
Every time I would see a crying mother admitted to the hospital with her sick baby, I would tell them, ‘If your baby has to be in hospital, be glad it’s here. This is where you need to be’,” Cameron said. “All of us — the other mothers and the doctors and nurses — we became a family. When we go back for check-ups, everyone remembers us by name. Sometimes staff members will call to check up on Cameron. I absolutely love Children’s Hospital.”

DePina said that while she is so grateful that Cameron made a full recovery and will live the life of a normal, active, rambunctious boy, she is still haunted by and heartbroken for the mothers who didn’t have the opportunity to nurse their babies back to health at home. She said, however, she will always find a way to honor the babies who lost their battles.

“Cameron is our miracle baby,” DePina said. “The staff at Children’s introduced me to the March of Dimes Walk in May of last year. We decided to make it a family tradition in honor of Cameron. And, for the other babies who go to Children’s and never get to go home. We met another family of a baby who passed away, so we walk for him, too. You can’t help but hurt when you later find out one of the mums you bonded with lost her child.”

Even after spending nearly two months in hospitals, DePina still brought Cameron home two days before her due date. As long as another family of a baby who passed away, so we walk for him, too. You can’t help but hurt when you later find out one of the mums you bonded with lost her child.”

“His daycare provider tells me that he is healthier than babies who were born full-term,” she said. “No one believes me when I say he was born two months early. He’s right on track with his height and weight. The doctors warned me that he could have turned out deaf or blind for how early he was born and all the issues he went through. But, I can’t see any of that. You should see him now. He’s the fastest little crawler and has taken his first steps.”

It’s hard for DePina to believe that the beaming, beautiful toddler she sees every day, unfazed by shots at the doctor’s office, and always calm when his five-year-old big brother accidentally topples over him, is the same fragile pre-eminence that she brought home just a year ago, hooked up to a breathing machine that would wall like an ambulance whenever he would stop breathing.

“It was so hard for me to not think of the worst case scenario.” — Loren DePina

Mother Keeps Positive, Trusting Baby’s Medical Team

FROM PAGE 6

City of Alexandria

FISCAL YEAR 2017 PROPOSED BUDGET

A summary of the City of Alexandria’s proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget is set out below. Notice is hereby given of a public hearing on the proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget for the City of Alexandria. The hearing will be held in the City Council Chambers, City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia, on Monday, March 14, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. Persons wishing to speak on the proposed budget may sign up prior to the public hearing by calling the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at (703) 745-4550. Presenters are requested to provide a copy of their test to the City Clerk and Clerk of Council.

Persons wishing to request an accommodation should contact the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council at (703) 745-4550 (TTY/ODD (703) 883-8056) prior to March 14, 2016, if possible.

SUMMARY PROPOSED BUDGET FY 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Fund</th>
<th>All Funds</th>
<th>FY 2017 Capital Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
<td>Proposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FY 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Council</td>
<td>$326,434</td>
<td>$326,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Manager</td>
<td>$2,464,732</td>
<td>$2,464,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Attorney</td>
<td>$2,866,163</td>
<td>$2,866,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk and Clerk of Council</td>
<td>$445,562</td>
<td>$445,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th Circuit Court</td>
<td>$1,662,220</td>
<td>$1,662,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th General District Court</td>
<td>$146,919</td>
<td>$146,919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk of the Circuit Court</td>
<td>$1,635,220</td>
<td>$1,635,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commonwealth’s Attorney</td>
<td>$3,509,078</td>
<td>$3,509,078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court Service Unit</td>
<td>$1,278,165</td>
<td>$1,278,165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court</td>
<td>$50,415</td>
<td>$50,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Criminal and Justice Services</td>
<td>$4,246,265</td>
<td>$4,246,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Register of Voters</td>
<td>$1,413,610</td>
<td>$1,413,610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheriff</td>
<td>$218,567</td>
<td>$218,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>$13,908,450</td>
<td>$13,908,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>$14,082,850</td>
<td>$14,312,141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Rights</td>
<td>$3,512,923</td>
<td>$3,512,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology Services</td>
<td>$10,229,438</td>
<td>$10,672,468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Audit</td>
<td>$315,991</td>
<td>$315,991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management and Budget</td>
<td>$1,301,434</td>
<td>$1,301,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Departmental - Debt Service</td>
<td>$66,751,022</td>
<td>$66,751,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Departmental - Contingent Reserve</td>
<td>$3,674,806</td>
<td>$3,674,806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Departmental - Insurance, Memberships, Other</td>
<td>$9,164,240</td>
<td>$9,164,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>$3,512,923</td>
<td>$3,512,923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications &amp; Public Information</td>
<td>$1,306,061</td>
<td>$1,306,061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance and Accountability</td>
<td>$662,641</td>
<td>$662,641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>$49,711,802</td>
<td>$51,991,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Administration</td>
<td>$114,000</td>
<td>$7,773,419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Communications</td>
<td>$2,158,590</td>
<td>$2,158,590</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>$56,087,761</td>
<td>$56,272,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>$6,878,517</td>
<td>$6,824,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community and Human Services</td>
<td>$90,038,320</td>
<td>$90,088,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Activities</td>
<td>$1,781,250</td>
<td>$1,781,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>$31,144,823</td>
<td>$31,823,548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development Activities</td>
<td>$5,415,453</td>
<td>$5,415,453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Implementation</td>
<td>$1,805,590</td>
<td>$1,349,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Zoning</td>
<td>$5,543,691</td>
<td>$5,902,487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>$3,093,932</td>
<td>$3,093,932</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>$6,849,201</td>
<td>$7,387,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities</td>
<td>$21,897,859</td>
<td>$22,897,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Subsidies</td>
<td>$30,472,378</td>
<td>$31,076,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and Environmental Services</td>
<td>$37,778,399</td>
<td>$37,577,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Educational Activities</td>
<td>$12,131</td>
<td>$12,131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>$203,561,472</td>
<td>$217,831,185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Capital</td>
<td>$17,277,504</td>
<td>$17,277,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
<td>$671,589,927</td>
<td>$833,077,640</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The proposed budget includes a $1.30 cent increase in the property tax rate (from $1.045 cents to 1.345 cents) per $100 of assessed valuation based upon an assessment rate of 100% for market value. It is noted that the City Council will not set the tax rate to be advertised at March 3, 2016. Reverting of $65,070 in the Budget for FY 2017 and the Council may reduce this rate if it deems it necessary to do so in order to meet the capital improvement goals of the City. The proposed budget includes no change in the current motor vehicle personal property tax rate of $5.00 per $100 of assessed value. All personal property tax rates, including vehicle specialty tax rates, are fixed by the Board of Supervisors with disabilities, which was proposed to be taxed at the present rate of $6.00 per $100 of assessed value, unchanged. The amount of real estate dedicated to the operation of Alexandria Health and Support service relates to the continued housing of 550 units.
TC Girls End Season in Region Quarterfinals

The T.C. Williams girls’ basketball team won the 2016 Conference 7 title, knocking off two-time defending champion West Springfield in double overtime, despite having just one senior on the roster. The Titans followed that win with a victory over Osbourn in the opening round of the region tournament.

But T.C. Williams’ season came to an end on Feb. 25, when the Titans lost to eventual region runner-up Fairfax 55-43 in the quarterfinals in Alexandria. Fairfax has a 27-2 record and enters the championship game. Despite injuries and foul trouble leaving TC with just five players at the end of the game, the Titans pulled out a 69-66 win in double overtime on Feb. 21, giving head coach Kesha Walton her second conference/district title in six seasons with the program.

“I really enjoy being a player under Coach Walton,” Palacio wrote. “She is a very understanding coach that believes in all her players and gives us opportunities to get better. She is a coach that encourages me on and off the court.”

Palacio scored 25 points against West Springfield in the conference final and earned tournament MVP honors. Junior forward Bhrandi Crenshaw scored 14 points and junior forward Keyana Roberts added 10. Senior guard Ajuanae Nelson, TC’s lone senior, scored eight points. Palacio received second-team all-conference honors. Roberts, Crenshaw and sophomore forward Karemee Copeland received honorable mention.

With most of the roster coming back next season, Palacio has high hopes.

“As a team, I hope we are able to repeat our season with back-to-back (conference) championships and I also want to be able to make it to states next year,” she wrote.

“As for myself, I want to continue to improve my scoring and to also be able to get first team all-conference next year.”

— Jon Roetman

Wilson Earns Third-Team All-AMCC Honors

Penn State Altoona junior guard/forward Javon Wilson, a 2013 T.C. Williams High School graduate, was voted to the third team of the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference’s All-Conference men’s basketball squad, which was released on March 1.

Wilson ranked sixth in the conference in points per game (16.8) and 3-pointers made (57), as well as ninth in total points (370). Wilson also ranked fourth in the AMCC in points per 40 minutes (24.0), while finishing ninth in steals (34).

School Notes

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

Diana Kathleen Simmons graduated from Baylor University (Waco, Texas) December 2015. Simmons was awarded a B.S. in family and consumer sciences, child and family studies.

Megan von Kolnitz, a senior majoring in psychology has made the president’s list at Coastal Carolina University (Conway, S.C.) for the fall 2015 semester.

The following students have been named to the Champlain College (Burlington, Vt.) president’s list for the fall 2015 semester: Adella Francis, majoring in cybersecurity; and Robert Holbrook, majoring in computer and information systems.

Christopher Doyal was named to the president’s list at SUNY Canton (Canton, N.Y.) for fall 2015 semester. Doyal is a SUNY Canton management major.
**EARN EXTRA INCOME**

**SEASONAL/PART-TIME**

**Garden Center Merchandiser**

Bell Nursery, a nationally recognized grower/vendor is looking for hardworking people to stock our products at a garden center near you.

**Come get your hands dirty, enjoy the summer weather and, earn a paycheck!**

If you spend TOO much time hanging out in the garden department of your local home improvement retailer, we have the summer job for you!

**Bell Nursery** is one of the nation’s largest live good vendors, supplying the Home Depot with its beautiful flowers!

Our Seasonal Merchandisers work in the garden departments, unloading and displaying product while providing customer service.

---

- Flexible seasonal work schedule
- Minimum base pay of $10.00 an hour PLUS OVERTIME!
- Additional incentives/consideration for:
  - Being bilingual (Spanish/English)
  - Relevant work experience
  - Extensive knowledge of plants/growing

For job descriptions & locations go to: www.bellnursery.com/careers
Joyce Sherwood Keir
August 28, 1923 – February 20, 2016

Joyce Sherwood Keir passed away at her home in Hollin Hills in Fairfax County, Virginia, on Saturday, February 20, 2016, succumbing to kidney failure at the age of 92. She was born on August 28, 1923 in a town so small that no longer graces the map – Leetsville, Michigan, a crossroads in Rapid River Township northeast of Kalkaska, Michigan. Her family moved into the town of Kalkaska when she was three years old, and she grew up there. One of her favorite pastimes was to climb a tree with a good book in the hope of avoiding a few household chores. Joyce was an excellent student, and aspired to attend the University of Michigan. However, as a young woman in the Midwest at mid-century, she was constrained to attend the school that offered the most scholarship money, and attended Central Michigan University instead, graduating in 1945. Nonetheless, she remained an ardent fan of the Michigan Wolverines for the rest of her life. After college, she moved to Detroit, where she taught middle school math, worked for the Wayne County Health Department, and ultimately got a job at General Motors. She left Michigan for Washington, D.C. in the early 1950s to attend graduate school at The George Washington University, where she earned a Master’s Degree in Government and Economic Policy in 1954. Thereafter, she worked for five years as an economic analyst, traveling on several missions to Costa Rica and Nicaragua. In 1958, a mutual friend introduced her to Peter Keir, a recently divorced fellow economist with two young children. Shortly thereafter, she embarked on a new and very different stage of life as a wife and mother. Although she offered to “retire” from the work force in 1959, she remained active as a volunteer in the public schools, as a political campaign stalwart, and in a number of other community activities and recreational pursuits. Her home was always a welcome place, where dinner was served promptly at 7 p.m., with generous portions for all. Certain relatives and friends were known to time their arrival in town for the seven o’clock hour in order not to miss the evening meal. She is survived by her husband of more than 56 years, Peter M. Keir, of Hollin Hills; her sister, Kay Ryckman of South Boardman, Michigan; stepdaughter Elizabeth B. Mark Boboeine, both of Duxbury, Massachusetts; stepson Bruce Keir and daughter-in-law Patricia Whitmore Keir of Davis, Florida; and son David Keir and daughter-in-law Lorraine Preheim Keir of Alexandria, Virginia, as well as six grandchildren, Halcy, Sam and Peter Boboeine; Christopher and Heather Keit, and Caroline Joyce Keit. She was preceded in death by her younger brother Clayton C. Sherwood of Tekonsha, Michigan, who passed away last April at age 88, and her parents, Clayton and Mamie Sherwood, who each died in 1993, at the ages of 95 and 94 respectively. The family wishes to thank the staff of Adult Companion Care in Alexandria who provided excellent care and friendship to Joyce and the entire family during the last years of her life, in particular caregivers Dione Pressey, Yolanda McCall, and Susan Del Pure in their effort to keep her active in the community and her home. In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to the Alzheimer’s Association, P.O. Box 9601, Washington, DC 20090-6011; the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22478, Oklahoma City, OK 73123; or the Esophageal Cancer Action Network, P.O. Box 2247, Alexandria, VA 22314 to Yellow Line 35+.

Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission and Alexandria Renew Enterprises are seeking nominees for the 2016 Eighth Annual Ellen Picking Environmental Excellence Award. The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission and Alexandria Renew Enterprises are seeking nominees for the 2016 Eighth Annual Ellen Picking Environmental Excellence Award to honor and recognize Alexandrians who demonstrate a commitment to protecting the natural environment and keeping the City green.

The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission and Alexandria Renew Enterprises are seeking nominees for the 2016 Eighth Annual Ellen Picking Environmental Excellence Award to honor and recognize Alexandrians who demonstrate a commitment to protecting the natural environment and keeping the City green.

The Ellen Picking Environmental Excellence Award is named in honor of Ellen Picking, a long time advocate for the preservation and conservation in the City.

Qualifications: Residents, groups, clubs, organizations or corporations may be nominated. To be eligible, nominees must live within the City of Alexandria and corporations, organizations and other groups must operate within the City of Alexandria.

Nomination Requirements: Submissions must include the following: The nominee’s name, address, telephone number, or the key individual to contact if a nominee is an organization. The name, address, and telephone number of the person nominating the candidate must be included. A brief description (not to exceed one page) of the nominee’s accomplishments and qualifications for the Ellen Picking Environmental Excellence Award. Submit online or mail: • Online: http://savesalexandria.va.us/EllenPickingAward • Mail: The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission and Alexandria Renew Enterprises 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 620 Alexandria, VA 22314 Attention: Lisa Goldberg

Nominees will be invited on March 11, 2016.
NEW! Extended Service Department Hours:
Monday – Friday, 7 am to 9 pm
Saturday, 8 am to 5 pm
Sunday, 10 am to 4 pm
Sunday by appointment only.

Make your next service appointment at: alexandriatoyota.com

You Have Saturdays Off
That’s Exactly Why We Don’t!