Easing Aging

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

By 2020, the Virginia Employment Commission Population Projections indicates there will be 28,564 seniors (over 60) living in Alexandria. A lot of them are going to need assistance. Fortunately, throughout Alexandria, several groups and individuals are working to make the city more livable for them. For their contributions to the city’s elderly population, on May 9 in City Hall, the Commission on Aging awarded six individuals special honors.

From left: Mayor Allison Silberberg with 2017 Excellence in Aging Awards recipients Carol Siegel, Arthur Thomas, Katherine Dixon, executive director of Rebuilding Together Alexandria, Debbie Ludington, and Mary Lee Anderson.

2017 Excellence in Aging Awards

Murray Nominated to UN Post

Former congressional candidate to serve in Trump administration.

Journalist and political-military commentator J. Patrick Murray has been nominated by President Donald Trump to serve as an alternate representative to the United Nations by President Donald Trump.

Alexandria resident J. Patrick Murray has been nominated to serve as an alternate representative to the United Nations by President Donald Trump.

The White House released a statement May 8 announcing that the Alexandria resident has been nominated by President Donald Trump to an administrative post at the United Nations. Murray, who challenged former U.S. Rep. Jim Moran in 2010 and 2012, is a published author and political-military commentator and served on the board of directors for the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

— Jeanne Theismann

Under Pressure

6-1 budget vote highlights tensions on City Council.

By Vernon Miles
Gazette Packet

The budget process is over for the year, but the tense and often bitter disagreements on the dais have revealed some deep cracks in the city’s leadership.

In a 6-1 vote on May 4, the City Council approved the FY 2018 budget. The vote pushed Alexandria’s tax rate up 5.7 cents, from $1.073 to $1.13 per $100 of assessed value. The original budget proposed by City Manager Mark Jinks included a 2.7 cent increase to fund the rising cost of Metro and schools, but during the add/delete process the budget grew by 3 cents primarily to fund Alexandria Public Schools projects and affordable housing projects.

With the increased sewage fees, the total cost tax increase for local residents will be closer to 4.9 cents. For the majority on the council, the new tax rate increase is essential to fund long-delayed infrastructure needs. But the final weeks of the budget process were mainly defined by a standoff between the council and Mayor Allison Silberberg, who said the tax rate increase was too much to put onto local citizens.

Silberberg proposed deferring/cutting three projects from the budget that didn’t have an immediate need to keep the tax rate at the city manager’s original proposal. The exact terminology of whether these were cuts or deferrals largely depended on who was being asked. Silberberg said the projects would be cut from the FY 2018 budget, but Vice Mayor Justin Wilson argued that pushing those projects into FY 2019 would only delay the tax rate increase and potentially increase the cost of those projects.

Silberberg also argued that the original proposed budget had already included ample funding for schools and affordable housing, but the other members of the council said they believed the need to invest in city infrastructure justified the increase.

The battle over the budget is just the latest front in a long running conflict that has emerged between Silberberg and Wilson. Since the very first item Silberberg proposed, an ethics commission in January of 2016, Silberberg faced pushback from the other members of council. One of the main voices of opposition was Wilson, who said he found the proposed commission redundant. Eventually the commission passed at a City Council meeting in May 2016, but with significant revisions from the other council members objected to by Silberberg.

See Council, Page 23
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Finding Security in a New Country

Couple adjusts as refugees from Afghanistan.

By Shirley Ruhe
Gazette Packet

Sughra Bakhtiari pours the hot water for tea and sets out a colorfully arranged platter of dried fruits and nuts. “I already arranged it,” she says to her guest. “I didn’t want to waste your time. I know Americans are always in a hurry.”

At seven months pregnant, Sughra and her husband Mohammad Zia Amiri boarded a plane from Kabul for the 17-hour flight to America with their 1-year-old son Yoshay. They had packed only their clothes. No one on their block knew they were leaving. “They also got us furniture and some kitchen appliances.”

She says Mohammad had a temporary job at Macy’s and has been working as a Lyft driver. “But to pay the rent — it’s tough. He is only able to pay the rent and nothing else no matter how hard he works.” Sughra adds that Mohammad had a number of interviews but when they asked him on the airport. They had found the family a place to live and they paid the rent for four months. “They also got us furniture and some kitchen appliances.”

Sughra says she applied for some jobs here and “the same thing happened to me.” They decided if she gets a better job than he does, he will stay home and take care of the kids or if he gets a better job, she will stay home. “He is a good husband. People like him; there aren’t many like him in Afghanistan.” Mohammed is at an interview this afternoon hoping to get a job similar to the one he had in Afghanistan as a finance manager.

She says that when she had finished a certain phase her mother told her now it was time to stay at home and learn housekeeping. “But I ignored her and continued to go to school. I had my dad’s support. Then later she was always finding a boyfriend for me; she would point out their qualities.” Sughra says she didn’t get married until later but in Afghanistan in the rural areas some girls are married at 13 or 14.

Sughra and Mohammad left Afghanistan because they both worked for the U.S. forces. “We had to hide our job. We never told our relatives because the Taliban target you. They thought if you were working for the Americans you were not helping Afghanistan; you were ruining the country.”

Sughra says it is better in America but it can be lonely here. “In Afghanistan there are big families and all of our relatives are with us. We meet in each other’s houses. Here there are small families, and we came ourselves, not with our siblings.” She adds, “I worry about them. I wish I could do some-thing for them. Day by day it is getting worse there after 2014. There are more Taliban.”

Sughra explains that America assistance to her country in the form of some projects has improved areas like roads, protection walls for rivers and that USAID is helping the people. “It was really skillful for them. Women were working. And since America invested now there are a lot of engineers and doctors; we didn’t have any gynecologists and engineers.

“But I am feeling secure in America. After 7 or 8 at night in Afghanistan women don’t walk on the roads.” And she says she has to walk with a man. “It is more harder for women. And you can’t travel from state to state or you are a bad woman.”

Sughra says she stills cooks Afghan food like the specialty dish “aash” with noodles, kidney beans, spinach and yogurt. Except pizza. “I made it at home with vegetables and chicken.”

Yoshay has been enrolled in preschool at William Ramsay Elementary just across the street. She says Yoshay is on the waiting list. In the meantime Sughra has downloaded programs and is teaching him rhymes, colors and numbers.

She explains in Afghanistan the Taliban don’t like people who get education. “Girls cannot go to schools.” Sughra got her education because her father was a refugee to Pakistan at the time of the war and she was educated there. Now she hopes to start college when one year of residence in Virginia has been completed. “I want to have a job like I had in Afghanistan as a staff compliance officer.” She points to her daughter Asne, who is bouncing in a baby seat. “It is even better in America where she will be able to go to school.”

She says the culture in America is different and they are facing a few problems. But after five years she feels “we will make our- selves competent from education and will succeed here.

This is the third article in a series focusing on refugees.

Hotel
Indigo
Opens

Official grand opening set for summer.

Seven years after it was first proposed, and after a long tug of war with local residents over every part of the building design, Hotel Indigo has finally opened. At an open house on May 7, the hotel opened its doors to the neighborhood.

The hotel is open for business, though some work is still being done in different parts of the building. President of Carr Hospitality Austin Flajser said the hotel will have its official grand opening this summer.

Reaction from the local residents was mixed. “It’s a bad idea,” said Don Santarelli, a 50-year resident of Old Town. Santarelli said he was most concerned about the impact hotel operations would have on the local streets. “The size is bulky. And I’m all for development as long as it doesn’t include parking at the site. It looks better than I thought,” said Hal Hardaway, who had been one of the residents speaking out with concerns about the new hotel. “It’s not a boutique hotel, but I think it looks better than I thought that it would. People in this neighborhood are all over the spectrum [on how they feel about the new hotel operations would have on the local streets].”

“I think it’s a lovely addition to the area,” said Susan Polland. “I have friends come to visit my place and they want somewhere local to stay. I think this hotel works nice for the area. I think it blends in pretty well with the surrounding neighborhood.”

Looking back at the process, Flajser recognized there were some difficulties, but “once we got things going, it went smoothly. Things went well. We couldn’t be more proud of the hotel.”
People

Spirit of America

An immigrant’s story.

Eby Jean Baptiste Aka is an Alexandrian and an African immigrant. He brims with faith and passion to serve the community he now calls home and to build bridges across the Atlantic. He says this “spirit of service” is the “spirit of America.”

Aka came to the U.S. in 2000 as an educator from Côte d’Ivoire in West Africa. Having taught in Ivory Coast at a Christian school filled with expats, missionaries and diplomats, he wanted to take his multicultural experience abroad. He has taught various grade levels in Minnesota, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. In 2002, he decided to stay. Now 46, he has called Alexandria home for 13 years. He and his wife, both immigrant citizens, have two young children.

Aka’s commitment to youth stems from his own experience growing up in the hardship of a small Ivory Coast village, and in particular from his mother. “Mom told me early to live useful, to make sure…[to] touch…other people’s lives” he said. He learned from her example. “She [would] be taking care of people’s children. She [would] be sharing food. She [would] be involved in resolving conflict. … She was everywhere.” When Aka was a teenager, his father left. Aka stayed in school to support his mother, who suffered from an eye sickness that ultimately blinded her. He has been taking care of her ever since, now by sending money.

Aka is a man of strong faith. “I have served a lot. I have been sharing the gospel [with] young people. I have … a strong bond with Eby Jean Baptiste Aka

See Spirit, Page 25
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Step back in time and experience some of the amazing stories that helped form our nation and our region. Visit novaparks.com today and plan your next time travel.
Susan D. Dawson of Alexandria, with brother Tom Dawson of Winston-Salem, N.C., and Mom Dorothy Dawson on Easter, 1948.

Sharon Thompson, Alexandria resident for 40-plus years, and her first grandchild, my son, Duke Jeffry. The photo was taken in October, when Duke was approximately six months old. My best friend, who also happens to be a photographer, was here visiting from Chicago and took the photo. It is one of my favorites. My mom proudly gazing at Duke ... they are the best of friends. — Julia Byrnes

Amy and Ford Ward playing kickball with little Summer at left.

Silvia Mendez with son Harold, daughter Belky and niece Jiana (top) relaxing after dinner and watching a movie at home.

Sharon Thompson, Alexandria resident for 40-plus years, and her first grandchild, my son, Duke Jeffry. The photo was taken in October, when Duke was approximately six months old. My best friend, who also happens to be a photographer, was here visiting from Chicago and took the photo. It is one of my favorites. My mom proudly gazing at Duke ... they are the best of friends. — Julia Byrnes

Evan Hulehan and his mom, Dr. Jennifer Sade, taken at the river house on Northern Neck in June 2003. Rest in peace, Jenny. — Wayne Hulehan

Sophie Hattery with her mom, Maude Lee, enjoying frozen treats near our house on May 30, 2015. — Brian Hattery

Bilquess Giwa teaching son Messiahs to ride his bike.

Four generations: Maggie Harris, Pat Broyles, Mae Collins and Mary Cay Harris.

Three generations of festive ladies: Allison Priebie, Cynthia McClain Brooks (both of Alexandria) and Florence Priebie of Springfield, celebrate each and every day with the mantra — life is a party — dress like it!

Me & My Mom

— Julia Byrnes

— Wayne Hulehan

— Brian Hattery
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Me & My Mom

‘A Heavenly Mother’s Day Poem … For My Mother’

May 4, 2016 was one year ago
As if it was yesterday
And yesterday has been many days
That I’ve not forgotten you are my mother …
I think of you often
And that’s a lot I must say
And offers little smiles of yours
At times I can see...
I think of you,
Music I play I hope for you to hear
For sure I know like a lamp in the sky
that you see
In time we be ...
But for now I am here and you are there
in Heaven
An angel of beauty, you are still my mother,
I miss the little notes you would send
Of few lines of just a “Hi” and ask for me
to call,
Get in touch and now no phone is needed
’Cause you can see
Like a star in the sky bright as a lamp ...
I love you Mom
Your daughter

Geri Baldwin
Alexandria

W hile in office, I only felt compelled to write with purpose. Since ending in 2012, I’ve worked to reclaim and enjoy a private, non-political life. I’ve been silent but feel moved to write from an unguarded perspective on motherhood today … my own. I celebrate the most incredible woman I know, Alice Hughes, and others who have impacted life remarkably. But ironically, I simultaneously join so many silent women who desire motherhood, yet mourn being childless in the land of the living.

As I reflect on what is in Heaven that I must die to see, in openness, and with profound vulnerability I admit that being childless hurts every year this time. Sometime ago, I read some great advice: don’t ask women why they don’t have children, because you don’t know their story … and we all have one. I agree, because so many of us hurt and the question adds to the pain. No one sympathizes with the plight of those who have carried and lost or not been privileged to carry at all. What’s worse, we live in a culture oblivious to the need to understand. I ask we all be mindful amidst celebration that many among us have an invisible struggle and profound sadness. I raise my hand as part of that chorus while still celebrating the mom who fascinates me every day.

She’s my greatest, but was diagnosed with lung cancer recently. We learned that due to medical oversight, she’s had it for six years. I live for family so my world has stopped for mom. Given God’s grace we are witnessing a miracle. Even minus half a lung and with massive surgery, she’s still here, encouraging all of us and epitomizing grace and strength amidst incomprehensible pain.

As I reflect on my life, I’m saddened by many things I’ve endured publicly. I’ve hurt a lot. In a manner apparent and painful to my family, I don’t have the privilege of private shortcomings or mistakes, even outside a public life. Witnessing my mother love, fight through and endure overwhelming pain given a desire to see her grandchildren grow up and be resilient through unfair circumstance is nothing less than inspiring, to me and all she encounters. I find myself overcome with joy even amidst sadness because she exists to love and has been an exemplar of how we are all called to love others, even when they bring us pain.

Regardless of your own circumstance, as Mother’s Day approaches, I hope you’ll join me in being grateful for the moms we’ve been blessed with while simultaneously praying peace for those who are sad given unrealized heart’s desires. We aren’t called to do much, but we are expected to walk in love with one another.

Alicia Hughes
Former Alexandria City Councillor

To Moms and Motherhood … Whatever It Looks Like for You

The layers of clouds are like an angel watching over me.
— Geri Baldwin

Marie Sharpes of Alexandria with mom Fumiko Skovran enjoying their time together in September 2015.
— Suzy Martin

Former Alexandria City Councillor Alicia Hughes and Mom Alice Hughes.

Former Alexandria City Councilwoman Alicia Hughes and Mom Alice Hughes.
Honoring Those Serving Seniors

Two members of city staff won the Public Service Award, recognizing a city employee who contributed to making Alexandria more livable for all ages.

Arthur Thomas was honored for his over 30 years of service to the city’s Office of Housing. The Home Rehabilitation Loan Program helps lower income homeowners rehabilitate their homes with accessibility improvements and basic maintenance. For 10 years, Thomas managed the office and coordinated with architects and contractors to do work on the homes.

Debbie Ludington was honored for her 30 years of service in the city’s Division of Aging and Adult Services. She co-directed the adult day services for years before becoming the long term care coordinator. Ludington oversees the agency’s contracts with private organizations for work with senior centers, home delivered meals, homemaker and personal services, and legal assistance.

The commission also recognized Rebuilding Together Alexandria with an Excellence in Aging Award. Rebuilding Together Alexandria is part of a national network of organizations that rehabilitate homes for lower income homeowners, many of them elderly. Last year, Rebuilding Together worked on 115 homes and helped 200 Alexandria residents of an average age of 71 years. On April 29, the organization participated in National Rebuilding Day, sending more than 1,000 volunteers to homes across the city to help work on repairs and home maintenance.

The Lois Van Valkenburgh Excellence in Aging Award, an award given to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to elevating the quality of life for elderly residents, was awarded to Mary Lee Anderson, executive director of Senior Services of Alexandria. As executive director, Anderson expanded the meals on wheels and friendly visitor programs, helping to provide meals on weekends and holidays in addition to the regular weekday meals of other programs. Anderson also established the Groceries to Go program and a monthly Speaker Series that brings free educational programs to older Alexandrians.

The Annie B. Rose Award recognizes lifetime achievements in public service. This year, the awards were given to William “Bill” Clayton and Carol Siegel. Clayton was recognized for his volunteer work with At Home in Alexandria (AHA), ranging from editing the monthly newsletter to helping with home repairs and snow shoveling. Siegel was recognized for her 17 years of service providing art instruction and therapy at the city’s Adult Day Care Services Center, where she instructs participants twice a month to use art to help express themselves.

Debating Gun Control

Agenda: Alexandria program scheduled for May 22.

T.C. Williams High School Varsity Debate team co-captains Jay Falk, right, and Victoria Peace, second from left, will be featured in the May 22 Agenda: Alexandria discussion on gun control.

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The Annie B. Rose Award recognizes lifetime achievements in public service. This year, the awards were given to William “Bill” Clayton and Carol Siegel. Clayton was recognized for his volunteer work with At Home in Alexandria (AHA), ranging from editing the monthly newsletter to helping with home repairs and snow shoveling. Siegel was recognized for her 17 years of service providing art instruction and therapy at the city’s Adult Day Care Services Center, where she instructs participants twice a month to use art to help express themselves.
O P I N I O N

Accountable Citizenship

By Dan Brendel

A s a freelance reporter with the Gazette Packet, I’ve been covering this year’s city budget process. Someone asked recently why I have taken such an interest in such a phenomenally boring subject. I’ve thought of three good, interrelated reasons — at least in hindsight. These also reflect areas of significant and ongoing awakening for me personally, as a citizen.

First is the increasing role of Christianity in my life and how I understand the importance of religion’s moral voice in human society. I used to think that politics is inherently corrupt because it involves exercising power over other people. Best to steer clear of it. Jesus meek and mild. But I’ve come to see the imprudence of that view. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote: “One of the greatest problems of history is that the concepts of love and power are usually contrasted as polar opposites. Love is identified with a resignation of power and power with a denial of love. … What is needed is a realization that power without love is reckless and abusive, and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best and love implementing the demands of justice … Love at its best is justice concretized.”

The budget is pretty boring, no two ways about it. But, along with planning and zoning, the public schools, and elections, it’s among the most powerful instruments in this city. And precisely for that reason, the Christian church — and I personally — must seek to embody the transformative love of the gospel in it. So I’ve taken an interest, not because it’s interesting per se, but because it’s vital.

The point about what is “interesting” segues to my second reason: I worry about our cultural commitment to the hard work of authentically human community. I’m less and less concerned about a Twitter-shaped president than I am about a Twitter-shaped public. We’re not entitled to have our interest captured in 140 characters. We’re not entitled to pare down complex social issues into easily digestible snippets. Such entitlement leads to, and reveals itself in, a cheap politics of trendy sound bytes and bumper stickers.

Take racial discrimination and disparity, for example. Richard Spencer leases space on King Street and Alexandrians go nuts. Not that anyone should like it. Yet our fair town has homegrown race-biased structures, too, which are far more pernicious because they’re harder to comprehend and point at: Such as a feeble posture toward affordable housing and a lucrative real estate-industrial complex. These interlocking structures drive the intergenerational arc of gentrification, and therefore of systemic racial bias in our own city, much more than one extremist ideological flitting through the media spotlight. And in certain ways perhaps even more than one president passing through the Oval Office — or a least independently from him.

Consider the Braddock Metro Neighborhood in Old Town, where I moved last year. This area used to be among the city’s largest and most vibrant black communities. But it’s become steadily richer and whiter, largely thanks to ongoing redevelopment. Slated projects include overwhelming several public housing developments, resulting in the displacement of residents and a reduction of public housing units; new retail districts; and moving the land adjacent to the Metro station with rider-sharing (i.e., not low-income) offices, mixed residential-retail, and/or a hotel. These measures seem a lot more likely to bolster a posh, upper-middle class enclave than to constrain skyrocketing property values and the See Accountable. Page 17

Keep the Future in Mind

To the Editor:

As the City Council has struggled with issues of budgeting and taxation and spending in recent weeks, I have tried to think about the issues in broader terms than those on the table. For the past couple of years, the City of Alexandria has been at a crossroads, trying to figure out which way to go. Should it stick with the values and practices of the past, as it tries to deal with current pressures for change? Or should it plan for the future and set goals to work toward, even though those goals may be hard to reach? Which way to go: the comfortable embrace of the status quo, with an occasional minor adjustment? Or the less comfortable job of grappling with the demands of a future whose challenges are cause for anxiety?

During the current budget season we’ve seen this struggle play out in many ways. Public funds to stem the tide of raw sewage and build yet another Metro station have captured most of the headlines; the first issue as a continuing threat to public health, the second as a support for further development. Also on the agenda has been the level of support for the Alexandria City Public School System. In an odd sort of way, these disparate issues reflect a similar problem: Alexandria’s inability over decades of urban expansion to put the city in gear, drive through those crossroads, and move toward the future.

The issue that concerns me the most is that of support for public schools. For reasons and pressures of the past and present, school buildings in Alexandria have been allowed to deteriorate. Herculean efforts were required to replace T.C. Williams High School a decade ago and, more recently, the crumbling disgrace that was Jefferson-Houston Elementary School.

Both efforts were essential, and the results of new construction brought a boost to civic pride and student achievement. But those efforts still generate controversy in the city’s meeting rooms, as some quietly question whether the schools cost too much, or should have been built at all. Similar doubts have been openly expressed about the nature and size of the ACPS 10-year Capital Improvement Program, designed to address the deterioration of city schools.

See Letters. Page 12

Heading to World Finals

A team of fifth graders from Douglas MacArthur Elementary School and a team of seventh graders from George Washington Middle School will compete in the World Finals of the Odyssey of the Mind competition at Michigan State, May 24–27. There were approximately 825 teams from more than 20 countries competing this year. The following two teams included some siblings. MacArthur Team: Henry Anderson, Keira Bosland, Tate Fagan, Miriam Gortner, Walker Kopp, and Anna Moulthrop. G.W. Team: Savannah Anderson, Cooper Bosland, Zach Bosland, Cassie Gortner, Ethan Gotsch, Ava Moulthrop, and Cade Stinson.
Hallowing Point River Estates
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307 W Glendale Ave, Alexandria VA STUNNING & CLASSIC Tudor abounds w/ character & convenience near Old Town & 2 metros, 3 bd/3.5 ba, gourmet kitchen, lg formal/casual rms, heated garage, band room, ptm pt au pair suite, & more! 1,795,000 The York Group (703) 926-0749 http://bit.ly/2i0d1bX

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Open House Sunday 1-4pm • Old Town
122 Cameron Mews, Alexandria VA This beautiful brick federal features hardwoods throughout, with chair rails and moldings. Lovely secluded patio off English basement and kitchen. $1,125,000 Ellis Duncan (703) 307-4295 http://bit.ly/2iaJpP3

Lacey Boulevard

Laceysville

Open House, Sunday 1-4pm • Midtown Alexandria Station
2611 Midtown Avenue #1503, Alexandria VA Amazing unit for sale! Unbeatable Penthouse! 1305 sq ft, freshly painted, crown molding, new windows, french doors are some of the charming appeal of this Old Town home. Local to metro, shops, restaurants, grocery stores, 2 lights to DC. 960,000 Bonnie Rivkin (703) 598-7798 http://bit.ly/2iu0twm

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5709 River Drive, Alexandria VA Beautiful 3 bedroom with 2.5 baths. Newly painted, crown molding, 2 car garage, 3rd level rec room, & plenty of storage. 1,325,000 Michelle Zelmas (703) 926-0749 http://bit.ly/2i0d1bX

Alexandria
310 King St. | Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.518.8300
Proud to support Carpenters Shelter with donations worth nearly 2000 lbs. of food!
Justification for every part of the CIP and for all of the funding that’s required for ACPS, can be found on the school system’s website. On a larger scale, I believe the city owes its children — every single one of them — the best education it can provide. It also owes that same result to us — Alexandria’s citizens, present and future — as students graduate and move into society.

Think of it as an investment: graduates of our schools will represent us one day, no matter what they become, or how well they do. Do we want their future achievements to represent the wisdom of a generation that gave them the education and skills to build a future for our community? Or do we want them simply to replace us as drivers of that city, idling at the crossroads? As a generation of voters and taxpayers do we want to be remembered only for making decades-late repairs to open sewers? Or also for investing in our children as future citizens of Alexandria?

I grumble every time I pay taxes, especially when they go up. But I will vote every time for candidates who make sure my taxes are spent with the challenges of the future — and not just the easier comforts of the past — in mind.

John E. Lennon
Alexandria

John Lennon is outgoing president of the T.C. Williams PTSA, and co-chaired the ACPS 2020 Strategic Planning Stakeholders Committee. He and his wife are parents of a T.C. Williams sophomore, and a 2014 TC graduate.

Overwhelming Overbuilding

To the Editor:

On the evening of May 3 the Planning Commission met to consider Docket 14 which included the building of a Hyatt Hotel on the 1600 block of King Street. The proposed new hotel building is six and a half stories tall with 124 rooms and an attached restaurant. A dozen local residents came out and spoke against the hotel. No local resident came out and supported the hotel.

The citizens who spoke expressed concerns with the height and density of the development, inadequate parking provided in the design, the conversion of part of Harvard Street to a two-way street and eliminating several on-street parking spaces on Harvard Street, removing at least six mature trees, destruction of an almost historic building, and removal of at least four no parking signs at the alley entrance to the hotel so that entrance bumps can be built to slow and narrow down traffic entering the alley for the underground parking garage.

The citizens were also concerned about the proximity of the hotel to areas where children play and the amount of traffic that the hotel would produce. Others were concerned about the impact on the serenity and beauty of the street. Many of the citizens have lived on the block for many, many years. They chose the neighborhood for its peacefulness and beauty, so obviously they are extremely concerned. The developers indicated the development would bring vitality to the neighborhood. There is already vitality to the neighborhood with five restaurants and the Durant Center on Cameron Street.

Some residents feel it is insane for the Planning Commission and forthcoming City Council to recommend more and more excessive growth, claiming it is needed for increased tax growth.

The proposed hotel plans on excavating the existing parking lot at the corner of Harvard Street at one level providing 85 parking spaces two of which will be reserved for the management.

No spaces are provided for three or four shifts of employees.

Massive destruction for this hotel will take place within two years. The developers’ proposal to make it a two-way entrance street will cause unheard of traffic congestion.

Water, gas and electric utilities will have to be placed underground causing further destruction.

Town houses on the odd side now 110 years old with half basements and porches could be damaged by pile placement.

What will residents get out of this hotel when it is finally built? Practically nothing accept for the loss of six or more parking spaces on the street and the death of at least six mature, beautiful trees.

Alexandria is overbuilding and destroying old buildings for the tax money, not for the people living in areas where big hotels are being built. Taxpaying citizens need more respect from City Hall instead of continual overbuilding.

Jim Melton
Alexandria

with modest incomes whose biggest investment is in their homes, a 3 cent per hundred add-on has a real impact. Mayor Silberberg understands this and stood strong — a lone voice on council for fiscal restraint.

The beauty of love lives and shines within

Through life and our environment

For Earth Day is everyday.

— Geri Baldwin

Alexandria

Justify Tax and Fees Increase

To the Editor:

I have lived or worked in the City of Alexandria most of my life. I have observed in excess of 50 budget cycles. This budget cycle was by far the most unusual.

A group of long-term City Council members who have been through seven or more budget cycles just discovered that they had approved budgets that did not allow Alexandria to maintain its physical buildings, schools, and sewer system.

The past seven budgets deferred replacement of the failing sewer system (parts of which are 100 years old) and ignored the fact that raw sewage was running into the Potomac River.

The citizens of this city have noticed this and have been asking questions about this for 15 years or more. How can long-serving members of the City Council have not noticed this and allowed it to continue this long?

The city manager presented a very reasonable budget with a 2.7 cent increase in the real estate tax rate. That was a reasonable start to a solving problem caused by low budgeting. The vice mayor proposed a 5.7 cent increase without any intention of compromise.

The council had an “add and delete” meeting in which they supported the 5.7 cent increase with the only proposed deletions being offered by the mayor.

It was apparent that some of the council members came to that meeting with no intention of compromising with the mayor. They demonstrated arrogant thinking. This council cannot fix years of low budgeting with an increase of taxes and fees in one year.

This current budget has set aside millions of dollars in something like a slush fund. The use of which will be determined later. Three hundred thousand dollars is for potential use of consultants to study what the newly created task force will recommend to council. This city has a staff to perform this service.

This nearly 10 cent increase in taxes and fees imposes a hardship on a lot of our long-term low- and moderate-income residents and seniors.

Charles Edwin Simpson, Jr. C.P.A.
Alexandria
Margueritte V. Foisie

Margueritte V. Foisie, a long time Alexandria resident and the wife of former Washington Post assistant managing editor, Philip Foisie, died on May 9, 2017 at age 90. Mrs. Foisie came to the U.S. in 1948 from Shanghai, China. Both her parents had left Russia following that country’s revolution and emigrated to Shanghai, where they met and where Mrs. Foisie was born. Her family moved for a few years to Dairen (now Dalian) and Hankow (now Hankou), but returned to Shanghai, where she attended the Convent of the Sacred Heart school and where they lived through the Japanese occupation. She met her husband briefly at the end of the war after which he returned to the United States to finish college but the couple stayed in touch.

Amongst her many moves she wrote short stories for her family and later developed her writing talents while working in media, research, and newspapers including the Alexandria Gazette in Northern Virginia and military base newspapers such as the Tempelhof Air Base Tabulator during the Cold War. She was in Berlin when the Wall came down in November 1989. Previous to that she was directly involved in facilitating the visit by President Ronald Reagan on June 12, 1987 where he gave his famous speech “chairman, tear down this wall” in West Berlin.

She cared deeply for her community through service to others and volunteering in many ways. She was one to often volunteer on military installations lending support to our service-people and their families.

She also remained an active member of Alexandria Free Methodist Church and the MD1 chapter of Rolling Thunder. One of her last contributions was volunteering for the Alexandria INOVA hospital.

She is survived by her mom, Margit, sister Ingrid, and daughters Isabel and Olivia, niece Anna, and loving pup Max. She was an organ donor. Through her generosity and caring, she will help restore vision to two people.

A memorial service will be held at the Alexandria Free Methodist Church, 4901 Polk Ave, Alexandria, on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 10:30 a.m.

The family is asking donations in lieu of flowers be made to the Vera Casey Memorial Fund of the National Foundation for Cancer Research (NFCR) at https://www.crowdrise.com/vera-casey-memorial-fund

Vera ‘Casey’ Gonzalez

Vera ‘Casey” Gonzalez also known as Vera Moeller, died as a result of complications from liver and lung cancer in Arlington on Saturday, May 6, 2017, surrounded by her daughters and ex-husband. She was 67-years-old.

Vera was born in Ansbach, Germany on Dec. 18, 1949 to Margit Moeller and James Casey. She was a Department of the Army civilian, writer, mother, and community volunteer.

She earned a Cold War certificate and other military civilian accolades.

She made many sacrifices that came with being a military dependent and spouse. Her father James Casey, a sergeant major, U.S. Army, was a WWII veteran. After living in Germany and Turkey when she was young, her family settled in New Jersey, where she attended Oceanport Grammar School and Shore Regional High school, Class of ‘67. She loved horses and worked at Monmouth’s Park Racetrack.

Amongst her many moves she wrote short stories for her family and later developed her writing talents while working in media, research, and newspapers including the Alexandria Gazette in Northern Virginia and military base newspapers such as the Tempelhof Air Base Tabulator during the Cold War. She was in Berlin when the Wall came down in November 1989. Previous to that she was directly involved in facilitating the visit by President Ronald Reagan on June 12, 1987 where he gave his famous speech “chairman, tear down this wall” in West Berlin.

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Pre-register by May 12 for Free T-Shirt* and Bike Raffles!

FREE FOOD, BEVERAGES and GIVEAWAYS at all locations

Visit biketoworkmetrodc.org for pit stop locations & times.
*T-Shirts available at pit stops to first 16,000 who register.
Over 85 pit stops throughout D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!

Celebrate Bike to Work Day in Alexandria!

On Friday, May 19, Alexandria residents will be among the thousands of area commuters who will celebrate Bike to Work Day by cycling to work and participating in special events around the region.

The Market Square pit stop, sponsored by GO Alex, will be open from 6:30 a.m. until 8:30 a.m.

Visit www.biketoworkmetrodc.org and register today to visit Market Square or one of three other Alexandria pit stops on May 19.

- Old Town/Market Square: (301 King St.)
- Carlyle (300 John Carlyle St.)
- Del Ray: (2704 Mount Vernon Ave.)
- Mark Center: (Directly across from 4825 Mark Center Dr.)

Register by May 12 to receive a free t-shirt, water bottle, and be entered into a raffle!
May Is Older Americans Month

“Age Out Loud” at the Senior Health and Fitness Fair.

By MaryAnne Beatty
Senior Services of Alexandria

Since 1963, the Older Americans Month has been a time to celebrate older Americans, their stories and their contributions. This year’s theme, “Age Out Loud,” gives aging a new voice that reflects what today’s older adults have to say. More than ever before, seniors are working longer, trying new things and engaging in their communities. They are taking charge of their health and fitness so they can stay independent and advocate for themselves and other.

Senior Services of Alexandria

Getting older doesn’t mean what it used to. For many aging Americans, it is a phase of life where interests, goals, and dreams can get a new or second start. Today aging is about eliminating outdated perceptions and living the way that suits you best.

Take Barbara Hillary, for example. A nurse for 55 years who dreamed of travel, at age 75 Hillary became the first African American woman to set foot on the North Pole. Former president George H.W. Bush celebrated his 90th birthday by skydiving.

Alexandria’s Successful Aging Committee is using Older Americans Month to focus on how older adults in our community are redefining aging by taking charge of their health at its Annual Senior Health and Fitness Fair on Wednesday, May 24 from 9:30 a.m. – noon at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St. in Alexandria. It will be an informative and interactive event free for all Alexandria seniors. Dr. Basim Khan from Alexandria Neighborhood Health will talk about what all seniors need to know to stay healthy and fit. There will also be healthy cooking and exercise demonstrations including Line Dancing, and “Parkour” — an exercise program that blends creative movement and mindfulness to help with balance. Health screenings will be available for hearing, blood pressure and mental health.

To register for the event, go to Senior Services of Alexandria’s website at seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 110. A light breakfast is served and there is free parking.

Take time to celebrate the older Americans in your community by acknowledging all the contributions they continue to make as valuable members of our society. To learn more about the Older Americans Month go to http://oam.acl.gov.

Democrats: Use Your Words

By Kerry Carter

Old Dominion Boulevard is one of the most beautiful streets in all of Alexandria. Every spring, thousands of dogwoods and azaleas in that neighborhood, known as Beverley Hills (yes, with an “e”) put on a spectacular display of bloom and color. But an even more impressive miracle happens year after year down the boulevard at the venerable Beverley Hills Church Preschool, founded in 1939. There, teachers and parents have worked together for decades to mold toddlers from ages 2 through 5 into creative, happy and thoughtful children ready to take on the challenges of elementary school and the real world. As a parent I found many aspects of BHCP’s child-rearing philosophy useful, but one particular phrase helped enormously, especially in the heat of a full-blown kiddie meltdown: “Use your words.”

Given the present state of our politics and an increasing number of meltdowns emanating from various Democratic leaders, I’d say it’s time to go back to preschool.

First, I’ll acknowledge that every American politician needs to take a refresher in the basics of civil speech. Let’s start with President Trump. We have watched him numerous times make a variety of shockingly profane and sexist statements. We know that lots of past presidents frequently used profanity, but one particular phrase helped enormously, especially in the heat of a full-blown kiddie meltdown: “Use your words.”

I can understand the profanity of former Clinton operatives, who are still agonizing and scratching their heads as to why their candidate lost. Famous personalities like Ashley Judd, Amy Schumer and Stephen Colbert can also get away with lewdness and cursing because, after all, they’re paid to get good ratings. The same cannot be said of the several Democratic leaders and spokesmen (and women) whom we’ve observed helplessly flailing and repeatedly failing the English language. They know better and should hold themselves to a higher standard. They remind me of the loser kid who went home with a poor grade, but one particular phrase helped enormously, especially in the heat of a full-blown kiddie meltdown: “Use your words.”

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One particular phrase helped enormously, especially in the heat of a full-blown kiddie meltdown: “Use your words.”
Walk-In Closet Design Ideas

From chandeliers to luxury seating, the option are plentiful.

By Marilyn Campbell

When an Old Town Alexandria couple decided to remodel their master bedroom suite, they wanted to pay particular attention to the room’s two walk-in closets. Designer Gene Delgado of Hopkins & Porter Construction, Inc., in Potomac, Md. was tasked with overhauling the spaces to give the couple the maximum amount of storage for their clothing and accessories.

“We ordered a storage system from Poliform, an Italian luxury modern furniture brand, that does exquisite closet systems,” said Delgado. “The closet spaces are very modern with lots of built-in lighting. Because of the angled ceilings … we are working with a multi-purpose lighting system that can change the ambiance from very modern with lots of built-in lighting.

The closet spaces are perfect for scarves, handbags, and belts,” she said. “For example, do they mostly hang or do they fold clothes. It’s helpful to see what the client’s closet looks like currently [and] do they fold clothes. It’s helpful to see what the client prefers to use their closets,” she said. “For example, do they mostly hang or do they fold clothes. It’s helpful to see what the client prefers to use their closets.”

A combination of small and large drawers is important for the different items to store, says Walter. For example, small drawers can hold items like jewelry, underwear and socks while larger drawers can hold items like scarves or exercise clothes.

“I like to use the upper most shelves in closets for bulky storage like luggage, hat cases [and] for items that are either not used too much or are seasonal,” said Walter. “Open shelves are great for display of shoes and handbags.”

Invest in a full-length mirror and install it behind the door or on an open space that won’t take away from storage, advises Allie Mann, designer, senior interiors specialist with Case Design/Remodeling, Inc.

“Use every inch of a closet space for storage. There may be small niches that are perfect for scarves, handbags [and] belts,” she said. “Build in shoe shelving if possible. Keeping shoes off the floor gives a more organized look to the space. If you want to keep shoe boxes, be sure to label them with photos of the shoes inside so you don’t have to open every box to find the pair you’re looking for.”

For those with a generous budget, Interior Designer Todd Martz, co-owner of Home on Cameron in Old Town Alexandria advises investing in a lighting system for viewing clothing and distinguishing colors. “Add pullout shelves and rods to organize outfits. [Add] drawers with glass inserts to see contents,” he said. “Group accessories [like] belts and purses by color for easy access.”

Accessories that Walter recommends adding to a walk-in closet include belt hang-ers, tie hangers, jewelry drawers and safes. “If space allows, a center island is a great feature for getting dressed and showcasing certain items,” she said. “Before a night out, [for example] a gown and shoes can be displayed.”

COMMUNITIES OF WORSHIP

Good Shepherd Catholic Church Mass Schedule

Saturday: 5:00 pm Vigil Mass 6:30 pm Vigil Mass (en Español)
Sunday: 7:30 am; 9:00 am (with Sign Language Interpreter and Children’s Liturgy of the Word); 10:30 am; 12:00 Noon; 2:00 pm (en Español); 6:30 pm
8710 Mount Vernon Highway, Alexandria VA, 22309
Tel: 703-780-4055 Fax: 703-360-5385 • www.gs-cc.org

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OPINION

Accountable Citizenship

From Page 10

outflow of minorities. And these measures, underway long ago, have little or nothing directly to do with Trump or Spencer.

So if we really want to serve the cause of racial equity, we need to stop confusing “progressive” sloganeering and hashtag avalanches for a genuine politics of inclusion. Such confusion is a civic sickness that I’ve perceived in several quarters of this city. We need instead to undertake the hard and tedious work of sifting through the city’s budgets and master plans; lobbying for consistent funding for affordable housing; organizing turnout at Planning Commission and Development Special Use Permit hearings, as well as small area advisory group and ARHA Board of Commissioner meetings; etc. We need to cultivate a greater political commitment to the instrumental and efficacious, not the conveniently symbolic and instantly gratifying.

A final reason is my growing conviction about the imperative of jurisdictional politics. It’s said that politics is local — but I think mostly only in the sense of the hyper-local, or what’s in our immediate orbit of self-interest. After that politics seems largely national. We give comparatively short shrift to a great deal of what happens in between. We need to engage politics integral to the city-as-a-whole more vigorously and with wider-angle lenses. It’s the first level at which otherwise narrow interests really connect with the bigger picture of systemic social-political-economic-ecological health, not only of the city, but also of the metropolitan. The seemingly utter one-track-mindedness of many interests I observed during the budget process surprised me. There’s nothing inherently wrong with having interests. Yet at some point this year’s epic deferred maintenance calamities should make us look in the mirror. It’s easy, though only partially valid, to blame past city councils, school boards, etc. But did an effectively organized constituency years ago ever demand speedier sewer overhauls, because flushing millions of gallons of human feces to our neighbors downriver is clearly not OK? Or demand joint city-schools capital planning, because looking ahead together clearly makes more sense than perpetually warring fiefdoms? Or demand regional dedicated funding for WMATA, because identifying sources would clearly improve the conditions for capital planning and borrowing? Evidently not. Democracy being what it is, I suspect we got the budget process this year that our own myopia deserved. Engagement beyond our interests is surely part of the remedy. And that requires dedicated engagement of processes, like the budget, that reach across and beyond the city.
Titanic Success

SFA raises $300k for students in need.

To the chant of “We Are the Titans,” students from the T.C. Williams class of 2017 entered the ballroom of the Mark Center Hilton April 29 for the 31st annual Scholarship Fund of Alexandria Gala.

The event, with more than 460 attendees, raised $300,000 to send students in need to college. Among the recipients was T.C. Williams Student Government President Peter Laboy Jr., son of veteran police officer Peter Laboy Sr., who was wounded in the line of duty in 2013.

“I am very proud of Peter,” said Laboy Sr., who was decked out in the colors of Duke University, where Laboy Jr. will attend school in the fall. “This is an exciting night for us.”

On March 31, SFA executive director Beth Lovain surprised Laboy Jr. with the Loti Dunn Scholarship of $24,000, which will be awarded over four years. In addition to serving as the student government president, Laboy Jr. rows for T.C. Titans Crew and is a member of the National Honor Society.

This year’s Scholarship Fund will send 154 students from the class of 2017 to college. Since its inception in 1986, the Fund has provided more than $13 million in scholarships and sent more than 4,500 Alexandria students in need to college.

For more information, visit www.alexscholarshipfund.org.

— Jeanne Theismann

Edwards to Keynote ASC Gala

High school athletes to be honored May 30.

Former Washington Redskins co-captain and Super Bowl XXVI MVP runner-up Brad Edwards will be the keynote speaker May 30 at the 62nd annual Alexandria Sportsman’s Club Athlete of the Year gala.

Edwards, a second round draft pick and nine-year veteran of the NFL, is currently the assistant vice president and director of athletics at George Mason University.

The ASC dinner will recognize the 2017 outstanding Alexandria high school Athletes of the Year. Additionally, Jon Peterson, chairman of the Executive Committee of The Peterson Companies, will be inducted into the ASC Hall of Fame.

Marching in the Heat

The Climate March in Washington, D.C. on Saturday, April 29 was attended by many holding signs about the need to protect the climate for children and grandchildren. Crowds, estimated to be about 200,000, braved 95 degree heat index temperatures to walk about four miles.

Choral Arts Society Performs at Athenaeum

The Choral Arts Society of Washington performed at the Athenaeum on Sunday, May 7.

Peter Laboy Jr., Student Government president at T.C. Williams High School, is recognized at the Scholarship Fund of Alexandria Gala April 29 at the Mark Center Hilton. Laboy was awarded the $24,000 Loti Dunn Scholarship and will attend Duke University in the fall.

This year’s Scholarship Fund will send 154 students from the class of 2017 to college. Since its inception in 1986, the Fund has provided more than $13 million in scholarships and sent more than 4,500 Alexandria students in need to college.

For more information, visit www.alexscholarshipfund.org.

— Jeanne Theismann
Sweets Reign Supreme at Dolce and Bean

By Hope Nelson

Mount Vernon Avenue just got a whole lot sweeter: Dolce and Bean has come to town. The high-end treat shop brings with it a plethora of options to tempt the sweet tooth, ranging from macaroons to gelato to one of the store’s anchoring goodies, Neuhaus chocolates.

Even before the confectionery’s grand opening last weekend, neighbors had begun to find their way into the shop to join what co-owner Cookie Seifu calls Dolce and Bean’s “Del Ray family circle.” “Del Ray’s a very welcoming community. The residents and the businesses are very kind and very warm so far,” she said.

The storefront was a long time coming — first a lengthy location hunt, then a year and two months of preparing the space. But even before the confectionary’s grand opening through Saturday, 10 a.m. -5 p.m., and Sunday 1-5 p.m. at Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Highway, Mount Vernon. All the President’s Pups Walking Tour, along the way, learn about George Washington’s love for dogs, his dogs’ unusual names, and his efforts to improve the quality of his hunting dogs through breeding. $7. Visit www.mountvernon.org for more.

Dolce and Bean’s pistachio gelato is a perfect sweet treat for any occasion.

“From my personal experience, health is an important aspect, and when you’re dealing with sweets, you’ve got to be careful,” she said. “Our pastries are individual sizes. . . . Our macaroons are about an inch and a half in diameter; there are macarons out there that are 2 to 3 inches.”

The storefront is only a portion of Dolce and Bean’s business. Its catering business is also beginning to take off, Seifu says. From weddings to corporate events, the confectionary has customers covered. “Also, look for more family-friendly daytime events to emerge in the coming months; Seifu envisions child-centric baking classes and other teachable events to keep the community engaged and always learning. And as the store continues to settle in, Dolce and Bean wants to hear from neighbors, no matter the special request. “So far, we’ve been happy; we’ve been asking for feedback, we really want to hear from the community — what they like, what they would like to see, what they don’t like, the good and the bad. Because at the end of the day we’re here to serve the community,” she said.

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

If You Go

Dolce and Bean, 2003 A Mount Vernon Ave.
Current hours: Noon-9 p.m. Monday-Thursdays; 9 a.m.-10 p.m. Fridays-Saturdays; 8 a.m.-8 p.m. Sundays

Personal favorite: “My personal favorite is my pastry. I love the cheesecake caramel, the carrot cake . . . I would love for someone to come and tell me they didn’t like the carrot cake,” said co-owner Cookie Seifu.
**ENTERTAINMENT**

Sundays, noon-5 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 West Braddock Road. Highlights of the exhibit include military passes issued by Provost Marshall's Office, construction tools, and original photographs of some of Washington's defenders. 703-746-4484 or www.fortward.org.

**Who These Wounded Are:** The Extraordinary Stories of the Mansion House Hospital exhibit. Ongoing, Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Sundays, noon-4 p.m. at the Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St. See the site that inspired "Mercy Street," the new PBS' series inspired by real events that took place at Carlyle House. www.carlylehouse.org or call 703-549-2997.

**Color Disorder Exhibit.** Ongoing, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. at La Tasca, 607 King St. Guitarists perform traditional flamenco. $12. For reservations call 703-299-9810 or visit www.latascausa.com.

**French Movie Night.** Every Thursday, 7 p.m. in the back room of Fontaine Caffe and Creperie, 119 S. Royal St. A joint exhibition of artists Katie Baines and Amy Chan who use diverse painting materials such as acrylic, gouache, airbrush and screen print to build energized abstract paintings. Free to attend. Call 703-299-9810 or visit www.fortward.org.

**Tuna in this summer for the largest music celebration on the Potomac!**

May 26 – September 4, 2017

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- Murit Mystery Scavenger Hunt & Nightly Atium Laser Light Show
- Seasonal spa treatments & unique dining events
- Additional entertainment experiences just steps away in National Harbor

**Rockfest**

On Saturday, May 13 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. the children take the stage at Rockfest in Del Ray.

**MULTI-ARTS WEEKEND**


**THURSDAY/MAY 11**

Tory Cowles Sculptures. 5-8 p.m. in the Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 7, 105 North Union St. Cowles turns old roofing, electrical wires,
ASO Closes out Season with Americana-themed Concert

By Melinda Kernc
Alexandria Symphony

A lexandria Symphony Orchestra will present its season finale on Saturday, May 20, 8 p.m., at the Rachel M. Schleisenger Concert Hall and Arts Center, led by guest conductor Emil de Cou. The 73rd season has focused on masterworks, led by five renowned guest conductors, each concert anchored by a classical “popular” favorite loved by audiences from the symphonic canon.

Anchoring the Americana-themed finale is Dvořák’s Symphony No. 9 (from the New World). Considered a symphonic favorite by many for its lyrical second movement and written as both a tribute to his immigrant roots and his adopted homeland, this work borrows from Native American song, African American spirituals, Scottish melodies and Dvořák’s own Czech folk traditions.

Composed while music director for the National Conservatory of Music in New York and during his trips visiting immigrant settlements in the Midwest, he incorporated the diverse musical elements he observed as uniquely American. The added inscription “from the new world” was suggested by the conservatory’s founder Jeannette Thurber as a testament to the students he taught at the school, which came from diverse backgrounds (as immigrants and with multiple ethnicities) throughout New York City.

Opening the program is Barber’s only Violin Concerto (Op. 14), featuring ASO’s own Marlisa del Cid as soloist. Barber wrote the work in 1935 for his close friend, the violinist委员会 for special projects.

Subscriptions for the ASO’s 2017-2018 Season featuring the four finalists for music director are now on sale. Senior and military subscription pricing is available. To purchase tickets and for more information, visit www.alexsym.org or call 703-548-0885.

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA OF NEW JERSEY

Saturday, May 13
Street Painting Festival, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on the sidewalks of Mont Vernon Avenue between Bellfonte and Hume avenues. The Del Ray Montessori School will hold the second annual “La Bella Strada: An Italian Street Painting Festival” where more than 20 local artisans will create large chalk paintings along the sidewalk. Visit www.labelastradasdelray.com or email info@labelastradasdelray.com.

Trot Rock Fest, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Mt. Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. A day of music, movement, and making a difference for children in and around Del Ray. Visit www.trotrockfest.com for more.

Quander Brook Cleanup, 10 a.m.-noon, meet in the Kings Crossing Shopping Center, 6305 Richmond Highway. Community residents and volunteers are invited to volunteer an hour or more of their time to help clear the stream of accumulated trash, primarily plastic bottles and bags, paper cups and cans. Email smillerr@verizon.net for more.

Heroes for Moms Blood Drive, 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Alexandria Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St. Mother’s Day weekend for a blood drive and maternal health awareness event dedicated to saving the lives of mothers. Visit www.heroesformoms.com for more.

Celtic Spring Fling, 3:30 p.m. at St. Aidan’s Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road. Games, crafts, food and drink, plenty of music and dance, face painting, and corn hole tournament. Email bmrutledge@barclayassociates.com or call 703-548-4250 for more. Beethoven’s Monumental Piano Concerto, 7 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schleisenger Concert Hall and Arts Center, 4915 E. Campus Drive. Featuring keyboard artist Todd Flicker, and Mozart’s Coro Mass (Kronungsmesse) with orchestra. Solos for the Mozart will be the winners of the 2016 Chorals Young Artists Competition: Abby Lloyd, soprano; Elizabeth Sarian, alto; Patrick Kilbride, tenor; and Benjamin Curtis, baritone.$40; ages 23-29, $20; 13-22, $5; 12 and younger, free. Visit www.choralis.org for more.

Sunday, May 14
American Indian Heritage Day. Celebratory events organized by the National Park Service will be held at Fort Hunt Park in cooperation with the Indigenous Circle in cooperation with the National Park Service and the National Museum of the American Indian. Visit www.nps.gov or call 703-780-2230 for more.

May 15 Through Labor Day
Gadsby’s Tavern Museum Relics. Various times at Gadsby’s Tavern Museum. 134 N. Royal St. Learn the history of the museum, the purchase and see the original woodwork. Visit 703-746-4242 or visit www.gadbsytavern.org for more.

Tuesday, May 16
DNA Genealogy Talk, 1:30 p.m. at the Helix Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shemesh Road. Learn the basics of genetic genealogy and how to use it as a tool in a research

In Democracy!
Bike to Work Day 2017
FRIDAY/MAY 19
Chamber Golf Classic. 1 p.m. at Laurel Hill Golf Club, 8701 Laurel Crest Drive, Lorton. Event is the main fundraiser for the Mount Vernon Lee Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund and will be capped at 120 golfers. Email Info@MtVernonLeeChamber.org or call 703-317-9086.

Civil War Firefighting Walking Tour. 1-3 p.m. at the Fire Station, 3891. Enjoy an advance look at this 18th-century house, recently purchased by the City of Alexandria as the final event of Alexandria’s Preservation Month. $10 donation suggested. Visit Shop.Alexandriava.gov for more.

Meet the Civil War Author. 7:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South St. Enjoy an author reading at the Lyceum. Could the Civil War been Avoided? Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-746-4994.

COUNTRY-Western Dance Association. 6-9:30 p.m. at Capital Steps. 7:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Alexandria, 2932 King St. 7:30 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at the Alexandria Campus, 4941. Visit www.shop.alexandriava.gov or by calling 703-746-4994 or 707-746-3891.


Visit www.portcitybrewing.com/ for more.

Beer Yoga. 7 p.m. at Port City World Headquarters, 3950 Wheeler Ave. Suitable for beginners and experienced students, this yoga class will challenge balance, strength and flexibility. Learn breathing techniques to help alleviate physical tension and mental stress. All levels welcome, and a post-yoga pint is part of the class, 21 and older for the beer. Visit www.portcitybrewing.com/ for more.

SATURDAY/MAY 20
2017 Little Hunting Creek Cleanup. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Little Hunting Creek, at three locations: Janus Lee Avenue Bridge, Creekside Village Apartments, Mount Vernon Shopping Plaza Near Dunov Paints. Part of the Alice Ferguson Foundation’s Annual Potomac Cleanups. Visit www.southvoll.org for more.

Armed Forces Day Tour and Concert. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Tour of Fort Ward, the best preserved of the Union forts that defended Washington during the Civil War, followed by a concert of Civil War music by the Federal City Brass Band on the Museum lawn. Call 703-746-4848 or visit www.fortward.org.

Contemporary African Immigration Lecture. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St. Dr. Nemata Blyden, a George Washington University professor talks about the Africans who arrived in the United States after slavery ended in 1863. Call 703-746-4356 for more.

Civil War Firefighting Walking Tour. 1-3 p.m. at the Fire Station, 107 South Alfred St. Explore Alexandria’s Civil War firefighting history on the “We’ve Been Burned: Alexandria Firefighters During the Civil War” tour. Visit www.shop.alexandriava.gov or by calling 703-746-4994 or 707-746-3891.

Architectural Walking Tour. 2-4:30 p.m. Details about start location and reception address will be provided to all registrants. Architectural Walking Tour of Rosemont followed by a garden reception at a private home. $20. Visit www.alexandriava.gov or call 703-860-4941.

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at the Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive. Free. Visit www.avcedu.edu/schlesingercenter.

TASTE of Mount Vernon. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Restaurants are featured. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/or call 703-780-7518.

Country-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. at Lincolnia Senior Center, 4710 N. Chambalis St. Lessons at 6 p.m. and dancing at 7. The Northern Virginia Country-Western Dance Association members $10; non-members $12; children under 18 accompanied by a paying adult $5. Visit www.avcda.org or call 703-860-4941.

Taste of Mount Vernon. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Call 703-366-8400 for more.

Tour the Murray-Dick-Fawcett House. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at 517 Prince St. Enjoy an advance look at this 18th-century house, recently purchased and now owned and operated by the City of Alexandria as the final event of Alexandria’s Preservation Month. $10 donation suggested. Visit Shop.Alexandriava.gov for more.

Chiapas. 7:30 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. 455. Visit www.chiapasinfo.com.

Flora and Fauna Artshow. Various times at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 N. Union St. This show will highlight the work of artists. Jeanine Bohlen and Flores Flam. Visit www.potomacfiberartsgallery.com or call 703-548-0935 for more.

MAY 21
Roman Art. From May 10-June 4 Artist Lesa Cook sets the Greek and Roman gods into a contemporary context at the Torpedo Factory, 101 N. Union St. Visit torpedofactory.org.

SUNDAY/MAY 21
 Alexandria Children’s Concert. 2-4 p.m. at The George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive. Performances by the John Adams Orff Ensemble; Rockonero and The Great Zucchini. $10. Visit KwameConcert.com or email alexandria.kwame@earthlink.net for more.

COUNTRY-Western Dance. 6-9:30 p.m. at the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center at The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave. 455. Visit www.birchmere.com.

MAY 24
Meet the Civil War Author. 1-3 p.m. at The Lyceum. Washington St. Writer and Civil War buff Mark Tosley speaks on the topic: Could the Civil War been Avoided? Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum or call 703-746-4994.

Taste of Mount Vernon. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Call 703-366-8400 for more.

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Taste of Mount Vernon. 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center, 2511 Parkers Lane. Restaurants are featured. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/mountvernon/or call 703-780-7518.
6-1 Budget Vote Highlights Tensions on City Council

From Page 1

“I did want more ethics and transparency,” said Silberberg. “But it was a great start given the pushback. It was hostile.”

Over the next few months, the divisions between Silberberg and her fellow council members started to become more and more apparent. In February 2016, ARHA sought a rezoning and master plan amendment for their Ramsey Homes project, but asked for a deferral on the project’s special use permit. The vote required a supermajority, but both Silberberg and Councilman Paul Smedberg voted against it. However, three days later at a City Council meeting, Smedberg reversed his decision. The amendments had their supermajority, with Silberberg being the lone opposition. When Silberberg criticized City Attorney James Banks for not sharing that Smedberg was going to make a motion to rescind, Wil- son questioned Silberberg’s leadership and “decency” for attacking a member of city staff in public.

In January 2017, Wilson put forward a proposal to limit the number of public speakers at the start of a public hearing to 12. All others would be pushed to the end of the meeting. Wilson said the shift was intended to benefit speakers on docketed items, but Silberberg attacked the proposal as draconian and arbitrary. In another 6-1 vote, the council supported Wilson. The disagreements have ranged in nature from differences in general policy to sharp outbursts and insults. Most recently, Wilson scoffed at a comment made by Silberberg, drawing a quick back-and-forth between the two parties.

“It’s an interesting dynamic on the council. Watching the conversations gives a good insight on where the tension is,” said Wilson. “There is a tension there. That’s what makes this all interesting.”

And yet, Wilson said the while there is substantial conflict on the dais, it’s not as much as was predicted after Silberberg was elected. During Mayor William Euille’s term, Silberberg had often expressed similar disagreements over development issues. “Certainly on some development issues, [we’ve] had a divide,” said Wilson. “I don’t think it’s as much as people predicted. Remem- ber talking to [people] back in November that it would be constantly 6-1 votes. But when there’s a different viewpoint, it reflects that. That is not a new thing. There are two different visions. The six of us feel that we need to feel a chart a path forward.”

But Silberberg sees her election by the citizens as a mandate to protect Alexandria’s citizens and its historic character. Much of her campaign two years ago had centered around protecting residents from onerous development — along the waterfront in particular. For Silberberg, the battle over the budget has been another manifestation of this ongoing mission to protect the citizens of Alexandria.

“The people elected me for my judgment,” said Silberberg. “I believe strongly in the budget that Jinks put forward. This is too much.”

Without naming specific members of the council, Silberberg also said there had been outbursts from other members of the council but said that, in council discussions, she would follow Senatorial procedure and would try to take the “high road.”

Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Leadership at George Mason University, said the conflict is between addressing long-term challenges versus the desires of local citizens. What is going on here is the contrast between members with longer experience in the complexities of fashioning a budget process which attempts to address the city’s short and long-term challenges versus the perception that voters want the best of everything—but do not want to pay higher fees or taxes,“ said Shafroth. “So, in some sense, I believe the mayor is reflecting her perception of what our fellow citizens and taxpayer... Any mayor would say citizens do not want to pay more taxes. Nor do they want to have cavities. Or potholes. Or traffic. Etc. But, of course, they want good schools that are not overcrowded; they want safe neighborhoods; they want those roads plowed right away after it snows, etc. I think every taxpayer in Alexandria recognizes the taxes are a price one pays — it’s just that they would like it if someone else paid.”
On Day One of the 2017 Virginia Scholastic Rowing Association Championship Series at Occoquan, the T.C. Williams High School Crew Team swept three consecutive races to capture gold medals and State Championships.

The Men’s and Women’s Junior 8 boats (comprised of only high school juniors and underclassmen) and the Women’s Frosh 8 won their races by wide margins for state finals, where a couple seconds or less often separates the top two boats.

On a rainy, cool, breezy Saturday, May 6 that challenged rowers from T.C. Williams and 32 other schools, more than 130 boats competed in 14 race categories, from Novice 4s to Junior 8s. Following morning heat races to winnow as many as 16 boats in a single category down to no more than 6 for the final, TC advanced boats to finals in all nine categories they entered.

Finals began with the Men’s Varsity Third 4 category, in which TC oarsmen rowed for a silver medal with a time of 7:36.5. The TC Novice 8 Girls boat, comprised entirely of eighth graders and rowing against other novice boats with freshmen and sophomores, also scored a silver medal with a time of 6:24.6, only 3.9 seconds behind first place Yorktown.

TC’s gold run began with the Varsity Women’s Junior 8, a boat that often “raced up” in more senior race categories in regattas earlier in the season, including their 2017 State Champions - TC Women’s Junior 8.

Regional Champions
The Alexandria Titans Volleyball Club’s Titans 12 and Titans 15 teams earned Gold Medals in the recent Club Regional Championships sponsored by the Chesapeake Region of USA Volleyball. The competitions were held in Maryland during April and represented the final competition of the season. The Titans 12 include, bottom row, Aida Rhilinger, Mason Mantey, Ellery Reinholdt, Corinne Solsby, and Erin Munson. Top row: Megan Mutscheller (Head Coach), Olivia McCarthy, Lucy Voelker, Gabby Guest, Stella Kethman, Bridie Wendling, and Caroline Roda (Assistant Coach). Back row: A.J. DeSain (Assistant Coach).

The Titans 15 include, back row, A.J. DeSain (Head Coach), Shannon Murphy, Maddie Harvey, Majlis Walker, and Julia Hart. Front row: Eva Joia, Abi Ayala, Alexandra Berman, Olivia Ernst, and Sadie Finn. Not pictured is Megan Munson.
AN ORDINANCE to amend and reenact Section 10-4-8 (PARKING FOR MORE THAN 72 CONTINUOUS HOURS) of Chapter 4 (STANDING, STANDING AND PARKING) of Title 10 (MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

The proposed ordinance updates City Code Section 10-4-8 to add language to enable a pilot program that would, upon, application, grant temporary exemptions from the “72-hour parking rule,” permitting residents to park “on a city street for a period of up to two weeks per exemption.”

AN ORDINANCE of the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia authorizing the Issuance of General Obligation Bonds in the estimated maximum amount of $105,300,000; and providing for reimbursement to the City of Alexandria from bond proceeds.

The proposed ordinance authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for various city and school capital projects in the estimated maximum amount of $105,300,000.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a License Agreement to Authorize Level 3 Communications, Inc. for the Installation of Fiber Optic Cable in the Public Rights-of-Way along Reinkers Lane from Prince Street to Duke Street.

PUBLIC HEARING and Consideration of a Five (5) Year Lease With Verizon Wireless for Antennas on the City-Owned Building Located at 4480 King Street.

The THE PEOPLE is ADVISED that AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS MAY BE MADE TO PROPOSED ORDINANCES WITHOUT FURTHER PUBLICATION. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PERSONS INTERESTED IN ANY OF THESE ORDINANCES OBTAIN FREE FULL-TEXT COPIES FROM THE CITY CLERK AT CITY HALL. If the mayor finds and declares that weather or other conditions are such that it is hazardous for members to attend the meeting, this meeting will be continued to the following Saturday. JACQUE M. HENDERSON, MMC, CITY CLERK.

From Page 4

People. Not only mentoring students, but I have been mentoring young adults, even adults. So… my spirituality is just and just my spirituality is very strong. I’m Christian and I love God. And… the love of God is a very big part of my life,” he said.

Rich Hurst, who used to be a pastor at McLean Bible Church in Vienna, where Aka both worked and worshiped, concurs. Aka “is a devout believer” and “a great lover of people,” he said.

“I have never met a person with as much heart to serve teenagers and young adults,” he wrote in the foreword to Aka’s 2010 book “The Walk to the Stage of Honor.” Aka wrote the book as a guide to moral development for youth.

Aka hopes that his example and mentorship will help young people rise above their challenges. “I think if I can give a little bit to another young person maybe some will rise beyond their circumstances … to be where I am today,” he said.

To that end, he serves on the board of directors for the Campagna Center, a local non-profit, which runs programs for youth and families. And in 2009 he founded Global Caravan for Education and Cultural Exchange, an Alexandria-based charity that, among other things, has incrementally outfitted an elementary school in Ivory Coast with books and computers. Also in connection with this work, Aka participated in an education roundtable in 2015 with then Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

Joan Vistica, Global Caravan’s senior operations coordinator, feels inspired by Aka’s optimism and energy “about how things could be.”

Aka has since left career teaching. He’s been paying the bills by driving for Uber and selling his book. With his children growing up, he said it’s time to pursue his “stock of [business] ideas.”

Last year he launched Eburne Partners Corporation, which aims at developing mixed use and mixed income real estate in Africa. Aka says “Africa is going to grow for a very long time,” so he expects a very good return on investment.

But it’s not only about the money. Aka says “some of the profit to fund charity work and he envisions the business itself as a service. Unlike other commercial enterprises that just “take re-
“Bulky Boy”

By KENNETH L. LOURIE

Is the nickname I gave Andrew, one of our male cats. It’s because he’s a bit portly, like his father, yours truly. However, Andrew’s nick-name is not the impetus for this particular column. The impetus for this column is my tendency, as the primary (almost exclusive) buyer of miscellaneous household goods and to a lesser extent, services, to buy in bulk/quantity, not necessarily quality; although that’s a subject of a long-ago column and perhaps a future one as well — not the least of which that needs to be dusted off again, and one that has earned me this identical nickname to Andrew.

As a cancer patient originally diagnosed as “terminal” — at age 54 and a half, eight-plus years ago, time becomes an integral/essential part of your life, what there is of it presently, what you have been told you have left of it and what you — in your wildest dreams, every day and every night, hope you actually get to do: what you have been told you have left of it and what there is of it presently, years ago, time becomes an integral/essential part of Andrew.

As well — dare I cross that Rubicon again, and perhaps a future one not necessarily quality; although that’s a subject of miscellaneous household goods and to a name is not the impetus for this particular column, yours truly. However, Andrew’s nickname is not the impetus for this particular column. He’s called “Bulky Boy,” and every night, hope you actually get to do: what you — in your wildest dreams, every day what you have been told you have left of it and part of your life; what there is of it presently, years ago, time becomes an integral/essential part.

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For the Rainier Valley Paper, July 12, 2017 www.connectionnewspapers.com

NEWS

Champions

From Page 24

third place finish in the Varsity Second 8 category at the Charlie Butt Regatta at Georgetown two weekends ago. After a victory in their qualifying heat with a 10 second cushion over second place Langley, the TC Men’s Junior 8 had a time of 5:18.0, a 10.8 second margin. Members of the TC Men’s Junior 8 include Stefanos Psaltis-Ivanis, Wogan Snyder, Ian Willmore, Connor Rex, Kenneth Warren, Griff Austin, Adam Elnahas, and Cameron Luther, and coxswain Claire Williams.

Capping the Titan gold rush was the Women’s Frosh 8, including rowers Ava Elkins, Lydia Greenwood, Madelaine Toaso, Madeleine Allen, Julia Clements, Felicity Brock, Lila Arnold, and Alaina Browand, and coxswain Sara Rider. Coming off their victory at the Charlie Butt, the Frosh 8 posted a 14.5 second win over Oxonk in their qualifying heat.

In the final, the Frosh Women staged a 12.25 second win over second place National Cathedral School with a time of 6:18.2. Their win brings the Women’s Frosh 8 State Championship trophy back to TC’s Dee Campbell Rowing Center for the second year in a row.

BULLETIN BOARD

From Page 15

SATURDAY/MAY 13

City Council Public Hearing: 9:30 a.m. City Council Chambers, 100 King St. Email CityClerkStaff@alexandriava.gov or call 703-746-4500.

Stop The Violence Community Day: noon-5 p.m. at the Lenny Harris Field at Braddock Park (George Washington Middle School), 1005 Mt. Vernon Ave. The Tysons Ruffin-Pratt Foundation (TRP) along with support from the Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Special Events Section. Visit apps.alexandriava.gov/ for more.
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Includes: Genuine Toyota oil filter, up to 5 qts of conventional oil*, inspect windshield wipers, check tire condition, check battery (with print-out), inspect and adjust all fluid levels, inspect air & cabin air filters.

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$29.95
Rotate & Balance 4 Wheels
Includes: Inspect brake pads, inspect front & rear rotors & drums, check tire condition and inspect all hardware. Pads only: lifetime warranty on additional $10.

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$79.95
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