



Feeling ICE's Chill

City's immigrant community under stress.

By RIKKI GEORGE
GAZETTE PACKET

The tone in Alexandria regarding immigration is one of apprehension and fear of harassment and deportation.

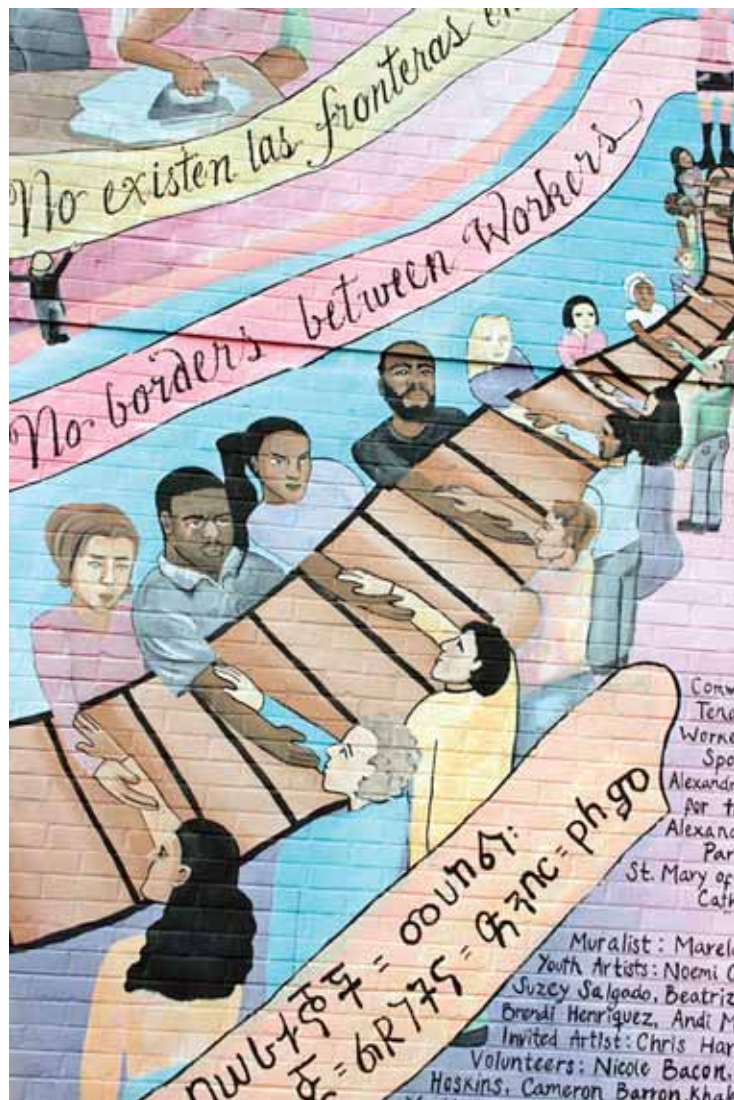
One of the first steps Mayor Allison Silberberg took shortly after November's election was to issue an official Statement of Inclusiveness in four languages — English, Spanish, Arabic and Amharic — on behalf of the City Council and herself to reassure all residents that Alexandria is a hate-free zone.

Distributed by email and issued to schools and nonprofits, it read in part: "... we remain committed to diversity and to fostering an atmosphere of inclusiveness that respects ... [the] worth of every person without regard to race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or familial status, and we declare that we denounce hate speech, hate crimes, harassment, racial bias, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-immigrant activity"

Silberberg's stance on immigrants without legal status is that "enforcement is not what we're about." Immigration law is a federal responsibility. City resources are too limited to assume that, she said. People are not required to prove their legal status to live in Alexandria, she added.

But Alexandria is not a "sanctuary city" either. It does not impede federal legal enforcement. If anyone is arrested for a criminal charge, his or her identity is run through state and national criminal databases. If there is a match, that person is referred to the respective reporting agency, whether that is another local police department or a federal agency like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Nearly 28 percent of the 153,011 people residing in Alexandria are foreign born, according to



The mural on the Tenants and Workers United's building, located at 3801 Mt. Vernon Ave., highlights the history of U.S. immigration. It was commissioned by the nonprofit in August 2008 and sponsored by the Alexandria Commission on the Arts, Alexandria Economic Partners Inc. and St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church.

2015 Census data. One trend for the city is that it has a much higher proportion of its current foreign-born population from Africa than either the U.S. or the region, according Alexandria's Department of Planning and Zoning in a report called "Alexandria's Racial and Ethnic Groups and Foreign-born Population: A Brief Look at Diversity."

The majority, however, are Latin Americans from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras like Jennifer, her full name withheld by her request, who arrived in the U.S. at age 10, from Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras, a city plagued with violence and gang trouble, she said.

At the recommendation of her parents, Jennifer, a T.C. Williams High School graduate, applied for relief under President Obama's program called

SEE FEELING ICE'S, PAGE 22

Impact of An Accident

City struggles with a year of record high pedestrian fatalities.

By VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

Even a year later, Sarah Al-Hashimi still feels pain. She feels it in the hematoma sending pain down her legs. She feels it along her back where her vertebrae was damaged. She feels it in the torn disk in her back and in her pinched nerves. On Feb. 4, 2016, Al-Hashimi was struck by a Fiat Crossover 500X at the corner of Madison and Washington streets. She was thrown 10 to 20 feet across the asphalt to the entrance to the nearby gas station.

With much pain and therapy, some of the injuries will heal. Others, like the permanent hematoma on her sciatic nerve, will not. The driver of the car was never caught.

Sarah Al-Hashimi is one of the roughly 70 pedestrians involved in a vehicle crash last year. Of those 70, four were fatally struck by cars. 2016 was the deadliest year for pedestrians in Alexandria in at least the last five years. There was one pedestrian death in 2015 and none in 2014.

As of November 2016, there were 1,169 total crash incidents, SEE A YEAR, PAGE 8

False Prophets

Dr. Larry Sabato assesses where polling and analytics went wrong in 2016 election.

By VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

There's an alternative universe somewhere in which Dr. Larry Sabato attended the packed Christ Church in Old Town to talk about how he and the other analysts were right about Hillary Clinton's easy victory last November. It's a universe where there is no ban on immigrants coming into the United States from Muslim-majority countries. It's a universe where talk of building a wall along the border

SEE WHAT WENT, PAGE 9



Dr. Larry Sabato at the pulpit of Christ Church

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Prisoner Resource Fair Offers a Head Start

Easing the transition from jail to the community.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Prisoners crowd around several tables in the Detention Center on Feb. 9 while others sit in chairs waiting for the short presentations. Mayor Allison Silberberg has just told the prisoners, "Everyone has a place in Alexandria. We are embracing and accepting community."

This is the first prisoner Resource Fair held by the Alexandria Sheriff's Office for prisoners who are scheduled to be released within several months. The event was set up to allow inmates to make connections with resources that can help them succeed when they return to the community. Four groups of prisoners totaling about 85 rotated in and out of the Resource Fair during the afternoon.

In the past, workshops were held with a different format of short presentations on a number of topics. In that format participants were required to listen to information that didn't necessarily interest them. Now a participant can target whether they want to go to the veteran's information table or stop by the legal services table, DMV or one of the city agencies.

"My favorite places today were Arm & Arm, Charles Houston Recreation Center and NOVA. As a matter of fact I was carrying my books on the way to class the day I was incarcerated," says Nicole Copeland who is due to be released into the community Feb. 23 after her five-month stay at the Detention Center. "I've been in and out several times, and I like the idea of Arm & Arm because it is a peer support group." She continues, "Someday I want to be part of the solution, to help other people." Arm & Arm provides assistance for individuals and their families



Sheriff Dana Lawhorne at the Probation and Parole Table.



Stephanie Wright, co-founder of Together We Bake and Keisha Davis, a recent graduate.

through the transition process "through peer guided behavioral strategies."

Copeland said she also liked the idea that Charles Houston Recreation Center, close to where she lived, brings in different companies every Friday who hire ex-offenders. "They try to alleviate the barriers between employers and ex-offenders." Copeland adds, "With a record like mine, I could use a buffer." She adds, "I'm 50; I got to get it together."



William G. Truesdale
Alexandria Adult
Detention Center.

Just inside the door, representatives of Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) answer questions about classes offered in prison and transition to campus. Krista Sofonia, who coordinates the NOVA classes inside the prison says, "We started the program in 2012 to give the prisoners a head start." She explains the students take general studies like history, sociology and psychology that are applicable to the campus curricula when they are released. "It has been a very big success. It motivates the people in the GED class who never thought they could go to college." And she adds that professors who have taught on the outside say they like it a little better here because the students have to meet NOVA requirements and we make sure they want to be here."

Two men stand at the Miller and Long

Concrete Construction table getting details about how to apply for a job in its Bethesda office. They stare at the picture of the crane with the workbasket and listen to the recruiter's experience working up there for 14 hours a day. He tells them: "We are an equal opportunity company and we get some good employees."

Others are attracted to job opportunities with Together We Bake that is a non-profit organization founded to develop programs for women who need a second chance. The mission of Together We Bake is a comprehensive workforce and training as well as personal development program targeted toward sustainable employment in the food service and hospitality industry. Stephanie Wright, co-founder explains, "We offer a class for about 10 women three times a year. We teach food safety, how to run a small business and give them hands-on baking training experience."

Keisha Davis, a recent graduate of the class says, "I was a success story." Davis currently runs the Together We Bake empowerment group. "It allows me to help other women to be successful who come from the same background."

Tyrese Roberts says that today he is looking for anything that is related to food. Roberts is scheduled to be released March 15. "I have a culinary license and I have worked in multiple restaurants as a host, then shift manager working my way up." He says, "I

have a crab cake recipe with a twist. I can't tell you the secret because that's the twist." And he makes a mean baked ziti. But Roberts doesn't want to be in the back of the house as a chef taking orders from other people but instead would like to run his own restaurant. He is looking forward to reconnecting with the community and a new change in life. He says he is not scared but more overwhelmed at the idea of reentering the community. "Like everyone else, I do have a big problem with rejection."

Sheriff Dana Lawhorne stands near the probation desk manned with Chief of Probation and Parole Lisa Stapleton and three of the 16 probation officers. Brochures are out on their table on Putting the Pieces Back Together and the T4C program for cognitive behavioral restructuring. Staples says, "We tell today's clients about the programs that our office offers and what to do when they get out. The first question is "are you on probation?" and if so, they are told to report ASAP, which means within three days. Stapleton is also the co-chair of the Alexandria Reentry Council that was set up in June 2011. It represents a collaboration of about 20 different agencies who meet quarterly to share information, network and talk about initiatives in the city. She said it was the convergence of a system of mapping that identified reentry as a priority combined with "Governor McDonnell beginning to put an emphasis on reentry at the state level." Representatives of Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) and Guest House, both non-governmental organizations, are there to offer information on services available to assist ex-offenders. OAR provides re-entry services to previously incarcerated individuals including transition assistance, and employment coaching. Guest House, located in Del Ray, is the only residential facility in the Northern Virginia area for recently released women who were non-violent offenders. It offers a three-month residential stay with resources like counseling, education, case management, life skills development and mentoring. It is supplemented by an after-care program of 6-9 months. A comment from one of the prisoners sums it up: "Now that I know better, I do better."

Stabilizing the City's Affordable Housing Crisis

With market-rate affordable housing in decline, Alexandria scrambles to keep itself accessible.

BY VERNON MILES
GAZETTE PACKET

At its Jan 28 public hearing, the City Council adopted the FY2017 through 2022 Strategic Plan. Through FY2018, the plan recommends

STRATEGIC PLAN PART 2: INCLUSIVE CITY

actions to help the city reach certain goals in various categories related to life in Alexan-

dria. Over the next five years, the Strategic Plan will be the central guide to projects approved and funded by City Council.

Ten categories are identified in the plan as areas where city government will continue to develop resources, ranging from changes to the waterfront to encouraging citizens to get more exercise. Each item of the plan also includes a selection of actions to be taken for the FY 2018 year.

The second section of the city's Strategic Plan focuses around combating poverty and adding committed affordable housing to

Alexandria.

Action items for FY 2018 include:

- ❖ Support non-profits and ARHA to provide committed affordable housing
- ❖ Provide housing relocation support to Beauregard residents impacted by redevelopment
- ❖ Develop tools and strategies to create and maintain deeply subsidized committed affordable units
- ❖ Conduct Fair Housing Testing and Training
- ❖ Secure committed affordable housing

through the development process

- ❖ Launch an equity and implicit bias initiative
- ❖ Create Title VI plan (to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin) for the city
- ❖ Create a comprehensive one stop workforce development shop
- ❖ Implement strategies to execute federal, state, and local goals toward functionally ending chronic homelessness by the end of 2017

SEE STABILIZING, PAGE 14

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THREE BEDROOMS

NEWS

Historical Taxable Real Property Assessment Changes



GRAPHICS CONTRIBUTED

The New Normal Stagnant assessment values.

BY VERNON MILES
 GAZETTE PACKET

The real estate assessments are in, and while the average Alexandria taxpayer will likely be happy to hear the assessments won't drive their taxes up, the city is left short changed on the eve of an already challenged budget.

Locally assessed real property assessments increased 2.07 percent, or \$778.6 million, from 2016 to 2017. The residential tax base saw the slowest growth, with 1.75 percent (\$379.8 million) while the city's commercial tax base increased 2.51 percent (\$398.8 million). According to Kendel Taylor, Alexandria's director of finance, this is the third worst performing change in the tax base since 1996. It is also the lowest tax base increase since the Great Recession in 2009 and 2010.

The average value for a condominium in Alexandria increased by an average 0.16 percent. For a resident in a condominium, average value \$310,999, that will mean a \$5 increase on the tax bill caused by assessment. The average single-family home value increased by 1.26 percent. For a resident in a single-family home, average value \$730,449, that will mean a \$97 increase on the tax bill caused by assessment.

Residential property in Alexandria composes 56.7 percent of the real estate tax base, with 43.3 percent being commercial. While the assessments in 2017 brought those numbers a little closer together, Real Estate Assessor William Bryan Page said this was only because multi-family rental housing is classified as commercial rather than

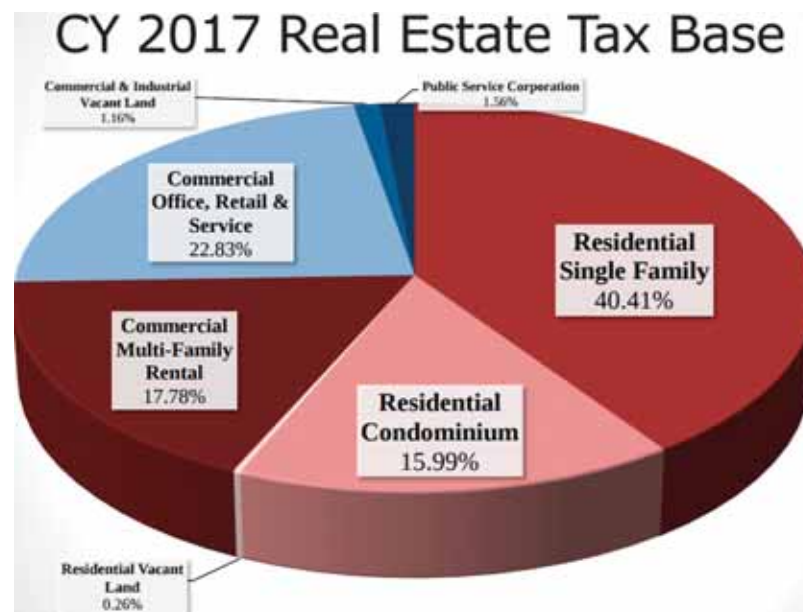
residential. If multi-family rental were grouped with the rest of residential housing in Alexandria, the residential housing in the city carries closer to 74.5 percent of the city's tax base.

For the commercial sector, hotels and general commercial properties saw the largest growth, at 12.58 percent and 10.27 percent respectively. Office buildings, apartments, and shopping centers all maintained relatively stagnant values, while warehouse values declined by 2.65 percent. The city's office vacancy rate hovered around 18.7 percent. Offices in Alexandria's West End are particularly hard hit. At the Mark Center, Taylor said the office vacancy rate is 45.3 percent. East of Quaker Lane, the office vacancy rate is more stable at 11 percent.

Taylor said Alexandria's stagnant growth is typical of the region.

"The regional economy has slowed," said City Manager Mark Jinks. "Up to two years ago, we had one

SEE ASSESSMENTS, PAGE 14



NEWS

ASC to Host Steinberg

Sports columnist to address club.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Washington Post sports columnist Dan Steinberg will be the guest speaker at the Feb. 21 meeting of the Alexandria Sportsman's Club. Founder of the DC Sports Bog, Steinberg started working at The Post as a stringer and part-time news aide in the summer of 2001. He eventually became a full-time staff writer, covered the Maryland football team and George Mason and George Washington basketball teams and traveled to the 2006 Winter Olympics, where he began blogging for the first time. That summer, he became The Post's first full-time writer who wrote exclusively for the web. Over the last 10 years, he's written thousands of items for the D.C.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED
Dan Steinberg

Sports Bog, while also covering a Super Bowl, several NCAA tournaments, and the NBA and NHL playoffs. He became a Post columnist in late 2014 but continues to contribute to the D.C. Sports Bog. The upcoming meeting will be the last regular ASC meeting prior to the organization's annual banquet, which recognizes high school Athletes of the Year from across the city. This year's banquet and presentation of scholarship awards will be held Tuesday, May 30, at the Westin Alexandria Hotel. The Feb. 21 meeting will be held at the Old Dominion Boat Club, 1 King Street, in Old Town. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m. with the formal program and presentation of Athlete of the Month awards commencing at 7:15 p.m. The meeting is free to attend and open to all. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, visit www.alexandriavaspports.org.

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/FEB. 16

Heart Healthy Lifestyle. 7:30 a.m. at The Campagna Center, 418 S. Washington St. Dr. Kelly Epps, interventional cardiologist, member of Inova Medical Group, discusses how to live a healthy lifestyle. \$25. Call 703-549 0111 for more.

Park and Recreation Commission

Meeting. 7 p.m. at the Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St. Contact Jack Browand at jack.browand@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-5504.

72-Hour Parking Open House.

7-9 p.m. in Sister Cities Conference Room 1101, Alexandria City Hall, 301 King St. The City of Alexandria invites the public to an open house to give feedback on the "72-Hour Parking Rule," which prohibits parking vehicles within the public right-of-way for more than 72 hours at a time on all city streets, including residential and unrestricted streets. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Engage for more.

TRAINING STARTS FEB. 17

Tree Stewards. Tree Stewards of Arlington and Alexandria are volunteers who take the lead within their communities to enhance a sustainable urban forest through volunteer activities and public education programs. For details on what the training sessions involve and registration forms, go to treestewards.org

FRIDAY/FEB. 17

Conversations with the Superintendent. noon at Cora

Kelly Elementary, 3600 Commonwealth Ave. Share ideas and concerns with school Superintendent Alvin L. Crawley. Call 703-619-8055 or visit www.acps.k12.va.us/face-centers

SATURDAY/FEB. 18

Health Screenings. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Potomac Yards Giant, 621 East Glebe Road, Alexandria. Giant Food is offering free health screenings at select in-store pharmacies. Customers can receive free blood pressure, glucose and cholesterol screenings. In addition, Giant pharmacists can help determine if customers are missing any recommended vaccinations. No appointment is necessary. Visit giantfood.com/live-well/pharmacy.

Transition to High School. 6 p.m. at Charles Houston Recreation Center, 901 Wythe St. Virginia Housing Development Authority training classes for first time homebuyers. Visit www.vhda.com for more information.

TUESDAY/FEB. 21

Lunch and Learn. Noon-2 p.m. at Quad/Graphics, 99 Canal Center Plaza #300. Associations have a ton of original content — websites, microsites, publications, social media channels, blogs, conferences, meetings. Learn to maximize these content assets and increase engagement with key audiences. Members, \$10; guest/non-member \$25-\$50. Visit associationmediaandpublishing.org/calendar/Creating-a-Content-Strategy-That-Works for more.

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PEOPLE

Yoga for 50-Plus Learning to improve strength and balance.

By RIKKI GEORGE
GAZETTE PACKET

Yoga in Alexandria is plentiful and evolving. There's something for everyone. For some, Alexandria is a yogi's mecca with studios and centers conveniently located in the heart of Old Town, Del Ray and near Metro. There's a variety of teaching styles and types of yoga, including for those upward in age.

According to Chris Howell, a yoga teacher at Pure Prana at 101 S. Patrick St., people over 50 are coming to yoga classes in increasing numbers to regain youth-like flexibility and improve strength and balance.

Howell's weekly 50-plus Yoga classes are designed to be beneficial and empowering for all levels in a fun, often humorous and supportive community atmosphere. She leads students through poses and core breathing exercises so each person is fully participating in the practice.

That's a challenge considering the 50-plus population is "where we see the greatest variety in ability and fitness levels compared to other groups," she said. Common aging conditions include arthritis, osteoporosis, joint replacements, high blood pressure and shoulder injuries.

"Yoga keeps you balanced and more tempered," said one of Howell's students, Paul Doherty, 72. "It helps mood and sense of wellbeing and centeredness." He started yoga about three years ago to be less stressed.

Another Howell student, Kathy Ansell, 65, practiced yoga sporadically at a young age



PHOTO BY FOSTER WILEY

Small group class at Yoga in Daily Life. Pavana muktasana is the knee to body, seated variation pose.

but then became serious about it when diagnosed with a chronic lung disease. "I practice it religiously, four to five times a week," she said. Ansell says she is now symptom-free.

Ansell and Doherty both attend Chair yoga offered at Pure Prana by Joanna Crane. With Chair yoga, Crane combines her interest in yoga and helping the elderly live independently longer at home. Her goal is safety first and avoiding poses that aggravate 50-plus issues.

Seniors are more sedentary than others and statistically more prone to falls, says Crane. "I work on balance to prevent falls ... I try to focus on energy, strengthening the back body and lengthening the front body" to counter age-related upper spinal curve known as the dowager's hump.

Used as a prop, the chair supports balance positions such as the Tree pose or Stork pose, where students stand on one foot. The chair is also useful for a stable home practice when there is no teacher guidance.

Another feature in Crane's class is her rhythmic use of a gong while students rest on their back to close out class. "It helps students relax," said Crane. "The gong employs an energetic vibration on a cellular level.... It helps you attune the mind, body and spirit."

Down the road from Pure Prana is Radiance Yoga, 701 Prince St., where Lyn Vencus teaches Accessible yoga, a new class with students of mixed ages but 50-plus appropriate.

Vencus builds in Yoga Sutras or Aphorisms of Patanjali, one of the foundations of clas-

Yoga for 50-Plus

Partial list of yoga studios in Alexandria for 50-plus:

❖ **Mind the Mat Pilates & Yoga**
2214 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301
703-683-2228; www.mindthemat.com
Offers: Six-week Chair yoga series; 6-week therapeutic series for seniors

❖ **Pure Prana Yoga Studio**
100 S. Patrick St., Alexandria, VA 22314
703-836-7873; www.pureprana.com
Offers: Chair yoga for 50+ on Fridays, 10 - 11:15 a.m.; 50+ Yoga Sundays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays 10 - 11:15 a.m.

❖ **Radiance Yoga**
701 Prince St., Alexandria, VA 22314
703-535-8282; www.radiance-yoga.net
Offers: Accessible yoga Wednesdays and Fridays, 11 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

❖ **Yoga in Daily Life**
2402 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22301
703-299-8946; www.yogaindailylifeus.org/alexandria

Offers: Yoga for Seniors on Wednesdays 12 - 1:30 p.m.; Free Yoga for Seniors 60+ on Saturdays, 12 - 1 p.m.

sical yoga philosophy, before beginning the asanas (positions). She covers self-restraints (yama) and self-discipline (niyama) and is particularly concerned with an ethical question each month such as non-violence (ahimsa), and what that might mean to the day's practice and off the mat.

Like Howell and Crane, Vencus emphasizes poses that mimic and train good posture and functional movement patterns. This helps students be more agile as they age and responsive to a potential fall. She encourages "neutral spine" in all poses avoiding seated twists and forward bends.

Howell, Crane and Vencus, all trained at Duke University's Therapeutic Yoga for Se-

Give That Couch a New Life ALIVE! assists low-income families with furniture program.

By SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Two large trucks pull out of the parking lot at the First Christian Church on King Street early Saturday morning. The weekly ALive! InVolved Ecumenically (ALIVE!) furniture pick up and delivery is on the way.

On an average Saturday there will be about eight stops with five pickups and three deliveries in the City of Alexandria per truck. Diane Charles, executive director of ALIVE! says beds are the biggest need. She remembers one recent story where a family whose children had gone off to college donated bunk beds. They were delivered to a family where the grandma slept on the couch and the two boys on the floor. "The boys' eyes lit up when they realized they would have bunk beds to sleep in that night," she said.

Each week people contact ALIVE! to donate furniture and others contact them with furniture requests. "We don't have a warehouse anymore, and that elevates the challenge," Charles said. ALIVE! lost their free warehouse space a year ago as part of the waterfront redevelopment. Charles explains



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/GAZETTE PACKET
Diane Charles, executive director of ALIVE!



Mike Mackey, volunteer coordinator for the ALIVE! furniture program

without a warehouse they can only accept donations for what has been requested that week.

Mike Mackey, who is volunteer coordinator for the furniture program, says this means, for instance, if they get four bed donations and only three requests in a particular week, they have to turn down a donation.

"This makes it a bit more of a puzzle, keeping the donors happy," Charles said. However, she adds that they have a very generous resident of Alexandria who has donated her garage for storage. "At least

that's a place where we can put all of the mattresses." However, the logistics are difficult and the need is great for a large storage space.

Mackey says that he has been volunteering for 10 years and became coordinator a couple of years ago. "I was donating some furniture 10 years ago and said 'what's this all about?' If you ever need a hand" Before he knew it he was volunteering the next Saturday. He says that different congregations volunteer to take a Saturday and then round up members of the congregation to help that week.

"Some of them have had the same Saturday for years," Charles said.

Ideally there would be 8-10 volunteers on a Saturday, "but I have done it with two," Mackey said.

He says it isn't overwhelming to be a volunteer, and there is need for drivers, coordinators, heavy-lifters and other support. Most volunteers work every 4-6 weeks. "I feel uplifted by the good people who lend a hand and the good people with whom we come in contact — both donors and recipients. I'll do it for the rest of my life. As the former program coordinator said to me, 'you may be lucky to change someone else's

Space Needed

The ALIVE! Furniture program is requesting warehouse space needed to store donated furniture items (e.g. couches, beds, tables, chairs) to be delivered to families in need in the city. Generally a minimum of 1,000 square feet up to 6,000 square feet or larger would be the most useful. Access is needed for a multitude of volunteers who load furniture items for delivery as well as volunteer coordinators who assess inventory on a weekly basis. It would be ideal to have access at any time, which has been accomplished by the use of lock-boxes and key codes in the past.

life but you know it will change yours."

ALIVE is the largest private safety net for the needy in the City of Alexandria. The furniture program is one of the five of seven programs staffed and managed entirely by volunteers. To qualify to receive furniture a person must obtain a referral from an agency or organization. They will contact ALIVE! To request the furniture. To donate furniture or if you wish to volunteer, call 703-837-9300 or email furniture@alive-inc.org.



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A Year of Record High Pedestrian Fatalities

FROM PAGE 1

1,087 of which were vehicle only. In general, crash incidents have experienced a steady decline in Alexandria. There were 1,713 crash incidents in 2012, falling to 1,488 by 2015. There were 18 incidents involving cars striking bicycles or, very rarely, bicycles striking cars. 2015 was a record year for bicycle involved crashes, at 33, with 2016 being a slight drop.

Alexandria Police say overall crashes involving pedestrians in the city have remained at an average of 75 each year. While fatalities have risen, Deputy Chief Chris Wemple noted that the number of fatalities is small enough that it's difficult to measure.

"We have seen that damages and injuries are going down," said Wemple, though he said it wasn't known yet whether that decline had anything to do with police or city measures. More likely, Wemple suspected the cause was also the same source as many traffic problems: increased density.

"We don't know why the injuries are going down," said Wemple, "But one factor could be that with the traffic density, people are driving slower. The slower people are driving, the less accidents cause injuries."

That's not to say slow for a car isn't going to cause serious injuries for a pedestrian. According to Wemple, the average speed in the city is 25 miles per hour, and most of the crashes are at lower speeds than that.

"Anything over three miles per hour is going to hurt," said Wemple. "At 25 miles per hour, that's a lot of inertia. 25 miles per hour is still very dangerous."

Even if the accident isn't fatal, being struck by a car can still leave a lasting impact on a pedestrian. A few blocks away from where Al-Hashimi was struck, Michael

Top 20 Crash Intersections in Alexandria, 2010-2015
Pedestrian Deaths, 2016



Map of intersection crashes between 2010 and 2015 with the location of pedestrian deaths in 2016.

a number of measures the police or city staff can take to enhance traffic safety.

"Years ago, we changed the lights on Route 1 and Washington Street," said Wemple. "Now, all the lights are red [for a moment]. It reduced the crashes there dramatically."

Carrie Sanders, deputy director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, said the top 20 crash locations in the city are along the Duke Street corridor. Sanders said crashes are also more common along Route 1 in Old Town, where high volumes of pedestrians interact with dense traffic.

On Jan. 24 the City Council meeting adopted Vision Zero, a traffic safety concept that aims to achieve a transportation system with no deaths or serious injuries. Sanders said, as part of the Vision Zero program, city staff will look at intersections in the city that experience safety issues and assess potential solutions. In large part, Vision Zero is an evolution of the city's complete streets program, a policy designed around improving traffic and pedestrian safety.

The FY2017-2026 budget included \$9.3 million for the city's complete streets program with \$1.6 million in FY2017. Sanders said as part of the Vision Zero action plan, city staff will work with the community on assessing costs of potential safety measures.

"You're not just looking at infrastructure costs in terms of physical improvements, but education and enforcement," said Sanders, "It's about making sure that through different modes of communication and enforcement that we're improving safety for drivers and pedestrians."

Sanders said information about community meeting dates and locations will be forthcoming.

Wemple says awareness is the key point to emphasize in any transportation safety discussion. For pedestrians, that means being aware of cars around you even if you are at the crosswalk. For drivers, Wemple said the main cause of every accident he's seen is distracted driving.

"You don't see a lot of guys who say 'yeah, I saw the guy crossing at the crosswalk and decided to go for it,'" said Wemple, "Usually, it's 'that guy came out of nowhere.'"

More often than not, Wemple said crashes are the aftermath of what police call "the red-light prayer," where drivers are looking down at their lap at a cellphone or other electronic device, looking up and immediately hitting the gas as soon as their peripheral vision catches a flash of green. Wemple said many drivers think they can multi-task, but in doing so are unaware of pedestrians or other vehicles that move around them while they are distracted.

"Put your phones down," Wemple said, in a plea to drivers in Alexandria. "Whatever it is, it can wait."

Doyle was walking down Fairfax Street and crossing Pendleton Street in early December. He wore a knit cap his wife and bought him when he'd started walking home from work, one that had a battery light on-top to alert passing drivers. It did very little to protect him against the black SUV that struck him in the crosswalk. Like Al-Hashimi, the car that struck Doyle had been trying to turn and didn't see Doyle as he crossed the sidewalk.

After his accident, Doyle says he and his wife have become hyper-aware of every pedestrian around them while they drive.

"My wife and I are now extremely cautious," said Doyle. "If we see somebody walking, we think about them crossing even if there's not a crosswalk. The city needs more public reminders of pedestrian safety."

Wemple said most of the pedestrian-related accidents tend to happen where one would expect: in areas of dense pedestrian traffic, generally in the city's shopping areas.

There's plenty of anecdotal evidence, but Wemple said there were few places where police statistically could identify areas that were hazardous to pedestrians. Repeated accidents within the same year involving a pedestrian that occur at or near the same intersection are the exception rather than the rule.

Wemple pointed back to the death last year of Jeremais Herrera Rodriguez, who was sweeping in an alleyway when a 92-year-old driver suddenly lost control of his vehicle. The car careened down the alley, killing Rodriguez and severely injuring another.

"When the big tragedies happen, you look at the circumstances of that accident," said Wemple. "A lot of times, it's not something where that set of circumstances is likely to repeat."

Where accidents are repeated, there are

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Crash Data

Calendar Year	Traffic Crashes	Ped Crashes	Traffic Deaths	Ped Deaths
2012	1,713	78	0	2*
2013	1,578	77	1	2
2014	1,580	65	1	0
2015	1,488	73	1	1
2016	1,162	67**	0	4*

* Drivers charged

** Through Nov. 30

Traffic crashes, pedestrian crashes, and pedestrian deaths in Alexandria since 2012; 2016 data does not include numbers from December.

What Went Wrong

FROM PAGE 1

with Mexico is left to harder-right leaning factions in Congress and not Donald Trump's White House. But in this universe, Sabato attended Christ Church on Feb. 10 to explain to an assembly of Alexandrians how he got it wrong.

"Virtually all of the objective, nonpartisan polls predicted Clinton would win handily," said Sabato. "They don't coordinate. I know them, they hate each other."

Sabato said even within the campaigns the expectation was clear that Clinton would win. The Clinton campaigners were already deep into planning their White House transition while Sabato said the Trump camp was starting to blame one another for the defeat.

But Sabato said what the pollsters forgot was that the majority of the sampling that would have skewed towards Trump were also the type of voters who generally don't answer polls. Sabato said the record high non-response rate to polls should have been an early warning that the predictions were inaccurate.

"We knew the blue collar towns were in revolt," said Sabato, "but we didn't know how high the turnout was going to be [for Trump]."

The real surprise, Sabato said, was that

81 percent of evangelical voters supported Trump, a higher margin than Mitt Romney in 2012, John McCain in 2008, or George W. Bush in either election. According to Sabato, this was largely due to Justice Antonin Scalia's death earlier in 2016 and the lingering Supreme Court vacancy.

On the other side of the political spectrum, Sabato said African Americans and millennials didn't turn out to support Clinton in the same way they came out to support Barack Obama.

"Analysts underestimated the extensive, intense, deep opposition to Clinton," said Sabato.

"There was 25 years of scandals and controversy around the Clintons and on election day, people maybe realized that Bill Clinton would be back in the White House with a lot less to do [in his free time]."

Moving forward, Sabato said academics will be much less likely to trust the polls in the next few elections.

Mid-terms are also not looking promising for Democrats, with most of the seats up for election being deeply entrenched Republicans.

"Republicans will keep the Senate," Sabato predicted, "and the House of Representatives looks pretty solid too. It's possible they could lose the House, but I wouldn't bet on it."

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OPINION

Ending Gerrymandering Important to Region

Efforts appear dead for this session, but elections later this year provide new opportunities.

While three bills that could have reined in the runaway gerrymandering in Virginia made it through the Virginia Senate to crossover, they died on Tuesday morning in a House subcommittee, despite some vocal Republican support.

In Virginia, Democrats have won every statewide election since 2010, and notably Barack Obama won the state in 2008 by more than 52 percent of the vote. Many of these victories have been narrow. In 2009, Republicans won Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General by strong margins.

It is reasonable, given these results, to expect that representation at the state level would be approximately even, with either Republicans or Democrats holding a small advantage. Instead, Republicans control the House of Delegates 66 to 34, and the Virginia Senate 21 to 19.

There is little competition for these seats as a result.

According to OneVirginia2021, an advocacy group for ending gerrymandering, 56 candi-

dates in the House of Delegates faced no real competition in the last general election in 2013, with 22 Democrats and 34 Republicans facing no major-party challenger. In the end, only two seats changed parties.

These same lawmakers are set to redraw the the boundaries for state legislative and congressional districts after the 2020 census, and the just-killed proposed constitutional amendments would have required that these not be motivated by partisan politics. By far the best approach would be to turn the process over to a non-partisan commission to draw boundaries in the best interests of Virginia citizens.

One of the proposals, cosponsored by Sen. Jill Vogel (R) and Sen. Janet Howell (D), passed the Senate 31-9, but died in the House subcommittee on a 5-2 vote.

It matters more here in Northern Virginia. Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, which means that localities have only the power specifically given to them by the General Assembly. It means that the economic engines of the state in Northern Virginia provide most of the financial wherewithal but citizens in Alexandria,

every morning on my way to work. There are two speed humps on the block between Gibbon and Wilkes, and each is painted to alert drivers of their presence, not as crosswalks. What drives me bonkers is when I see parents and their children, or children by themselves, striding across these humps as though they're crosswalks. They're placed approximately one-

Arlington and Fairfax County are often unable to govern themselves as they wish because of control by a far more conservative General Assembly.

Real change starts locally. Anyone seeking change should tune in for this year's elections in Virginia, including all the seats in the General Assembly, plus Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General. Every voter will choose one Virginia Senator and one member of the Virginia House of Delegates.

Nonpartisan redistricting could support the best interests of the population, not the politicians.

In 2016
Hillary Clinton (D) 1,981,473 (49.75%);
Donald Trump (R) 1,769,443 (44.43%)

In 2013:
McAuliffe (D) 1,069,789;
Cuccinelli (R) 1,013,389
Northam (D) 1,213,155;
Jackson (R) 980,257
Herring (D) 1,103,777;
Obenshain (R) 1,103,612

In 2012:
Obama (D) 1,971,820;
Romney (R) 1,822,522
Kaine (D) 2,010,067; Allen (R) 1,785,542

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

third of the way along the block from each corner, where the actual crosswalks are.

I've even seen one of those portable crosswalk signs placed in the middle of the one closest to Gibbon Street signaling that it's a crosswalk. It is not a crosswalk, and unfortunately, people are using it as one. The speed limit in that block is 15 mph because of the school, but, as we all well know, not many adhere to speed limits. One morning, a young student bounded out from between parked cars and walked across the speed hump never looking either right or left to see if a car was coming. He assumed he was in a crosswalk and therefore safe to proceed. I wish the crossing guard could alert her charges to only use the designated crosswalks and not the speed humps for crossing the street.

Perhaps the Transportation and Environmental Services Department could devise a way of indicating that the speed humps are not crosswalks and should not be used as such.

Brooke English
Alexandria

Costs Keep Adding Up

To the Editor:

The debacle of Patrick Henry Elementary School continues — just when you think this project cannot get any worse — the School Board transfers \$5.7 million from another project (Polk) to pay for cost overruns at Patrick Henry. Now approaching \$50 million in total cost and growing, the A1 project was embraced as a design that could save \$1-2 million in savings. We have blown through the savings and

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 12

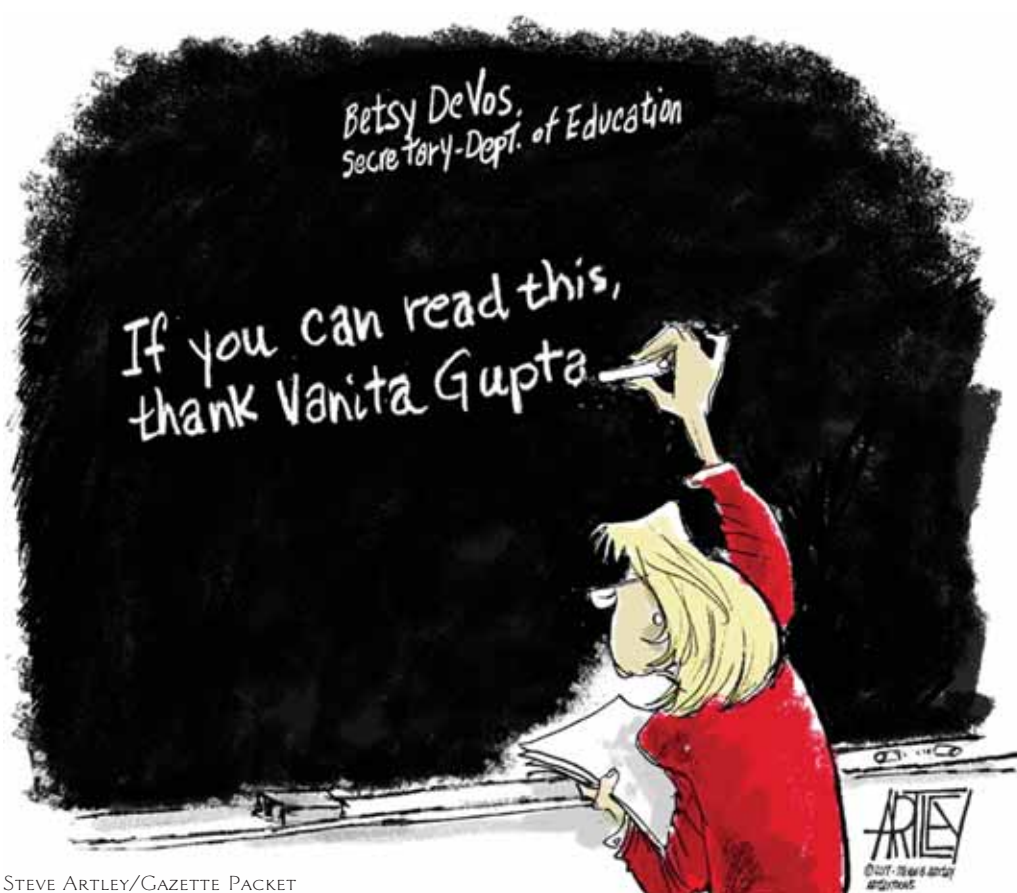
EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Teaching Where To Cross

To the Editor:

I would like to jump in on the crossing guard story ["Hands Held High," Gazette Packet, Feb. 9]. I travel northbound on St. Asaph Street



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Elections Matter

BY ADAM EBBIN
STATE SENATOR (D-30)



As a member of the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee, I support fair, open and efficient elections, which are fundamental to the maintenance of bedrock democratic principles. After a hotly contested presidential election, and leading into statewide elections, this is a good time for an update on the state of Virginia election law.

Several proposed Constitutional amendments, bills and budget items concerning voter registration, absentee voting, redistricting reform, and the responsibilities of the Department of Elections have been making their way through the General Assembly. If enacted, they would have a profound impact on future elections.

Last October, the House and Senate Committees on Privileges and Elections jointly held a five-and-a-half hour hearing regarding Virginia's readiness for the 2016 election. Republican committee members expressed grievances regarding voter registration, placing blame on election officials, despite declining to fund past budget proposals for the department during the 2016 session. These funding increases would have addressed technical issues with the online portal known as the Virginia Election & Registration Information System (VERIS).

Days later, VERIS crashed. This prompted a federal judge to extend the voter registration deadline, and Gov. Terry McAuliffe to propose \$3.9 million in much-needed funds for the administration of elections. This funding request provided senators and delegates an opportunity to ensure the implementation of critical upgrades to our election systems, by funding our elections technology and staff. The budget adopted by the House of Delegates included the proposed funding. However, the Senate budget removed this funding, stripping allocations for VERIS improvements, and even removed money for printing additional voter registration forms and absentee ballots. This included declining to approve \$2 million to replace federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds that will expire later this year. HAVA funds currently cover 60 percent of the Department of Elections operating budget.

I spoke against this action on the Senate floor arguing that removing this funding is a drastic cut that will undermine the ability of the department to complete its critical mission of ensuring the integrity of our elections process.

Several pieces of legislation to improve access to the ballot box were introduced by my Democratic colleagues and myself. Sen. George Barker (D-Fairfax), Sen. Jennifer Wexton (D-Loudoun), and I all introduced legislation to allowing senior citizens to vote absentee. Sen. Lynwood Lewis (D-

Accomack) worked to repeal Virginia's restrictive voter ID laws enacted in 2013. I also worked to expand the availability of early voting to all Virginians. Unfortunately all of these measures were defeated along party lines in committee.

Instead, legislation passed the Senate that would place burdens on voters and our electoral system.

A bill introduced by Sen. Amanda Chase (R-Chesterfield) would require voters to submit a photocopy of their photo ID when applying for an absentee ballot. The logic behind this is faulty, as the stated purpose for requiring photo IDs at polling places is to verify the voter's identity. But, when elections officials receive copies of photo IDs in the mail, they have nothing to compare the photocopied likeness to. This is a pointless exercise, and a barrier for some. Nevertheless, this legislation passed the Senate along party lines and has also passed out of committee in the House.

The Senate Finance Committee was provided with an opportunity to extend funding for activities to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the voter rolls. However, they declined to approve money that would support list maintenance, including, removal of deceased individuals, felons, and non-citizens from the rolls, checking for duplicate registrations for those still registered in their state of previous residence.

Another bill (SB1581) would require local voter registrars to annually verify Social Security numbers of each registered voter, despite this information being already verified by the state during a voter's initial registration.

The full Senate passed a budget and legislation that inhibits smooth engagement in the electoral process. Chesterfield County Registrar Lawrence C. Haake, who has served over 20 years as the Chesterfield registrar was quoted in the Richmond Times Dispatch as saying "I'm not sure the General Assembly understands the importance of what they are doing, [they are] not supporting elections in the Commonwealth by taking that money."

There is still hope that this funding would be restored as the House and Senate budgets are reconciled by a conference committee. The chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Chris Jones (R-Suffolk), seemed to confirm this sentiment, saying "There's nothing more essential than the conduct of our elections."

I will work with budget conferees toward a final budget that prioritizes the bedrock democratic principle of fair, open and efficient elections by sufficiently funding our election system. Thankfully, Governor McAuliffe is likely to veto all legislation that adds hurdles to participating in the democratic process. I pledge my vote to uphold such vetos.

Please consider following me on Twitter @AdamEbbin, emailing your views to me at district30@senate.virginia.gov and visiting AdamEbbin.com.

It is my continued honor to serve the people of the 30th District.

Love Tr---s Hate

BY KERRY CARTER

Last Fall the Alexandria City Council officially declared that, in response to the election of Donald Trump, our burg rejects all forms of hate and will henceforth be known as a "hate free zone." I refer you to the text of the city's Nov. 19 proclamation, which identifies seven groups of haters to watch out for: Immigrant /national origin haters, age haters, sex/gender/sexual orientation haters, religious group haters, race and color haters, disabled people haters and lastly, marital status haters. Wait ... did I just say "marital status" haters? Yes I certainly did, but don't worry: the city is considering exempting randomly ticked-off spouses from that last group.

The most striking feature of this proclamation is not that it boldly enumerated an intriguing, updated seven deadly sins list, but that it conspicuously omitted an important hater group: people who hate everything. If we want to have a truly effective hate-free zone, shouldn't we cover the bases by banning all haters?

Maybe not. So far no government has ever been able to successfully probe the human heart. Besides, we already have laws that set the boundaries of acceptable civil behavior by punishing various offenses such as discrimination and harassment. We must also question whether the word "hate" still generates any serious moral wallop. For example, someone told me I am a "hater" for opining that Justin Bieber's singing voice is sub-par. And I really hate that on a rainy day in Old Town I must slog 50 feet or more to locate the nearest parking meter while fishing through my purse for a credit card.

These may be lame examples, but a powerful word that used to describe something terribly odious has casually morphed and oozed into an unrecognizable creature. In academia, the word

"hate" has become quite handy as a free-speech-squelcher. Liberal college students, the little darlings, have figured out that there's no speedier way to hustle a conservative off campus than hurling the "hate speech" epithet. Add a dash of property damage to further drive home one's full outrage, and voila!

Alexandria has admirably struggled to find an adult way of expressing its own angst post-election, but the result is a rather whiny and self-righteous fail. Copycatting San Francisco, New York and Madison, Wisconsin, Alexandria came up with an embarrassingly toothless proclamation, warning certain nameless haters that they better stay away. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I'm guessing the warning is directed at everyone other than Clinton voters.

How about a little perspective, Alexandria? You know well that every four or eight years the earth turns on its political axis, but the center always holds. Although half the country won, still, the other half lost bigly. Nevertheless things are nowhere as bleak or frightening as you fear. Many good people have wandered through that forbidding Political Loser Wilderness before you and survived to tell about it. You will too.

Until the happy smiles and joyous tears return in say, 2020, please try to stop worrying about a potential plague of the seven deadly haters. And I "hate" to use an inartful term like "repeal and replace," but I really think that the city's preachy proclamation preventing predators from prevailing needs to be scrapped. Having lived here most of my life, I know that Alexandrians have a long history getting along famously, despite our differences. Moreover, it is entirely possible someone could unearth a smart, clever Alexandrian capable of composing a brilliant, catchy, less judgmental hater-repellant slogan we all would like. For starters, how about something positive, inclusive, inviting, and definitely containing another four-letter word: L-O-V-E?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

currently are in the hole for an additional \$6 million. In addition, adding insult to injury, the size of the school has increased by 17,000 sq. feet from what was promised 60 days ago — a 15 percent increase in the promised specifications.

The main selling point of A1 was the much ballyhooed financial savings. The traffic study deliberately left off the positives of C1, the safest and most traffic friendly in lieu the monetary savings of A1 and an accompanying tower. We still do not have the final figure for the A1 project. We need to go back to C1 — the clear winner in all categories. Why can we not develop a project that holds to specifications and cost? Are the facilities and planning board so inept

that they cannot bring a project to scale and on budget? Every project directed by the School Board has been delivered over budget. Why are we attempting to hide the cost factor or are we just incapable of telling the truth?

I do not want to ruin your day any further, but the citizens of Alexandria can expect a 15-20 percent increase in your taxes on top of the 3 percent raise of last year in order to pay for \$31 million for Metro funding, \$611 million for school reconstruction due to lack of maintenance, \$260 million for storm water issues that we have kicked down the road for decades, \$40 million for cleaning up the coal tar from the gas plant spewing into the Potomac and, of course,

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 13

Cherries, George Washington, and Today's Alexandria

BY KRISTEN EASTLICK
CO-CHAIR, 2017 CHERRY CHALLENGE

This is the fourth in a series of articles about the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee's February events. For more information, visit www.washingtonbirthday.com.

Ask most people what they know about George Washington, and his confession after chopping down the cherry tree is likely to be on the short list. While we now know that the story is a myth, it remains an enduring legend that helps cement General Washington's image as a Founding Father with integrity and honesty.

Nine years ago, the cherry tree myth inspired Danny Smith, member of the George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee to launch a fun-spirited contest among Alexandria's restaurant community.

For two weeks each February, the city's chefs are encouraged to design special dishes – cocktails, appetizers, entrées, or desserts – that feature cherries. Fresh cherries, dried cherries, cherry sauces, cherry liqueurs – the delicious Cherry Challenge



The Margarita Cereza at Taqueria Poblano



Homemade Cherry Clafoutis at the Warehouse Bar & Grill

dishes that showcase all those ingredients are offered as specials at restaurants in Old Town, Del Ray, the West End and all across Alexandria.

Over forty restaurants participated in this year's Cherry Challenge that ran from Janu-

Participants

Here are the 2017 Cherry Challenge participants:

219 Restaurant	Grape + Bean (Old Town and Rosemont)	Sonoma Cellars
Bastille Brasserie & Bar	Hank's Oyster Bar	Taqueria Poblano
Blackwall Hitch	Hank's Pasta Bar	Taverna Cretekou
Carluccio's	Hard Times Café	Tempo Restaurant
Cedar Knoll	Haute Dogs & Fries	The Italian Place of Old Town
Chadwick's	Hen Quarter - Old Town	The Majestic
Chart House	Junction Bakery & Bistro	Trattoria Da Franco
Cheesetique Del Ray	King Street Blues	Union Street Public House
Columbia Firehouse	Mackie's Bar and Grill	Vaso's Kitchen
Del Ray Café	Mason Social	Virtue Feed & Grain
Dishes of India	Murphy's Grand Irish Pub	Vola's Dockside Grill and the
DRP Belle Haven	Northside 10	Hi-Tide Lounge
Evening Star	River Bend Bistro	Warehouse Bar & Grill
FireFlies Bar & Restaurant		

ary 29th through February 11th. The GW Birthday Celebration Committee was still tallying the ballots at press time, but the 2017 winner could be any entry – from the Hand-Dipped Cherry Milkshake at Haute Dogs & Fries to the Alexandria Sour Cherry Martini at Vola's Dockside Grill and the Hi-Tide Lounge.

In addition to bragging rights, the chefs who create the entries with the highest ratings will receive prizes from the GW Birthday Celebration Committee. And for the second year, the Committee has sponsored a "Frequent Cherry Diner Award" for the guest who tastes and rates the greatest number of cherry creations!

"This event is designed to generate buzz

for Alexandria restaurants, boost customer traffic, and encourage chefs to get creative and excited about their special offerings," said Smith. "It also enables the GW Birthday Celebration Committee to offer a tasteful event that keeps George Washington's memory alive!"

By inviting restaurants to participate in this culinary contest, Alexandria celebrates George Washington's historic presence in his hometown. It's a delicious way to celebrate the city's vibrant restaurant scene and one of its favorite sons.

Kristen Eastlick is a member of Alexandria's George Washington Birthday Celebration Committee.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 10

the cost for Potomac Metro \$300 million for a grand total of \$1.25 billion, which may be at the low end of expectations.

The bottom line is that our governing bodies have been reckless. How do you ever vote on a school project without a final cost figure? Why do you not maintain schools to prevent such mass rebuilding? Why would you not address the issue of overcrowding when it was a known factor since 2009? Why would you not attend to sewage spill into the Potomac for decades?

This fiscal year Arlington will enjoy a one half cent decrease in taxes while Alexandria taxes will spiral by 20 cents. This suggests a total lack of fiscal responsibility and it was all self-inflicted.

Bill Goff
Alexandria

Appreciative Of Leaders

To the Editor:

It was an honor having a chance to meet our U.S. Sen. Mark Warner on an evening of a little shopping at a nearby CVS. Of course I share a sense of respect for being able to question our leaders of our nation in any capacity. There's so many questions but all I could do was ask a simple question: "Has anyone ever told you, you look a lot like Mark Warner?" He smiled and replied, "Yes, I am he." And I said, "Hi, nice to meet you, I'm Geri the activist" etc. We talked and he was so nice and polite. Thank

you. It was awesome.

Then I get home and checked my mail. There was this little postcard that I started to throw in the trash. It seemed to be junk mail but I waited until I got inside. It read: "Activist Geri On The Behalf of All The Seniors of The Heritage At Old Town" and I kept reading. It was from the Democrats of the District of Columbia about former President Barack Obama thanking Me for all my support. It read: "I wanted to send you a quick note to thank you for standing by my side these past eight years. Nothing we accomplished during my time in office would have been possible without your support. I know that I can count on you to continue to stand with Democrats in the months and years to come.

Thank you so much
Barack Obama"

Thank you Mr. Barack Obama for your service to us, the people, our country, our nation.

Activist Geri Baldwin
Alexandria

Support Alexandria Police in Budget

To the Editor:

On Feb. 21, the city manager will present the 2018 city budget to the City Council. In the next four months, a number of budget alterations and adjustments will occur prior to July 1, when the budget goes into effect. This year, the budget is critically impor-

tant for a number of reasons. First, the city is currently \$600 million in debt, with a projected 2018 debt service of \$90 million. The scant 1.5 percent GDP growth of \$9.9 million will be offset by expected expenditures of -\$25.8, thus leaving a potential funding shortfall of -\$15.9 million, which could result in an additional 4.1 cents in real estate taxes. Moreover, this does not even include the school budget estimate. Historically, the Alexandria Public School System (ACPS) has asked for \$10 million extra every year, but they will be asking for an additional \$23.3 million above last year's funding level due to increased student enrollments. This could potentially add six more cents to our property taxes assessments.

The Capital Improvement Budget (CIP) contains a number of critical needs throughout the city, starting with large infrastructure needs to city buildings, schools and IT. Metro contributions will increase from \$33 million to \$39.5 million, which is a \$6.5 million increase. The repair of our combined sewer system will require \$310 million over the next eight years. The city continues to tout the Potomac Yard Metro Station at a cost of \$268 million, and the resurfacing and reconstruction of our roads is also extremely critical. All of these items put a great deal of pressure on the city manager to develop a balanced budget with as little a negative impact on the tax-paying citizens as possible.

With all of the pressures of putting together a sound 2018 budget, one of the most important issues continues to be ensuring that our first responders are ad-

equately funded and compensated. Both the police and fire departments should receive first consideration in funding, as they are without a doubt the most important and critical pillars in our city. With the large number of homicides, robberies and aggravated assaults this past year, coupled with increased lawlessness on our streets, we need more police enforcement and protection on all our thoroughfares. Best practices tells us that for every 10,000 citizens we need 16 sworn officers and five backup employees, or a total of 21 personnel. That being the case, Alexandria requires 240 sworn officers and 75 individuals in non-patrol positions totaling 325 personnel.

Currently the Alexandria Police Department has 304 sworn officers, of which 65 are working in non-patrol positions. This leaves a shortage of 21 officers. However, an additional 40 officers attend both the Police Academy and field training on a recurring basis, thus leaving an overall shortage of 61 officers, as verified by the latest International Association of the Chiefs of Police Study. The new police chief needs to ensure that all the department's overhead costs and staffing levels are realistic, and that officers are compensated fairly in comparison to other jurisdictions.

We must remember that police presence is the greatest deterrent to crime on our streets. Hopefully, that will be reflected in the Alexandria Police Department's 2018 budget.

Townsend A. "Van" Van Fleet
Alexandria

Stabilizing the City's Affordable Housing Crisis

FROM PAGE 3

- ❖ Identify and support homeless youth and transitional age youth (18-24) in Alexandria by implementing best practices developed by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and partnering with the Alexandria City Public Schools and Health Department

- ❖ Add language courses for English Language Learners at the Barrett and Duncan Library branches

- ❖ Conduct Route 1 South Planning Study

- ❖ Secure committed affordable and accessible housing, as well as seek affordable assisted living units through the development process.

Project name	Type	Status	City investment (including Housing Trust Fund)	
Jackson Crossing	New construction	Completed	\$ 3.2 million	includes City land note
Lynhaven Apartments	Preservation	Completed	\$ 1.1 million	
St James Plaza	New construction	Under construction	\$ 5.7 million	
Gateway at King & Beauregard	New construction	Under construction	\$ 5.5 million	
Community Lodgings	Preservation	Pipeline (pursuing financing)	\$ 500,000	
Carpenter's Shelter	Redevelopment/new construction	Pipeline (secured approvals; pursuing financing)	\$ 7.1 million	
Ramsey Homes	Redevelopment	Pipeline (secured approvals; pursuing financing)	\$ 2 million	
Lacy Court	Preservation	Pipeline (pursuing financing)	\$ 3.8 million	
Church of the Resurrection	New construction	Pipeline (predevelopment)	\$ 400,000	
			\$ 29.3 million	

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Recently completed or in development committed affordable housing projects with city funding.

FOR AFFORDABLE housing in Alexandria, the Strategic Plan is a mostly a continuation of goals and efforts set forward in 2013's Affordable Housing Master Plan.

"The action items align perfectly with the work we're doing right now," said Helen McIlvaine, director of Housing. "The underpinnings for the Housing Master Plan is housing for all, which is an inclusive approach. Achieving more housing affordability is probably the most tangible way that this city speaks to the commitment to diversity and inclusiveness. If people of different abilities and incomes and ages can live here, that's how we make it real."

In Alexandria in 2015, 67 percent of residents live in housing that is considered unaffordable based on their income (spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing). Nearly 10 percent of the city's population live in poverty.

The first action item, supporting non-profits and Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) to provide committed affordable housing, is becoming an increasingly vital piece of Alexandria's housing program. The city partners with and financially supports public housing and voucher programs through ARHA, as well as through loans supplied to affordable housing non-profit developers like AHDC.

Market-rate affordable units, those con-

sidered affordable to low income residents without government or non-profit subsidies, have been in freefall in recent years. Between 2015 and 2016, the number of market rate affordable units in Alexandria fell from 5,956 to 3,853. If the trend continues the two decade decline, 2017 will be the first year that the number of committed affordable housing residences, 3,818 as of last fall, will exceed the number of market-rate affordable units.

City Manager Mark Jinks will present the proposed budget at the Feb. 21 City Council meeting. McIlvaine said the main part of the housing budget contingent on yearly funding is their yearly projects with non-profits.

"We use federal dollars and other funds we have available [for affordable housing projects] but when that amount isn't sufficient, our support is dependent on City Council allocating dollars for that project," said McIlvaine. "This past year, for the Carpenter Shelter ... we used our money and will use some general obligation bond funding when the project goes into closing. That's a case where doing a project was dependent on budget resources. We expect to be in the same position for 2018. The project we currently would expect to do,

the Church of the Resurrection project, would require an allocation from the City Council to make up what we don't have."

During last year's budget process, the Church of the Resurrection project was described as a \$7.9 million project. McIlvaine said the number was "in that same ballpark" but no exact estimate was available yet.

One of the last action items, the planning study for Route 1 South, is part of the Office of Housing's ongoing effort to preserve 200 affordable units in that area.

"We've been active in trying to get grant funding for the Route 1 South planning study," said McIlvaine. "There are three existing affordable housing developments that we would like to make sure remain affordable over time. What's being developed around there is the opposite of affordable. If these homes are redeveloped, they will come back as million dollar townhomes."

THE KEY INDICATORS of the Inclusive City section say the city should reduce levels of housing cost burdened households and reduce the percentage of residents living in poverty, but does not list numbers the city should be expected to reach.

"We don't have a target," said McIlvaine. "We can tell if there's success if the number

is going down. It doesn't reflect our reluctance to have our work measured, it just tries to take into account that there are lots of factors external to us at play."

Greg Useem, chief performance officer, said the indicators for Inclusive City have a directional goal rather than a numeric one.

"The focus there is, regardless if it has a target or not, is to strive to improve the city as a whole," said Useem. "The objective here is to focus the organization on improving these indicators. Setting a specific target sometimes helps that discussion ... [but] sometimes something like this can be a little more difficult to set a specific numeric value to."

Like McIlvaine, Useem said affordable housing in Alexandria is an area that can be heavily impacted by outside factors like tax rates for housing loans.

"These are indicators where the city has some influence on moving," said Useem. "We do not control these indicators or what direction they move in, but we are striving to influence them in a positive way. The city does not control poverty rate. If we did, it would be zero. There are variables and factors that go into the poverty rate. What we're trying to say we're is trying to make it better."

Asking for a Million More

After paying back a redevelopment loan earlier in the Feb. 14 City Council meeting, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) came back a few minutes later to request nearly a million more for the Ramsey Homes redevelopment.

Helen McIlvaine, director of the Office of Housing, presented ARHA's request to double the city's loan. McIlvaine said the loan increase was the result of the delay in the loan application process from 2016 to 2017 after the City Council requested ARHA do more work to further study preservation options for Ramsey Homes. \$700,000 of the \$900,000 total request was a result of a tax rate increase during that year. Mayor Allison Silberberg said, even

knowing the resulting cost increase, the delay was the right decision.

"It is a complicated project," said Silberberg. "We had to take in a lot of input in terms of history of the site to help us figure out a way forward."

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson added that cost delays will likely continue to plague affordable housing development in Alexandria as a result of changes at the federal level.

"This is the cost of delay," said Wilson, "but I also think this is the leading edge of a changing environment that is unfortunately going to bedevil us on all these projects."

The council voted unanimously to approve the loan request.

— VERNON MILES

Assessments

FROM PAGE 4

of the slowest growing regional economies. In terms of jobs that has picked up, but if you look at those jobs they are generally service level. [The jobs] are not as high paying as they used to be. This is our new normal: slow growth rather than hyper growth ... We will not see what we have seen in recent years."

Jinks said some of that has to do with federal government spending, with sequestration and other national financial crises having a visible impact on the regional economy. Jinks said the region is likely to see that continue, given the types of pay, job and employment decisions being made by the national government.

"We're settling into much more normal, low growth rate environment," said Vice Mayor Justin Wilson. "That is deadly for us. If we settle into

1 or 2 percent growth, and our expenditures grow at 3 to 6 percent, every year we will face this kind of gap. Every single year ... Most taxpayers this year, assuming tax rate stays the same which I highly doubt, will see decrease or stay the same."

Mayor Allison Silberberg pointed to this as an example for why Alexandria needs to continue to work towards diversifying the local economy.

Morgan Rout, the city's budget director, previewed for the council what the real estate assessments will mean for the upcoming budget. With \$11 million in estimated revenue and an estimated \$25.8 million in expenditures for the city expenses, the city faces a \$14.8 million budget gap before the public school funding increase is factored in. With ACPS facing its own 9.6 million dollar budget gap, Jinks said that gap could go up from \$14.8 million to \$24.4 million.

"That's a big number," said Jinks. "You'll see next week how we propose closing it."

Celebrating Black History Month

Educators say these lessons are urgently needed in current racial climate.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
GAZETTE PACKET

Even though Elavie Ndura knows that it is a daunting challenge to help children grasp the entirety of the African American experience in the shortest month of the year, each February she and other educators give it their best effort. This year, they feel it's more important than ever.

"With all of the racial experiences we're having these days, it's critical that children know their history and are not basing their knowledge on only what they see on television or what they hear from their friends," said Elavie Ndura, Ed.D., professor of education at George Mason University in Fairfax. "Research shows that children who understand their histories do better in school and in society, so it's critical that families teach their children about their history."

Ndura believes that the current racial climate in the U.S. gives this year's Black History Month additional significance. A study released last month by the Pew Research Center shows that among Americans, 61 percent of blacks, 58 percent of Hispanics and 45 percent of whites say that race relations in the United States are generally bad. Local educators say Black History Month

offers opportunities to address issues of race by allowing the past to inform the present.

"We have seen for more than a year how people from different political viewpoints, but also races, sexes, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses related to each other in the present political climate, and it was troublesome," said Mika'il A. Petin, Ph.D., associate director of African and African American Studies at George Mason University. "Teaching the history of Black or African-heritage peoples in this month ... is necessary to starting difficult conversations about... current race relations ... and social inequalities."

Race relations in our society have been deeply strained during the election and as America adjusts to a new presidential administration.

These divisions make African American history lessons critical for all children, but particularly for black children, says Ndura. "As African American parents we have a serious duty to educate our own youth," she said. "Knowing your history grounds and anchors you firmly so that you are not wavered in the wrong direction because of whatever feelings might be caused by what you're seeing on the news."

Black history lessons work best when they're intentional and creative, advises

Jessica Lewis, Ed.D., assistant professor of education and human services at Marymount University in Arlington. "Children benefit when they are exposed to a variety of perspectives, ideas and stories because it helps expand their view of the world and people living in it," she said. "The ability to understand and identify with others and their experiences is a powerful, life-long lesson."

Lewis advises making a trip to a local bookstore or library to find books that offer a glimpse of African American history and suggests that parents begin with books on subjects that interest their children. "[Parents] may start with readings on sports, or science, or biographies of the accomplishments and hardships of individuals who persisted throughout history to make a difference," she said. "Parents can ... select books by black authors and illustrators and then take the time to read the story together, discuss the pictures, and ask questions about what the characters are feeling and experiencing."

Other ideas include exploring music with roots in African American history such as ragtime, jazz, gospel and blues, making a timeline of major events that occurred during the Civil Rights Movement, and reading speeches from civil rights leaders and

then helping children write their own speech about what they are inspired to change in the world. Such activities can open a natural discussion and need not be complicated to be effective, says Lewis.

"Parents are their children's first educators," said Lewis. "It is important for parents to help their children understand the experiences of other children who are not like them because it builds empathy and a deeper sense of community."

One roadblock to such honest conversations, cautions Petin, is a discomfort with discussions of racial differences. "Let's be frank, some white Americans who are politically and socially conservative become noticeably uncomfortable with the topic of race, and therefore find difficulty with Black History Month," he said. "Yet, Black History Month — similar to the Black Lives Matter movement — does not express superiority over others. Both the month of celebration and socio-political movement are forms of resistance to deliberate attempts to conceal the worthiness of Black or African-heritage people in this country."

Some people "may attack Black History Month and Black Lives Matter as political correctness and identity politics, but I would argue that they are not seeing the humanity in both efforts," continued Petin.

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Alexandria Gazette Packet



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ENTERTAINMENT

Pipeline Playwrights Hosts Inaugural Series

Four plays by local women coming to MetroStage.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
GAZETTE PACKET

A new Pipeline Playwrights group in Alexandria has launched its 2017 inaugural series with four new plays by four women writers. Pipeline Playwrights is a group of women playwrights, ages 30s to 50s, who are based in Northern Virginia, and working together to support, present, and promote each other's work with the goal of moving their plays into the local and national theater pipeline.

Each of the Pipeline Playwrights — Jean Koppen, Soo-Jin Lee, Ann Timmons, and Patricia Connelly — will present a reading of a new full-length play in the 2017 spring reading series at MetroStage in Alexandria.

"Each reading is a play by one of the playwrights at MetroStage in Alexandria," said Patricia Connelly of Alexandria, one of the playwrights and co-organizers who works as an attorney. "Readings are an important part of the development process. We have professional actors who read the play on stage. It's to give the audience a sense of the play."

She said that it's a work in progress at that point. The writers solicit comments from the audience to hear what's working and what's not; it's an opportunity for the playwrights to hear their plays out loud.

She said the group first met at a Dramatist Guild Conference at The Kennedy Center in 2014 and formed a group of writers called the Northern Virginia Writers Circle. "We meet every couple of weeks; we read aloud our plays and give comments. Out of that group, we decided to try to take our work out publicly."

Up first on Feb. 27 is playwright Ann Timmons' play, "A Very Present Presence." This comedy opens as Alice's mid-life crisis is interrupted by a visitation from her long-dead great-aunt, who takes her on a journey through time. And Alice learns that her

problems spring from sources deeper than she imagined.

"Ann is a professional actor and a writer. She got her start in New York and she wrote a couple of one-woman shows that she toured around the country," said Connelly. "It's a comedy and one of Alice's ancestors was a Suffragette, and although Ann has been working on the play for probably a year, the subject seems timely."

Next on March 20 is Soo-Jin Lee's play, "The Men My Mother Loved." "The play is about a mother and daughter; the mother takes the daughter on a trip to South Korea where the mother grew up and she introduces her to people from her past, including former boyfriends," added Connelly.

On April 3, Patricia Connelly will present "Around the Snake Turn," a drama set in West Africa in which a mother pits herself against her extended family, her culture, and the centuries' old tribal religion of the village, to save the lives of her children.

Connelly said she spent two years working on the play about sex slaves called Trokosis (meaning ritual servitude). "I got the idea for the play when I saw an article in the New York Times about a young girl who was given for a sex slave to the village priest to atone for a crime committed by a relative. It was in West Africa and this was a 12-year-old girl who was a slave ... The story haunted me that this was a system of justice."

On May 8, the final play by Jean Koppen called "Unprotected" will be featured. In Koppen's new drama, a mother and her teenage daughter confront the subtle and not-so-subtle ways women are vulnerable to sexual assault.

"It's about a mother, father, daughter, and mother's brother, his wife and son. There's an incident involving cousins, two teenage children. And in the course of that we learn something about the mother's past," said Connelly.

All play readings on Mondays at 7:30 p.m. at MetroStage, 1201 North Royal St., Alexandria. They'll be readings of the whole plays with times for discussion with the playwrights and actors. A reception follows.

More info at www.facebook.com/events/101047870374049.



Matthew Miller, Caren Anton, Katherine Stanford, and Robin Covington read from "A Very Present Presence."



Lars Klores and Elizabeth Keith read from "Unprotected."



Jennifer Knight reads from "The Men My Mother Loved."



Cody Jones and William Shipman read from "Around the Snake Turn."

CALENDAR

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

ONGOING

RockNBlades. Fridays in February 8:45-10:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Ice Skating, 2017 Belle View Blvd. Skating with music. \$12 admission includes rental skates.

"Sanctuary." Through Feb. 18 in the Commons Fireplace Alcove of Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. Selected black and white photographs from Nina Tisara's "Sanctuary" series, shot in Huntley Meadows Park. A closing reception

will be held on Feb. 18, 6:30-7:15 p.m., followed by a concert by Nova Chamber Orchestra beginning at 7:30 p.m. Email Nina Tisara at ninat@ninatisara.com or call 703-765-5950 for more.

Convergence Arts Initiative.

Through March 4, Fridays 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at The Gallery @ Convergence, 1801 N. Quaker Lane. Highlights the artwork of students from Bishop Ireton, Episcopal High School, T.C. Williams, and St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School. Artists reception: Saturday, Feb. 11, 7-9 p.m. Email danabh@ourconvergence.org or call 703-998-6260 for more.

Ceramic Guild Show.

Through March 5, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St. "Customer Appreciation: Welcome to

our World" Ceramic Guild show at Scope Gallery. Visit www.scopegallery.org, www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope or call 703-548-6288 for more.

China Photography Exhibit.

Through March 6, various hours at the Bisdorf Building, NVCC, 5000 Dawes Ave. "China in my Eyes" photography exhibit. Artists reception: Saturday, Feb. 11, noon. Visit www.nvcc.edu/alexandria/ or email JZelloe@aol.com for more.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 15

Historical Gardens Lecture. 9:30-11 a.m. at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road. The Alexandria/Mount Vernon Antiques Club will have Dean Norton, the horticulturist at George Washington's

Mount Vernon Plantation, speaking about the various authentic historical gardens at the Mount Vernon estate. Call 703-360-4979 for more.

THURSDAY/FEB. 16

Business After Hours. 5:30-7 p.m. at The Wharf, 119 King St. Enjoy refreshments and hors d'oeuvres with the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce while networking with other business and nonprofit professionals. Members \$10, non-members \$25, and members at the door \$25. Visit web.alexchamber.com/ for more.

U.S. Navy Band. 7:30 p.m. at the Schlesinger Concert Hall, NOVA, Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive. Free. Visit www.navyband.navy.mil/ or call 202-433-4777 for more.

FEB. 17-18

Arlo Guthrie in Concert. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. \$110. Visit birchmere.com.

FEB. 17-26

Winter Restaurant Week. Neighborhood restaurants throughout Alexandria, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle and the West End. \$35 three-course dinner for one or \$35 dinner for two; select locations offering lunch from \$10-20/person. Visit www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com or call 703-746-3301 for more.

SATURDAY/FEB. 18

ENTERTAINMENT



FILE PHOTO/VISIT ALEXANDRIA

The George Washington Birthday Parade starts at the intersection of Gibbon and S. Fairfax streets at 1 p.m. Monday, Feb. 20.

Celebrating George's 285th

This year is the 285th anniversary of George Washington's birth in his hometown of Alexandria, where historians are serious when they say "George Washington slept here." The following is a list of activities to learn and celebrate the life of the country's first president.

FEB. 18-19

Presidents Day Breakfast Sampler.

9 a.m.-noon at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Hwy., Join "General Washington" for a sample of hoecakes prepared by Mount Vernon staff. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more information.

Visit with George Washington.

11 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Hwy. Mingle with costumed characters from George Washington's world, followed by an 18th-century dancing demonstration, birthday cake and wreath-laying ceremony. Adults, \$20; children ages 6-11, \$10; and children under 5 free. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more information.

MONDAY/FEB. 20

George Washington's Birthday. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Hwy. Celebrate the national observance of George Washington's Birthday by visiting his home and burial site free of charge on this day, and watch a variety of activities. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more information.

SATURDAY/FEB. 18

George Washington Birthright Banquet and Ball. 5:30-11 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Set in 1799, the evening includes an 18th-century banquet, English country dancing, dessert collation, character re-enactors plus the General and Mrs. Washington. Period costume optional; "after-five" attire encouraged. Tickets are tiered starting at \$125. Advance reservations required. Call 703-746-

4242 for more information.

SUNDAY/FEB. 19

Revolutionary War Reenactment.

10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fort Ward, 4301 W Braddock Road. Historic camp and tactical demonstrations throughout the day, including a Revolutionary War skirmish at 2 p.m. between the Redcoats and the Colonial Army. Participants include renowned reenactment units from around the United States dressed in authentic period costumes and demonstrating authentic 18th-century weaponry. Free. Visit www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/GWbday for more information.

Wonders of Science.

1-4 p.m. at the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105 S. Fairfax St. Hands-on demonstrations of the scientific interests of George Washington, including period medicine, inventions, and espionage. \$6 per person. Visit www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/GWbday for more information.

Walking with Washington Tour.

2-3:30 p.m. at Ramsay House Visitors Center, 221 King St. View some of the sites connected to the General, like where he filled his prescriptions or slept overnight. Free. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.com for more.

MONDAY/FEB. 20

Historic Alexandria Open Houses.

Times vary at the Friendship Firehouse Museum, Gadsby's Tavern Museum, Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum and The Lyceum: Alexandria's History Museum. Free. Visit www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/GWbday for more information.

Fire Engine Association Breakfast.

9-10:30 a.m. at The Alexandrian, 480 King St. Sponsored by the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, features "George Washington's" first appearance of the day plus an address by retired Four-Star General John H. Tilelli, the awarding of the Ben Lynt Award. \$35. Visit www.friendshipfire.net or call 703-751-6416 for more information.

Armed Forces Community Covenant Ceremony.

11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Market Square, 301

King St. Honor the nation's veterans, active military, and their families with music, games, and activities for children with military vehicles, demonstrations, informational booths, and displays. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.net or call 703-829-6640 for more information.

George Washington Birthday Parade.

1-3 p.m. starts at the intersection of Gibbon and S. Fairfax streets. Expect nearly 3,500 participants including historical groups, youth from Scouting groups, animals, bands and more. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.net or call 703-829-6640 for more information.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 22

Childrens Party for George. 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. A party for children in honor of George Washington's real birthday including reenactors of George Mason, John Carlyle, GW's stablemaster and houndmaster. Visit alexlibraryva.org or call 703-746-1705 for more.

Lecture: George Washington the Entrepreneur.

7:30 p.m. at Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St. Using Washington's financial papers, Edward G. Lengel, chief historian of the White House Historical Association, chronicles the story of how Washington built the Mount Vernon estate into a resource to win the war of independence. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.net or call 703-829-6640 for more information.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

George Washington Symposium.

1-3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr. Mark Tabbert, the Memorial's director of collections, discusses contemporary research on the life of George Washington. Free. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.net or call 703-829-6640 for more information.

Annual Birthday Gala.

5:30-9:30 p.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr. Black tie affair, featuring The presentation of the George Washington Memorial Award. \$125. Visit www.washingtonbirthday.net or call 703-829-6640 for more information.

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Eco-Savvy Symposium. 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Learn why plant and animal life biodiversity is critical to a healthy ecosystem and what can be done to bring diversity to your own backyard. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/.

The Lee-Fendall House as Civil War Hospital. 10 a.m. at the Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St. "This Tide of Wounded" tour of the museum and grounds highlights the Lee-Fendall House's role as a hospital during the Civil War. \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door. Call 703-548-1789 or visit www.leafendallhouse.org.

SOUPer Saturday. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St. Hundreds of ceramic pots and bowls donated by Torpedo Factory artists. For \$20, get a bowl and a voucher for a cup of chowder from the Chart House. All proceeds benefit United Community Ministries and their programs serving families in the community. For more, contact Stephen Lally at 703-819-9990 or email slallypottery@gmail.com.

Historic Candy Story. 11 a.m. at Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Susan Benjamin is the founder of True Treats Candy, the nation's only historic candy company, and will highlight African American history via the sugarcane industry. \$10. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

Experiences of Slavery. 2 p.m. at the Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St. "From Slavery to Freedom," this tour interprets the Lee-Fendall House from the perspective of its enslaved inhabitants, exploring the experiences of slavery in the city. \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door. Visit www.leafendallhouse.org or call 703-548-1789 for more.

Photo Exhibit and Concert. 6:15 p.m. at Chapel of Mt Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. The Ars Nova Chamber Orchestra will play the music of Prokofiev, Grieg. There will be an open house for a black and white photographic series "Sanctuary" of Huntley Meadows Park, plus a preview of new mosaic art, both by Nina Tisara. Free. Email music@mvuc.org for more.

FEB. 18-19

Presidents Day Breakfast Sampler. 9 a.m.-noon at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Join "General Washington" for a sample of hoecakes prepared by Mount Vernon staff. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more.

Visit with George Washington. 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Hwy. Mingle with costumed characters from George Washington's world, followed by an 18th-century dancing demonstration, birthday cake and wreath laying ceremony. Adults, \$20; children ages 6-11, \$10; and children under 5 free. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more.

SUNDAY/FEB. 19

Revolutionary War Reenactment. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Fort Ward Park, 4301 W. Braddock Road. Learn about a soldier's life, see authentic weaponry and uniforms from the Revolution. Watch an actual battle between British and Colonial troops. Free. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/FortWard for more.

Top 10 Plants for the Garden. 1:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Horticulturists Karen Rexrode and Keith Tomlinson of Meadowlark Gardens and Judy Zatsick discuss their favorites. \$10. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Concert. 3-5 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Pianist Thomas Pandolfi playing Paderewski's Piano Concerto in A Minor, and Duke Ellington's The River. \$20; children 8 and under are free. Visit www.wmpmusic.org.

Barbershop Harmony Concert. 3 p.m. at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane. The 30-member Harmony Heritage Singers present a concert of popular songs. Free. Call 703-765-4779 or email gronbrandt@gmail.com.

Surreal Artist Lecture. 4 p.m. at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Hear Peter Stern talk about the process he employs and the experiences he's had piloting his own ultralight plane over a variety of landscapes and creating the magical images in Surreal. Free. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

MONDAY/FEB. 20

George Washington's Birthday. 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at George Washington's Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway. Celebrate the national observance of George Washington's Birthday by visiting his home and burial site free of charge on this day, and watch a variety of activities. Visit www.mountvernon.org/ or call 703-780-2000 for more.

Wreath Laying Ceremony. 11 a.m.-noon at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier of the Revolution, at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 323 S. Fairfax St. Join the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Sons of the American Revolution as they host colonial military and civilians to honor the soldiers of the Revolution. Free. Visit www.VisitAlexandriaVA.com/ GWbday for more.

TUESDAY/FEB. 21

Winter Gardening Lecture. 7-8:30 p.m. at the Barrett Branch Library, 717 Queen St. Learn early season practices that will save you time, money and labor. Free. Email mgarlalex@gmail.com or call 703-228-6414 for more.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 22

Childrens Party for George. 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave. A party for children in honor of George Washington's real birthday including reenactors of George Mason, John Carlyle, GW's stablemaster and houndmaster. Visit alexlibraryva.org or call 703-746-1705 for more.

FEB. 23-APRIL 2

The Hand Print Workshop. Various times at the Athenaeum, 201 Prince St. Dennis O'Neil's Hand Print Workshop exhibit features a wide representation of the prints created by these artists in his Alexandria studio, including some by William Christenberry and Renee Stout, as well as works by O'Neil himself. Opening Reception, Sunday, Feb. 26, 4-6 p.m. Visit www.nvfaa.org or call 703-548-0035.

THURSDAY/FEB. 23

Starving the South. 7:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St. Andrew F. Smith discusses his book "Starving the South: How the North Won the Civil War," and sign books. \$10. Call 703-746-4994, or visit www.alexandriahistory.org.

FRIDAY/FEB. 24

CAC Hats Off Gala. 7-10 p.m. at the Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767

Take Advantage of These Restaurant Week Deals

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria's winter Restaurant Week returns for another year from Feb. 17-26, allowing diners to experience special menus and special deals from a passel of the city's best restaurants. Here are a few must-tries that are off the beaten path.

Café Pizzaiolo, 1623 Fern St.

This pizza purveyor near Fairlington doesn't need a Restaurant Week stint to boost its popularity, but a \$35-for-two menu doesn't hurt all the same. While the prix-fixe menu doesn't offer all of Pizzaiolo's favorites, it does highlight some of the restaurant's hallmarks and just might introduce you to an item you haven't tried before.

APPETITE The eponymous Pizzaiolo Salad, for instance, is worth your time on or off the week's special menu. With peppers and tomato caprese atop a bed of mixed greens and finished off with some Parmesan, the salad is an interesting number bite for bite and one that you'll want to come back for on its own as an entrée another time. For an entrée, choose between the salmon with risotto or a Neapolitan-style pizza topped with sausage — and honestly, as a party of two, why not try both?

Finish off the meal with some gelato or tiramisu and you've hit all the major food groups for the evening — and have perhaps found some new go-tos along the way.

Bastille, 606 N. Fayette St.

Walk into Bastille and there's a near-instant feeling of upper-echelon French dining in a comfortable, unpretentious atmosphere. Add in the celebratory feelings of Restaurant Week and you've got an evening to remember.

Unlike other Restaurant Week participants, Bastille offers up an extensive version of a prix-fixe menu for its dinnertime selection. Rather than choosing from a couple of options, the café hosts a wide array

King St. Benefit to help child abuse victims and vulnerable families in the City of Alexandria. Visit www.centerforalexandriachildren.org or call 703-746-6043 for more.

Blessed Sacrament Concert. 7:30 p.m. at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road. Director of Music, John McCrary will conduct the Blessed Sacrament Festival Chorus and Orchestra. Email jmccrary@blessedsacramentcc.org or call 703-998-6100 x103 for more.

Todd Snider Concert. 7:30 p.m. at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. Nashville gonzo outlaw music. Visit www.birchmere.com for more.

SATURDAY/FEB. 25

Black History Month Speaker. 9-11 a.m. at Bethlehem Baptist Church, 7836 Fordson Road. C.R. Gibbs will be the featured speaker for Boy Scout Troop 1906 talking on "Let Your Motto Be Resistance, Great Slave Revolts." Visit www.bethlehemofalexandria.org/ for more.

The Will to Adorn Workshop. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. The Will to Adorn: African American Diversity, Style, and Identity. Free. Email black.history@alexandriava.gov, or call 703-746-4356 for more.

Winter Birds and Feeder

Workshop noon-2 p.m. at Huntley Meadows Park, 3701 Lockheed Blvd. Learn about the birds that call Huntley Meadows Park and your backyard home during winter. Learn how to identify winter birds through calls, games and activities. Children must be accompanied by an adult registered in the program. \$8 county residents, \$10 non-county. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park for more.

Civil War Winter Drill Day. 1-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road. Members of the 3rd U.S. Regular Infantry, Company K, will interpret the life of the Union soldier on Civil War in the winter. Visit www.fortward.org or call 703-746-4848 for more.

Annual Black History Month Gala. 7 p.m. at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center, 5000 Seminary Road. Keynote speaker is Dr. Stedman Graham. He will speak on the 2017 National Black History Month Theme: The Crisis in Black Education. Visit www.vabhma.com.

SUNDAY/FEB. 26

Deer and the Garden. 1:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road. Author and garden expert Ruth Clausen shares some

of favorites to mix and match. For an appetizer, try the cheese board or the beignets de crevettes (savory breaded shrimp "beignets"). The main course offers an array of options for nearly every palate, ranging from French standard Coq au Vin in a deep red wine sauce to an Angus beef hangar steak with — what else? — French fries alongside. Vegetarians won't be left out, either; a sunchoke and spinach risotto seems sure to hit the spot.

Bastille's dessert menu is extensive, but you could do worse than the crème caramel with bourbon raisin compote. Bon appetit!

Lena's Wood-Fired Pizza and Tap, 401 E. Braddock Road

While dinnertime options often get top billing during Restaurant Week, many participants offer a prix-fixe lunch, as well — for a lower price. This helps diners maximize their tasting menus for a more reasonable price — and maybe stretch their dollar across several eateries, too.

It's safe to say that Lena's lunchtime menu rivals its dinnertime selection and in a few cases even edges out the latter. The polenta fries alone put a point in the luncheon column; the light-and-airy yet substantive-and-hearty polenta cakes are a mainstay at Lena's, and to omit them from your plate would be a crime. (Note also that said polenta fries aren't offered on the dinner Restaurant Week menu — choose your timing wisely.)

Dive into a half-panini with soup or salad for a main course; the meatball Panini stars Lena's famous giant meatball, which is as advertised, and served with marinara sauce and provolone on a hoagie roll. Or for something less protein-heavy, go with the vegetable Panini, which sports an array of roasted veggies such as eggplant, portabella, sweet peppers, and more accompanied by pesto and mozzarella and nestled in focaccia bread.

Hope Nelson owns and operates the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

beautiful shrubs, annuals and perennials that deer usually ignore, and signs her book on "50 Beautiful Deer-Resistant Plants." \$10. Call 703-642-5173 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring/ for more.

Secretive Marsh Birds. 2 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Join several area Audubon clubs, the Northern Virginia Bird Club and the Virginia Society of Ornithology. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/sh/direct.htm or call 703-765-3645 for more.

Locals Highlight Black History. 2 p.m. at the Lee Center Richard Kauffman Auditorium, 1108 Jefferson St. Program features the recognition of three former employees: Lawrence "Lucky" Elliott, Traverse Gray, and Jackie Mason for their more than four decades of service to the Alexandria community. Call 703-746-5402 or email Mac Slover, Regional Program Director, at mac.slover@alexandriava.gov.

FocusMusic. 7 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Scott Ainslie and Reggie Harris in concert. \$18/\$15 for advance sales and members. Call 703-380-3151, or visit www.focusmusic.org/buy-tickets.

ENTERTAINMENT

'China In My Eyes' Opens at NOVA

Just in time for the Chinese New Year, the Alexandria Campus Library in partnership with the Confucius Institute at George Mason University opened a photography exhibit titled "China in My Eyes" on Feb. 1. Seventy photographs captured by 28 photographers take viewers on a journey through China, displaying scenes from the everyday life of ordinary Chinese citizens while capturing an array of emotions and experiences.

After NOVA's Associate Dean Matt Todd, Lucia Claster, deputy director of the Confucius Institute, and Dr. Monika Hoffarth-Zelloe, curator of the exhibit, delivered welcoming remarks, the guests were invited to sample Chinese tea and snacks while viewing the exhibit. Almost 100 students, faculty, friends of the Confucius Institute, friends of the Library and community patrons attended the event. Several of the photographers, ranging from Mason students, faculty, staff and local residents, were present at the grand opening and offered personal insights into the significance of their photographs.

Natascha Zelloe, a college student and native of Alexandria, said she wanted to capture the simplicity of daily Chinese life in her photographs.

The exhibit also promotes the library's wide collection of materials on Chinese culture, art, history and language and remains on display through March 6.



Lucia Claster, deputy director of the Confucius Institute; Zhongya Liu, teacher at Confucius Institute; Dr. Monika Hoffarth-Zelloe, curator; and Yan Pan, teacher at Confucius Institute



Natascha Zelloe, photographer and a student from Alexandria.



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First Night in Alexandria celebrated its 22nd birthday on December 31st. First Night Alexandria relies on the generosity of area businesses and individuals to throw the largest family-friendly, best date night, budget-friendly New Year's Eve celebration through the performing arts in the region! The sale of admission badges covers less than one-half of the annual cost to produce the event. In addition to the many goods and services provided pro bono or far below retail, \$260,000 is needed to cover the expense of First Night Alexandria, including all the great performers. These businesses and individuals make it all possible.

We are grateful for their generosity and hope you too will thank them by doing business with them.

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 - Hooray for Books!
 - Society for Human Resource Management
 - Durant Arts Center
 - Alexandria Union Station
 - George Washington Masonic Memorial
 - Mount Vernon Recreation Center

FirstNightAlexandria.org

SPORTS



PHOTOS BY MARK MOGGE/GAZETTE PACKET



Rowers are cheered on during the Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints held Feb. 4 at T.C. Williams High School.

Rowers compete in the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints Feb. 4 at T.C. Williams High School.

Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints Returns to T.C. Williams

Records set in premier rowing competition.

Athletes from Alexandria Community Rowing were among those setting records at the 2017 Mid-Atlantic Erg Sprints held Feb. 4 at T.C. Williams High School.

Hosted by Alexandria Crew Boosters, two dozen records were set in several age categories from junior to veteran and across

all distances from 500-meter sprint championships to the erg marathon.

Setting records from Alexandria Community Rowing were: Pearl Risberg - College Coxswains Women 500-meter LTWT 120 lbs - 1:48.9; Peter Heimberg and Scott Atkinson - Senior Men (40-49) 3-minute crash double slide - 1,739m; Cynthia Way - Open Women Erg Marathon - 3:38:54.02; and the team of Senior Women (40-49) in the new event of 5-Minute quad slide team - 5,105m.

Griffin Canfield of Mount Vernon RECenter Rowing Rats set a record in the

Open LTWT Men Erg Half marathon with a time of 1:22:21.9.

Two new events this year set the bar for 2018: Adaptive Men Visually Impaired (LTA) and Adaptive Men 50+ Physically Disabled (LTA).

For the first time in Erg Sprints history two or more individuals/teams weighed in to compete as lightweights in the Open LTWT Men Erg Half Marathon, Open LTWT Women Erg Half Marathon, and Senior (age 40-49) Women 5-Minute Quad Slide.

Additionally, five competitors had quali-

fying times for C.R.A.S.H.-Bs to be held in Boston on Feb. 12: William Brownlee, Veteran G+ (Age 80+) Men 2000m - 8:51.7; Syd Lea, Adaptive Men Intellectually Disabled (Legs/Trunks/Arms) - 3:12.6; Cynthia Cole, Veteran C (Age 60-64) Women 2000m - 8:07.4; Joseph Johnson, Junior (Age 17) Men 2000m - 5:58.0; and Robert Sposta, Veteran D (age 65-60) Men 2000m - 6:57.7.

For complete results, visit www.ergsprints.com.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

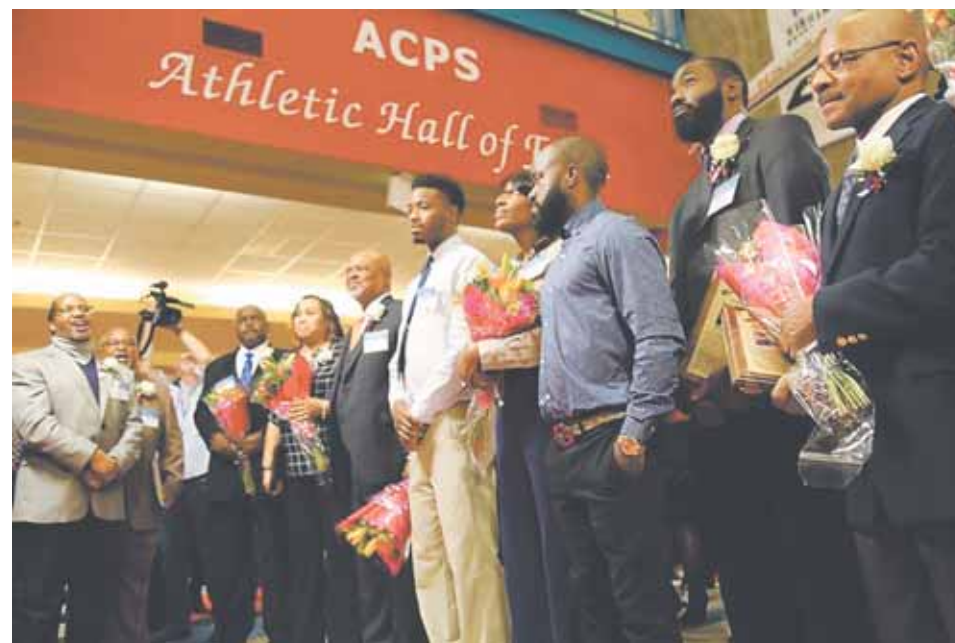
TC Inducts Five into Its Athletic Hall of Fame

Alexandria City Public Schools inducted five outstanding athletes into the Athletic Hall of Fame on Friday, Feb. 10, including a star player in the 1971 State Championship football team memorialized in the movie “Remember the Titans” and a student from the all-black Parker-Gray High School who went on to coach football for the Olympics.

The Hall of Fame, now in its third year, also honored a highly successful track coach and former athletic director of T.C. Williams High School in a ceremony with saber-bearing JROTC cadets and a trumpet fanfare.

This year’s inductees include Frankie Glascoe, captain of the 1971 State Championship football team. Glascoe still holds the TC record in the triple jump that he set 44 years ago, when he was ranked third in the nation in the triple jump and fourth in the long jump. He currently serves on the board of the 1971 Titans Foundation that provides financial assistance to students at T.C. Williams who may not otherwise be able to afford college.

Also inducted was Walter Oreal Griffin Sr., the only person to be named Washington Post All Metropolitan Basketball Player from the historically all-black Parker-Gray High School. His Parker-Gray High School basketball team won 38 consecutive games and three consecutive state titles between 1955



Five athletes, including 1971 “Remember the Titans” team captain were inducted into Hall of Fame on Friday, Feb. 10.

and 1957 and finished third in the nation in 1957. Griffin Sr. was one of the first black players from a segregated school in the United States to receive a scholarship to a major four-year university for basketball.

Jimmy Lewis was the first African-American Men’s Basketball Coach at Duke University in 1971, first head coach of the

Washington Mystics in the Women’s National Basketball Association and the coach with the highest number of wins for either men’s or women’s basketball at George Mason University. At the national level, Lewis was a member of the coaching staff for four U.S. National Basketball teams that between them won three gold medals and

one silver medal.

Tony Hunt finished his Penn State career with the second highest number of career rushing yards of any Penn State running back and went on to become only the fifth Penn State player ever to rush for 1,000-yards two years in a row and to rush for more than 3,000 career yards. He was named the Most Valuable Player of the 2007 Senior Bowl, after leading all running backs in total yards, named the 2007 Outback Bowl Most Valuable Player in 2007 and was drafted in the third round by the Philadelphia Eagles.

Dawn Ingram was a star of the girls’ basketball team at T.C. Williams and Temple University. She was named to the Second Team All Big 5 Conference, Defensive Player of the Year and Most Valuable Player. Ingram then went on to pursue her Doctorate Degree in physical therapy.

In addition to the five athletes, the Hall of Fame honored Aly Khan Johnson, who, during his 33 year career as a coach and athletic director at T.C. Williams, helped the Cross Country, Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field teams to six consecutive and nine overall State Championships. Johnson earned Coach of the Year honors from several organizations including the Washington Post which honored him a record seven times.

21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE

The Alexandria City School Board dba Alexandria City Public Schools is seeking bids for Roof Replacement at Charles Barrett Elementary School.

Sealed Bids with the notation ITB # 17-02-01, Roof Replacement at Charles Barrett Elementary School will be received in the Central Procurement Office, 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 620, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, on or before 3:00 pm, Friday March 9, 2017. The time of receipt shall be determined by the time clock stamp in the Procurement office. Bids appropriately received will be opened and the names of the firms responding will be read aloud. ITB documents may be obtained at the above Procurement Office or by calling 703-619-8162, or by downloading the ITB from the ACPS website at <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/financial-services/purchasing/>

All questions must be submitted before 3:00 p.m., March 1, 2017. If necessary, an addendum will be issued and posted to the ACPS web site.

A pre-bid conference/site visit will be held on February 22, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at the address listed above.

No ITB may be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the opening of bids except as may be set forth in the ITB.

ACPS reserves the right to cancel this ITB and/or reject any or all bids and to waive any informalities in any bid.

Gerald W. Amacker (Jerry)
Senior Buyer

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

**ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS NUMBER 17-01-04**

The Alexandria City School Board dba Alexandria City Public Schools is seeking responses from qualified Offerors interested in Design Build Services for the New West End Elementary School.

There is a non-mandatory pre-conference being held on February 23, 2017 at 11:00 AM, at the Alexandria City Public Schools Central Office, located at 1340 Braddock Place, in Conference Room 620-1, Alexandria, Virginia 22314.

Sealed Responses with the notation RFQ# 17-01-04 Design/Build West End Elementary, will be received in the Central Procurement Office, 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 620, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, on or before 3:00 pm, March 10, 2017. The time of receipt shall be determined by the time clock stamp in the Procurement office. Responses appropriately received will be opened and the names of the firms responding will be read aloud. RFQ documents may be obtained at the above Procurement Office or by calling 703-619-8343, or by downloading the RFQ from the ACPS website at <http://www.acps.k12.va.us/financial-services/purchasing/> after registration on the Vendor Self Service system.

All questions must be submitted before 4:30 p.m., on February 28, 2017. If necessary, an addendum will be issued and posted to the ACPS web site.

No RFQ may be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days after the opening of proposals except as may be set forth in the RFP.

ACPS reserves the right to cancel this RFQ and/or reject any or all applications and to waive any informalities in any response.

Sharon T. Lewis M.P.S., CPPB, VCO
Director of Procurement & General Services

OBITUARY

Charlene Myers died on January 24, 2017 at her home in

Alexandria, VA. Born February 25, 1927 at the Dukes Memorial Hospital, Peru, IN. Daughter of William Roy Myers and Mary Sullivan Myers. While living an idyllic childhood on the family farm she completed twelve grades at the Jefferson Township School in 1945. This was followed by graduation in 1949 from Butler University. Study continued upon receiving a Kellogg Foundation Scholarship to study and internship in Pathology Chemical Laboratory Medicine at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Lafayette, IN under Dr. James MacFadden, Director of Pathology. In January 1952, she began what was to become an interesting 46-year employment at the Alexandria Hospital in Alexandria, VA. The first 26 years was as Chief Medical Technologist under Laboratory Director Richard E. Palmer, MD. Upon his retirement, she began employment in the Finance Department as a purchasing agent.

Following retirement in 1998, she enjoyed being with old friends, St. Pauls Episcopal Church, concerts and traveled. She was preceded in death by her only sibling, William Henry (Bill) Myers in 2009. Survivors are beloved niece and nephew; Anne Elizabeth Myers Neitzke (Robert) her son Robert Maxwell (Max), and daughter Lola Elizabeth of Indianapolis, IN. John William Myers, daughter Elise Jaleh and Libby Marie of Dayton, OH.

Decedent requested no funeral service. Interment in the El River Chapel Cemetery, Peru, IN will be the final resting place.

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

Obituary

Robert (Bobby) J. Bixler, III, 66, died unexpectedly Tuesday February 7, 2017 in Alexandria, VA. Bobby was born January 5, 1951 at Fort Belvoir, VA. He lived his entire life in the Mount Vernon area. He graduated from Mount Vernon High School in 1970 and started his career working as the head bartender at the NCO and Officers Clubs at Fort Belvoir. He retired in

2014 from the Army and Airforce Exchange Service as a lead warehouse worker at Fort Belvoir after 44 years of service. Bobby enjoyed all sports especially the Washington Redskins and the Nationals. He played softball and golf until his knees made the game not fun anymore. He enjoyed going to a local bar and grill to play darts and pool and have a few drinks with his friends. Bobby was preceded in death by his parents Robert and Margarethe Bixler. Bobby never married and is survived by four siblings: Elizabeth Bornman (Louis) of Shawnee, KS, Margarethe Fuller (Terry) of Alexandria, VA, James P. Bixler and Samuel Bixler of Tonganoxie, KS; one nephew, Michael Fuller of Tampa, FL, and two nieces, Christine Wolfe of Overland Park, KS, and Kristy Collins of Pasadena, MD. Bobby was cremated and will be buried at a later date with family and friends at Mount Comfort Cemetery in Alexandria.

21 Announcements 21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE

Storage Line of Virginia, LLC (t/a APT Storage), Box 767, Haymarket, VA 20168, pursuant to the assertion of a lien for rental of a storage unit, will hold a public auction for the sale of all goods in storage unit #407B to take place at 11:30 am on Thursday, February 23, 2017, at storage unit #407B located at Sacramento Square, 5401 Claymont Dr, Alexandria, VA 22309, to satisfy the lien. All terms of the sale are cash. Call 800-217-4280 for questions.

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OBITUARY



Jean (Anderson) Raabe, 85, died peacefully at home on January 30, 2017 in Alexandria, VA, with her husband Mark and sister Alice at her side. Jean was successfully treated for lung cancer for more than eight years and died of complications which included rapidly progressing dementia. She had in-home hospice care for two weeks but she cheerfully attended a worship service in her downtown church and a string quartet concert at NIH the week before she died.

Jean was born in Aberdeen, South Dakota in 1931, the oldest of four children of Dewar and Elizabeth (Davies) Anderson. Her family moved to Truman, Minnesota, and later to Madelia, Minnesota, where she was Salutatorian of the class of 1949 and the Homecoming Queen. She obtained her teaching degree from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota. Jean taught Home Economics for three years in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota before marrying Mark Raabe in 1956. They began their more than 60-year marriage in San Diego, where Mark was stationed on a Navy ship and where she continued her teaching career.

In 1958, the couple moved to Alexandria, Virginia. Jean immediately began taking teaching assignments until she started full-time at Wakefield High School in Arlington where she taught Home Economics for more than 25 years. Jean loved teaching and her students gave every indication of loving her. She led innovative programs in foods and child development classes, that combined her passions for cooking, nutrition, and the teaching and care of children. It was a time when boys began taking Home Ec. In 1967, a Washington Post reporter visited her classroom with an even mix of girls and boys and described Jean as "a tiny woman with a wide smile and an uncanny knack of keeping her teenage charges interested and enthusiastic." A year later, another newspaper account quoted Jean saying, "Boys add a lot to a foods class, and I don't just mean their appetites.... they're interested and enjoy it so. They're more willing to experiment with a recipe and try new things. They'll give you an argument to defend something they've done." After retiring, she volunteered weekly, teaching teenage mothers how to cook in the Alternatives for Parenting Teens Program. Jean was active in her professional groups, the Northern Region of the Virginia Association Family and Consumer Sciences, and the Potomac Home Economists. She was also a member of the Arlington Retired Teachers Association.

After Jean retired, she and Mark purchased a 100-year-old cabin, with a guest cabin, on Woman Lake in northern Minnesota. For the past twenty-five years, they have welcomed many friends and family, especially all their beloved great nieces and nephews, and they have hosted many special family gatherings there. Jean learned how to fish, and she enjoyed catching more and larger walleyes than her husband during their special evening times together on the lake with glorious sunsets.

Jean and Mark traveled extensively with many of their trips focusing on nature, wildlife and birds. In 1973, when bluebird populations were down by 90%, and declining, Jean spotted the couple's first bluebird near Antietam National Battlefield where they had a weekend cabin. This led them to becoming charter members of The North American Bluebird Society, the establishment and monitoring of a 100 nest box trail on the Battlefield, and the fledging of more than 10,000 Eastern Bluebirds over 37 years.

Jean was an early volunteer and passionate supporter of The Children's Inn at NIH, a nonprofit residence for families and their children who are participating in pediatric research at the NIH. She also served for many years on the Board of and volunteered at Community Family Life Services, a nonprofit providing a network of social services for low income and homeless families.

Jean was a faithful longtime member of First Trinity Lutheran Church in downtown Washington, DC, served as an Elder, and participated in many service activities of the congregation.

Jean loved beautiful music, and she and Mark were regulars at concerts of the National Symphony Orchestra and the Manchester String Quartet. She also loved flowers, growing them along with vegetables in her Antietam garden.

Jean will be remembered for many good things, but above all, for her abundant kindness and her generosity towards anyone in need. She was considerate of every person in her life and earned the admiration of those who met her. She held keen insights and strong morals, which she was undaunted in sharing, but she never judged others who believed differently. She was a gracious and generous host, creating environments of comfort, beauty, fine food, and delightful conversation. When Jean told a story, she would captivate the entire room. She was attentive and devoted to her family, making every child and adult feel honored and adored.

Jean is survived by her loving husband of more than 60 years, Mark Raabe, with whom she shared her life completely. She is also survived by her brother Steven (Patricia) Anderson; sisters Alice (Bob) Morrice and Margaret (Dick) Jacobs; brother-in-law Bob Raabe; sister-in-law Rita (Larry) Williams; 17 nieces and nephews; and 26 "greats" (great-nieces and nephews).

A memorial service is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 25, at First Trinity Lutheran Church, 309 E St., NW, Washington, DC.

A second memorial service will be held on June 3rd in Minnesota at their lake cabin on Woman Lake.

All are welcome to attend and celebrate Jean's life. In lieu of flowers, please send donations to The Children's Inn at NIH, 7 West Drive, Bethesda, MD 20814 (designate the Jean and Mark Raabe Education Endowment Fund), or online at www.childrensinn.org/donate; or to CFLS, 305 E St., NW, Washington, DC 20001 or online at www.cflsdc.org/donate.

21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements 21 Announcements

LEGAL NOTICE

Pursuant to the provision of section 4-1-16 of the code of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Police Department located at 3600 Wheeler Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22304 is now in possession of unclaimed bicycles, mopeds, lawn equipment, money, scooters, and other items. All persons having valid claim to the property should file a claim to the property with reasonable proof of ownership or the items will be sold, destroyed, converted or donated. For a complete listing go to <http://alexandriava.gov/police/> and contact the Police Property Section at (703) 746-6709.

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COURTESY OF MIRIAM B. RIEDMILLER, ESQ.

At the "Know Your Rights" Immigration Forum hosted by Ghana Catholic Community of Queen of Apostle's Church in Alexandria are (from left) Ave Bustamante, guest/mother of speaker; the Rev. Fr. Anthony Appiah, of St. Anthony's Church, Falls Church, pastor's representative to the Ghanaian Community; Kwabena Twumasi, secretary of the Ghana Catholic Community; immigration attorney Miriam B. Riedmiller, speaker; and Julius Ceasar, president of the Ghana Catholic Community.

Feeling ICE's Chill

FROM PAGE 1
 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) about four years ago. "It's given me opportunities to work, study and help my family," she said. "I can get in-state tuition. I prove my domicile." Jennifer plans to graduate from NOVA in the spring and then pursue studies at George Mason University.

Despite this, Jennifer feels her family's future is uncertain, including the future of her 5-year-old brother, a U.S. citizen.

The environment is "shocking for our community," said Evelin Urrutia, executive director of Tenants and Workers United, who believes there are as many as 25,000 Latinos in Alexandria.

Urrutia is mobilizing the community, holding meetings in Alexandria, Arlington, Woodbridge and Fairfax County, to prepare and support one another. She wants businesses and churches on board, as well as widespread help to offer safe zones, free legal support and "Know Your Rights" seminars.

Such seminars offer "peace of mind" and "hope," said Miriam B. Riedmiller, an immigration attorney with offices in Washington, D.C. and Alexandria. Riedmiller re-



PHOTO BY RIKKI GEORGE/GAZETTE PACKET

Evelin Urrutia, executive director of Tenants and Workers United, is committed to empowering low-income people and creating positive change in society.

cently conducted an immigration forum, requested by the Ghana Catholic Community of Queen of Apostles Church in Alexandria, for more than 200 attendees following Mass. There, she encouraged people to seek U.S. citizenship and other pathways to legal immigration. Reidmiller has also presented free immigration table talks as part of the Campagna Center's New Neighbors English Learner and Family Literacy program.

The New Neighbors' 183 students from 28 countries receive English instruction held at Historic Christ Church's Fowler House and have access to child care and other resources, like

Reidmiller, that foster self-sufficiency and full participation and integration into community life.

"Our students are aware of the uncertain times," said Marcia D'Arcangelo, director of New Neighbors ELL. To reassure them, according to D'Arcangelo, the Rev. Noelle York-Simmons of Christ Church has recently spoken to every ELL class to express "this is a safe place."

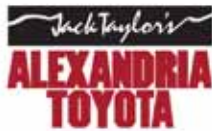
For Silberberg's Statement on Inclusiveness, go to www.allisonsilberberg.com or the city's website: www.alexandriava.gov.

2

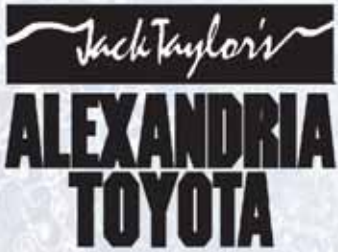
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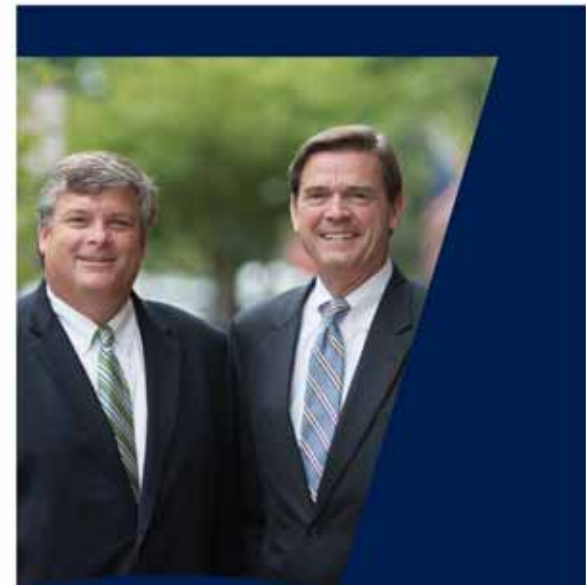
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