Alexandria's Noah Lyles, one of the most talked about athletes leading up to the Tokyo Olympic Games, left the world’s biggest athletic stage with a bronze medal in the men’s 200-meter final Aug. 4 at the Olympic Stadium in Tokyo.

“I’ve dreamed of being on this track for five long years,” Lyles said after his semifinal heat Aug. 3. Canada’s Andre de Grasse took home the men’s gold medal with a personal best 19.62 seconds. Lyles’ USA teammate Kenneth Bednarek took silver in 19.68, also a personal best, with Lyles finishing in 19.74.

Lyles was seen as a contender for 200-meter gold following Usain Bolt’s retirement in 2017. Bolt’s world record in the 200 meter was set in 2009 at 19.19 seconds. Lyles USA teammate Kenneth Bednarek took silver in 19.68, also a personal best, with Lyles finishing in 19.74.

Lyles was as a high school standout at what was then T.C. Williams High School, where he graduated in 2016. His younger brother Josephus, also a professional sprinter, joined their mother Keisha Cain Bishop at Alexandria City High School Aug. 2 where the Lyles Brothers Sports Foundation sponsored a watch party to cheer on Lyles during his qualifying 200m heat.

A crowd watches Noah Lyles on a big screen as he takes to the starting line of the 200m qualifying heat Aug. 2 at the Tokyo Olympics watch party at Alexandria City High School.

“I’ve dreamed of being on this track for five long years.”
— Noah Lyles after his 200m semifinal heat.

Lyles was a high school standout at what was then T.C. Williams High School, where he graduated in 2016. His younger brother Josephus, also a professional sprinter, joined their mother Keisha Cain Bishop at Alexandria City High School Aug. 2 where the Lyles Brothers Sports Foundation sponsored a watch party to cheer on Lyles during his qualifying 200m heat. Lyles still has a chance for a gold medal Aug. 6 when he is expected to run in the men’s 4x100m final.

Canada’s Andre de Grasse, center, races for the gold medal ahead of Americans Kenneth Bednarek, left and Noah Lyles.

Alexandria’s Noah Lyles wraps himself in the U.S. flag following his bronze medal run of 19.74 seconds in the men’s 200-meter final Aug. 4 at the Tokyo Olympics.

Alexandria’s Noah Lyles wraps himself in the U.S. flag following his bronze medal run of 19.74 seconds in the men’s 200-meter final Aug. 4 at the Tokyo Olympics.

Principal Pete Balas, left, with Noah Lyles’ mother Keisha Cain Bishop at the Aug. 2 Tokyo Olympics watch party at Alexandria City High School.

Noah Lyles’ mother and brother, Keisha Cain Bishop and Josephus Lyles, center, watch Noah Lyles run his 200m qualifying heat during a Tokyo Olympics watch party Aug. 2 at Alexandria City High School.

Josephus Lyles poses for photos during the Aug. 2 Tokyo Olympics watch party for his brother Noah at Alexandria City High School.

Noah Lyles Takes Bronze

Chance for gold in 4x100m final Aug. 6
Once in a Lifetime

6115 Vernon Terrace, Belle Haven
Offered at $2,395,000

OPEN SUNDAY AUGUST 8, 2-4PM
Premier Belle Haven Riverview Colonial

This incomparable home features resplendent river vistas from three levels. The living is easy, and the year-round resort lifestyle is within your grasp in this property unlike any other. Majestically sited overlooking the grand Potomac and Belle Haven Country Club, this home features a welcoming gallery foyer with large room sizes, wide hallways, and gleaming hardwood flooring. It has been strategically positioned with 4 balconies and a deck to maximize viewing.

The main level features a study, stone sunroom, and generous living and dining rooms. The eat-in kitchen quality is exceptional and adjacent is the window-filled family room with river perspective and overlooking the stone patio. Upstairs the expansive hallway leads to five bedrooms including the Primary suite with marble bathroom, walk-in closet, and rocking chair veranda. The third floor features another study with river-vista balcony while the large sixth bedroom/recreation area and bath could serve as overflow guest space. The lower walk-out level has an oversized garage, laundry room, and spectacular 1,500-bottle wine cellar. From the elegantly curated boxwood garden to the basketball court this property checks all the boxes for quality primetime living.

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Spending Spree

General Assembly returns to Richmond to appropriate federal stimulus cash.

By Michael Lee Pope

I n the 1985 hit movie “Brewster’s Millions,” Richard Pryor is given the task of spending $30 million in 30 days. Hijinks ensue. In some ways, that’s also the plot of the General Assembly session this week. But the stakes are bigger, and the jokes aren’t as funny.

Lawmakers are working their way through appropriating $4.3 billion of stimulus cash from the American Rescue Plan. Most of the money was already earmarked before lawmakers arrived in town as Gov. Ralph Northam made a series of announcements outlining his priorities. Each of those announcements indicated a tacit agreement between House Democrats and Senate Democrats and the governor’s office.

The biggest item on the list of spending items is a huge infusion of cash into the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, pumping $662 million into the fund in an effort to prevent tax increases on businesses in 2022. Because the trust fund is usually replenished by taxes levied on business, they would have been on the hook for restoring it. But the infusion of cash from Uncle Sam means taxes won’t go up for business owners.

“Shoring up the Commonwealth’s unemployment insurance trust fund is a smart investment that will prevent Virginia businesses from paying higher taxes and allow our economy to continue surging,” said Northam in a written statement announcing the proposal. “Together with the General Assembly, we are taking important steps to ensure Virginia remains a place where businesses, workers, and families can all thrive.”

The proposal was viewed by some critics as a gift to big business. “With so many competing interests, the balancing act is never easy,” said Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), chairwoman of the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance and Appropriations Chairwoman Janet Howell oversaw the massive spending bill in the Senate, where senators appropriated more than $4 billion in federal stimulus money.

“With so many competing interests, the balancing act is never easy,” said Sen. Janet Howell (D-32), who is chairwoman of the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee. The appropriations bill also allows lawmakers an opportunity to set some new policies as budget language, creating a new requirement for landlords to apply for rental assistance from the Virginia Rent Relief Program before evicting anyone. Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) tried to create an exemption for small-scale landlords who have a handful of properties.

That amendment, along with every other proposal from House Republicans, was defeated by the Democratic majority.

“Most Democrats don’t share that view. “This should not be used as an opportunity to get rid of anyone,” said Del. Cia Price (D-95). “Get your money, and then let’s move forward.”

Republicans tried and failed to make several amendments to the spending plan, offering a number of potential changes as the spending bills moved through the House and Senate. One of the Republican amendments was introduced by Del. Jason Miyares (R-82), who is also on the ballot for attorney general this fall. He introduced a budget amendment that would have given the attorney general authority to prosecute straw purchases of firearms.

“If you want to lower gun violence in Virginia, where well north of 80 percent of crime is done by repeat offenders, you get the repeat offenders off the streets,” said Miyares. “You go after those who are trying to traffic and buy guns illegally and you put them behind bars and off our streets.”

That amendment, along with every other proposal from House Republicans, was defeated by the Democratic majority. Many Democrats said that it was noteworthy that Miyares voted against all the gun-violence prevention measures last year but now wants to use the special session to crack down on straw purchases. Some questioned the need for creating new authority for the attorney general and the timing of the proposal.

“If Delegate Miyares wants to use the budget and this session as an opportunity to film a campaign commercial, it’s certainly his prerogative. He wouldn’t be the first one to do it,” said Del. Marcus Simon (D-53). “As far as I know this hasn’t been an issue that is under-prosecuted or people get away with anything here.”

Senate Finance and Appropriations Chairwoman Janet Howell oversaw the massive spending bill in the Senate, where senators appropriated more than $4 billion in federal stimulus money.
Alexandria’s Level of Transmission: Substantial
Protect yourself and those around you; updated recommendations for school and more.

Following a recent increase of cases, the City of Alexandria has been elevated to a state of substantial COVID-19 community transmission for the first time since early May. Because Alexandria is currently in a state of substantial transmission, and is exceeding 50 new cases per 100,000 residents in the past seven days, everyone over the age of 2 should wear a mask in public indoor settings. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their K-12 school mask recommendations in response to emerging data about the Delta variant. The CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to all schools.

This week, the CDC has updated guidance about precautions to take to protect yourself and others from COVID-19. The CDC has updated information for fully vaccinated people given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant currently circulating in the United States. The CDC has added a recommendation for fully vaccinated people to wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial or high transmission, which includes the City of Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax County.

Fully vaccinated people might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission, the CDC says, particularly if they are immunocompromised or at increased risk for severe disease due to COVID-19, or if they have someone in their household who is immunocompromised, at increased risk of severe disease or not fully vaccinated.

Fully vaccinated people who have come into close contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should be tested 3-5 days after exposure, and wear a mask in public indoor settings for 14 days or until they receive a negative test result.

CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to schools, regardless of vaccination status.

Every Alexandrian can take precautions to help reduce the spread of COVID-19, says the City; choose outdoor gatherings over indoor gatherings, stay home and get tested when symptomatic or exposed; wear a mask over your nose and mouth in public indoor settings, maintain at least 6 feet of distance from others, and wash your hands.

Because Alexandria is currently in a state of substantial transmission, everyone, regardless of vaccination status, should wear a mask in public indoor settings. The CDC also recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to all schools.

The City of Alexandria has updated requirements for wearing masks and maintaining physical distance in City facilities per guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): All visitors and employees in City facilities are required to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status.

Everyone who has not been fully vaccinated is encouraged to find an appointment at vaccines.gov, and should continue to wear a mask and maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others while inside City buildings.

This new guidance is indicated with signs at facility entrances.

Meeting rooms, hallways and elevators will remain set up with safety measures in place to provide the option to maintain physical distance. Virtual options may be available for meetings as indicated at alexandriava.gov/Calendar. Plexiglass partitions will remain in place until it is determined they are no longer needed.

The federal government continues to require that masks are worn when using public transportation, including on buses, trains, and airplanes.

On Aug. 3, the five Northern Virginia Health Directors issued a joint letter from the Health Directors of the City of Alexandria, as well as Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties to Northern Virginia Mayors, Chairs and Chief Administrative Officers with the recommendation that individuals wear masks while indoors in government and other public settings, regardless of vaccination status. The recommendation follows all five jurisdictions’ recent upward trend in average number of daily cases and being categorized as communities of substantial transmission.

Sales Tax Free Weekend

From Friday, Aug. 6 through Sunday, Aug. 8 in the Commonwealth of Virginia, you can purchase qualifying items, including school supplies, clothing, footwear; hurricane and emergency preparedness items; and Energy Star and WaterSense products without paying sales tax. Items include:

- Qualified clothing and footwear
  - $100 or less per item
- Hurricane and emergency preparedness products
  - Portable generators
  - $1,000 or less per item
  - Gas-powered chainsaws
  - $350 or less per item
  - Chainsaw accessories
  - $60 or less per item
- Other specified hurricane preparedness items
  - $60 or less per item
- Energy Star and WaterSense products
  - Qualifying Energy Star or WaterSense products purchased for noncommercial home or personal use - $2,500 or less per item

For more information, visit the Department of Taxation’s Sales Tax Holiday website, https://www.tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday

Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue.

Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name. Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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News

Friendship Firehouse Festival Returns

25th anniversary celebration to be held Aug. 7.

By Jeanne Theismann
Gazette Packet

Following a one-year hiatus, the Friendship Firehouse Festival returns Aug. 7 for a 25th anniversary celebration of the city’s historic Friendship Firehouse Museum and firefighting history.

Held on the 100 block of S. Alfred Street, the festival will include live music, craft vendors, raffles, hands-on activities and tours of the Firehouse Museum and 19th century fire equipment.

Sponsored by the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, the festival will run from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and celebrate Friendship’s 247th year. This year’s festival is being held in memory of Joe Shumard, a longtime president and board member of the association.

Food and beverages will be available and free Friendship fire helmets will be distributed to children. The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria will have dogs and cats available for adoption.

The Friendship Fire Company, established in 1774, was the first fire company in Alexandria. The Friendship Firehouse was built in 1855 and is now a museum open to the public.

www.friendshipfireco.org

This year’s Friendship Firehouse Festival will be held in memory of longtime Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association president and board member Joe Shumard. Shumard died unexpectedly in October of 2020.

Alexandria Love Your Pet Day Returns

This October with New Old Town Location

After a one-year delay due to the pandemic, the Alexandria Love Your Pet Day festival returns on Sunday, Oct. 3, in a bigger and more accessible location: Oronoco Bay Park at 100 Madison St. The popular event will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and proceeds will go to the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA), which is organizing the event.

“We know Alexandrians love their pets,” said AWLA Executive Director Stella Hanly. “The Alexandria Love Your Pet Day Festival gives them a chance to celebrate that, by bringing together local animal-themed vendors and nonprofits as well as artisans, entertainment and more, for a fun day the whole family can enjoy — including the pups!”

Along with shopping and a variety of food and drink choices, the festival will also offer family-friendly entertainment and activities throughout the day. Musical acts Uno Dos Tres Andrés (sponsored through the generosity of the Alexandria Library) and Rainbow Rock Band will headline the main stage, magician Chris Michael and interactive training and musical demos will round out the festivities. The AWLA will offer a Family Entertainment area, with animal-focused crafts, games and, of course, adoptable animals.

Working alongside the AWLA to renew this community event are founding event sponsors the Friendship Firehouse and the Veterans Fire Engine Association, which will be showcasing 1850s and 19th century fire equipment.

Tours of the Firehouse Museum and firefighting history will be available for admission.

Alfred Street, the festival will in October of 2020.

Held on the 100 block of S. Alfred Street.

Festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 7 on the 100 block of S. Alfred Street.
Stop To Remember Benjamin Thomas

The teenager was lynched across from Market Square on Aug. 8, 1899.

By Audrey Davis

On Sunday, Aug. 8 at Market Square, Alexandria, Virginia, the body of Benjamin Thomas was found. Three business days matter. Background checks take longer than the average year, almost 275,000 back. According to an interview, for instance, meeting someone in a gun store, you should just enforce existing laws. That needs to change.

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Biden Can Do More to Keep Guns Out of Unsafe Hands

By Paul A. Friedman

How badly do we want to reduce gun violence in America, whether from suicides, mass shootings, domestic violence or some combination of the above?

Some people don’t want to make any effort because they believe in an absolutist view of the Second Amendment in which only the literal clause is relevant – “the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” As late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia did in the Heller decision, they dismiss the opening clause, “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State…” as if it isn’t there.

Others repeat a mantra that we should just enforce existing laws. Yet, that’s easier said than done. For instance, according to an inquiry into public FBI records by FiveThirtyEight.com, “In an average year, almost 275,000 background checks take longer than three business days. In 2020, there were 535,786 such checks.”

This year is on pace to break that record. Three business days matter because if a check isn’t done in that time, a firearms dealer may sell the gun even if the search of his records is incomplete. After three business days, the FBI will continue to search but, if the gun has been sold, too often an insufficient effort is made to get that gun back from someone later determined to be prohibited from buying the gun. Case in point, in 2015, the White nationalist mass murderer at Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, SC bought his gun after the FBI search went beyond three days. Even though his illegal drug use record was discovered the day after he was allowed to buy his gun, no effort was made to get his gun back. Tragically, he didn’t kill those nine people until about two months later.

Worse yet, the FBI may need more time to find a prohibitive record but, after 90 days, even if the search is not complete, the bureau’s regulations require it to stop work and delete the background check from its computers. Once deleted, it’s impossible to know how many people who have been sold guns would have been denied. That needs to change.

On April 8, President Joe Biden made a speech to the nation about his agenda for gun violence prevention. Unfortunately, he didn’t include fixing this, or taking another powerful step to keep guns out of prohibited hands. We could require fingerprints before the sale of a gun.

In 2013, Politifact discussed this with Daniel W. Webster, director of the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Policy and Research and a professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health when it was examining the case for Maryland to pass the law. Politifact reported that, “In the five states where fingerprint licensing is currently required for handgun purchases, gun death rates are among the lowest in the nation.” In fact, Maryland’s law has quickly reduced gun violence.

Alexandria Gazette Packet

www.AlexandriaGazette.com

Special to the Alexandria Gazette Packet

On Sunday, Aug. 8 at 7 p.m., Alexandria will host a Remembrance Ceremony at Market Square to instill and renew hope and pride in all residents.

It is the moment Alexandrians will come together as a community to remember the short life and horrific death of Benjamin Thomas and as pledge to fight for equality, justice, and safety from racial terror hate crimes.

To advance the initiative, the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project has presented multiple programs on social justice with an imperssive list of speakers working in African American history and social justice. The project has been acknowledged by the Equal Justice Initiative for its work toward community engagement. Alexandrians can find the first tangible result of these efforts installed at the lynching sites of Benjamin Thomas, Joseph McCoy, and Thomas.

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Opinion

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On the Deaths of MPD Officers Kyle DeFreitag and Gunther Hashida

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), who represents the Northern Virginia suburbs of the Nation’s capital, today issued the following statement on the deaths of Metropolitan Police Department Officers Kyle DeFreitag and Gunther Hashida, both of whom reportedly died of suicide months after responding to the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol.

“I mourn the passing of Officers DeFreitag and Hashida,” said Beyer. “They, and all of the officers who defended the Capitol and our democracy on Jan. 6, are heroes and deserve our thanks. It is increasingly clear that many of those who put their lives at risk to protect the Capitol that day are still suffering from both physical and mental wounds.”

Officers DeFreitag and Hashida are the third and fourth police officers to die by suicide in connection with the Jan. 6 attack. The deaths of U.S. Capitol Police Officers Howie Liebengood and MPD Officer Jeffrey Smith were confirmed earlier this year. Smith and DeFreitag resided in Beyer’s Northern Virginia district, as did fallen U.S. Capitol Police Officer Brian Sicknick.

We encourage anyone in crisis to call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 or text TALK to 741741.

How Enslaved People Came To Be Called “Contrabands”

We much appreciated Jeanne Theismann’s front-page article regarding an historic first for the Commonwealth: the inclusion of Alexandria’s Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery, the burial place of about 1,800 African Americans, in the national African American Civil Rights Network.

An additional intriguing part of the story is how enslaved people during the Civil War came to be called “contrabands,” normally a term reserved for illegally smuggled goods or spoils of war, and thus began to gain their freedom as early as 1861. In that year Union Major General Benjamin Franklin Butler, originally from Massachusetts and commander of Fort Monroe in Virginia’s Hampton Roads, refused to return three escaped slaves who rowed across the water from Norfolk County and sought refuge at his fort.

Butler, a lawyer by training, argued that because Virginia had seceded and was no longer part of the United States, the Fugitive Slave Act requiring return of runaway slaves didn’t apply. He decreed that neither those three men nor any slaves who escaped should be returned to slaveholders pledging loyalty to the Confederacy. The result was that thousands of slaves made their way to Fort Monroe, thus providing valuable Union labor there, and also setting an example for other Union forts, where so-called contraband camps arose. One of those camps was here in Alexandria. Gen. Butler himself, although often at odds with his Commander in Chief, Abraham Lincoln, went on to command the Army of the James, which had the largest contingent of African American troops among all the Union armies.

Stephanie Kanwit
Alexandria

Adequate Healthcare Needed for All

Dear Editor:

Concern for the unvaccinated resonates rather hollowly in the absence of adequate healthcare for millions of Americans. Why do you care about my vaccination status, but not about my cancer, my diabetes, my bad heart? they can justifiably ask. True, there is the CHIP program for children, but I don’t personally know any children who would be reassured to find out that they themselves were entitled to healthcare but their parents were not.

Elisabeth Vodola
Alexandria

Drudi: Class Action Lawsuits Are Repugnant

Recall my letter from a couple years ago challenging Va. Sen. Scott Surovell’s call for allowing state class action lawsuits: www.alexandriagazette.com/news/2019/dec/17/opinion-letter-editor-shady-influences/ I have an example, in the form of a letter, of why this sort of lawsuit is so repugnant:

Earlier this summer I received a postcard with print barely big enough to read about a lawsuit over a data security incident where a medical provider network’s computer network was the target of an external unauthorized cyberattack in which patients’ personal information may have been compromised. The lawsuit includes “any person who was notified by or on behalf of [the medical provider network] regarding the Data Security Incident,” in other words a class action lawsuit. Even though the suit was filed on behalf of the officers who defended the Capitol and our democracy on Jan. 6, are heroes and deserve our thanks. It is increasingly clear that many of those who put their lives at risk to protect the Capitol that day are still suffering from both physical and mental wounds.”

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Drudi: Class Action Lawsuits Are Repugnant

Recall my letter from a couple years ago challenging Va. Sen. Scott Surovell’s call for allowing state class action lawsuits: www.alexandriagazette.com/news/2019/dec/17/opinion-letter-editor-shady-influences/ I have an example, in the form of a letter, of why this sort of lawsuit is so repugnant:

Earlier this summer I received a postcard with print barely big enough to read about a lawsuit over a data security incident where a medical provider network’s computer network was the target of an external unauthorized cyberattack in which patients’ personal information may have been compromised. The lawsuit includes “any person who was notified by or on behalf of [the medical provider network] regarding the Data Security Incident,” in other words a class action lawsuit. Even though the suit was filed on behalf
When 18-year-old Kelley Swan-son died just a few weeks after her graduation from T.C. Williams High School in 2005, her family wanted her spirit of giving and desire to help others to continue. Less than a year later, the Kelley Cares Foundation was formed to honor Kelley’s passion as a volunteer with the special needs community. Kelley was a soccer star during her time at T.C. Williams and believed everyone should have the opportunity to compete in sports, regardless of ability.

In the 16 years since her death, the Kelley Cares Foundation has spearheaded the construction of numerous facilities and programs to serve children and adults with special needs.

“As difficult as it has been at times, I think this has given our family a sense of purpose and helped us through our grief,” said Lindsey, Kelley’s older sister. Lindsey, along with Kelley’s twin sister Katey, has been the face of the organization, which also consists of parents Margaret “Mimi” and Sande “Sande” Swanson and brothers Ryan and Andrew.

“Mimi and Sande Swanson have spent their whole lives helping others in need,” said Alexandria Sheriff Dana Lawhorne. “It’s no surprise that Lindsey and Katey have followed in their footsteps.”

Added family friend Pat Miller in her nomination of the family as Living Legends of Alexandria: “They are good, solid people.”

An early project for the foundation was the Kelley Cares Miracle Field located at the Nannie J. Lee Recreation Center. A Miracle Field is a synthetic turf baseball diamond designed specifically for use by individuals with special needs. The surface is covered in a rubber-like compound that allows a firm, yet cushioned surface for wheelchairs, walkers and more. The goal is to allow youth and adults with special needs to play sports such as baseball, softball, T-ball and even kickball in an inclusive and safe environment.

Kelley Cares Foundation partnered with the Miracle League of Alexandria and the City of Alexandria to fund the project and move it from an estimated completion date of 2020 to November of 2012. The Kelley Cares Miracle Field and inclusive playground at the Lee Center is also home to the city’s Therapeutic Recreation program, where Kelley was a volunteer for many years.

The Miracle Field is used for older adult walking programs, as a play area for children enrolled in camps and activities at the recreation center, and for the city’s youth T-ball league. According to Recreation Services Division Chief Margaret Orlando, who oversees the city’s Therapeutic Recreation programming, “the league play is designed to provide important access to an organized fitness activity while helping to increase participants’ self-esteem.”

The Miracle League hosts youth and adult baseball leagues for people with disabilities in the spring and fall with “Angels in the Outfield” volunteers from community groups assisting participants with batting, fielding and running the bases.

While the Miracle Field may be the marquee project of the Kelley Cares Foundation, it is just one of many efforts to benefit families with special needs children and adults. Other endeavors include the Multi-Sensory Room at the Lee Center; the Kelley Cares Foundation Multi-Sensory Mobile; the Lee Center pre-K Tot Lot; and donated iPads and Apple TVs for the Therapeutic Recreation Program to help supplement its programming needs.

In 2015, the Kelley Cares Foundation dedicated the Ruthanne Lodato Memorial Playground. Located at the Lee Center, the fully inclusive and accessible playground features a cushioned play surface, extended ADA walkways around the park and play equipment that provides a safe place for the special needs community to play.

The Foundation worked with CVS Caremark, the Miracle League of Alexandria and community supporters to raise funds for the playground.

“Given her work with children, and her past support as an avid volunteer with the Kelley Cares Foundation, it was natural to name the playground after the late Ruthanne Lodato,” said Under-sheriff Tim Gleeson. “She wanted to do something in memory of her daughter Kelley.”

Another signature effort for the family was helping establish the Project Lifesaver program in Alexandria. Founded in 1999, Project Lifesaver International is a nonprofit committed to quickly locating missing persons who wander because of Alzheimer’s, Down syndrome, dementia and autism amongst others. The Alexandria program was implemented through the Sheriff’s Office in 2006.

“Mimi Swanson approached us and the Foundation provided the seed money to bring the program to the city,” said Under-sheriff Tim Gleeson. “She wanted to do something in memory of her daughter Kelley.”

Added Lawhorne: “The Swanson family’s support of Project Lifesaver is crucial to getting the tracking monitors to those who need them but can’t afford them.”

Over the course of many years, the Kelley Cares Foundation has stepped in to provide transportation to Special Olympics competitions for the Bellefonte Wizards, a basketball team comprised of men and women who live in Alexandria residential programs that assist adults with intellectual disabilities. The support from Kelley Cares allowed the team to travel across the state, ultimately taking third place in 2013 at the Virginia Special Olympics State Championships that year.

“I’d like to think that Kelley would be proud to see what the Foundation has done for children and adults with special needs,” said Katey. “Still, she would always be looking for ways to do more.”

Lawhorne added, “Lindsey and Katey helped establish Kelley Cares in memory of their sister. Together the family continues to change lives through their kindness and generosity. Our world is a little brighter because of the Swanson family.”

To learn more about the Living Legends project or to nominate a 2022 Legend, visit www.AlexandriaLegends.org.
Letters to the Editor

FROM PAGE 7

of however many tens or hundreds of thousands of persons, this is the first, and presumably the vast majority being notified, are hearing of it.

A settlement has been worked out: The medical provider network will compensate “ordinary losses” of up to $300 per person and “extraordinary losses” of up to $7,500 per person, but the total aggregate compensation would be capped at $2 million, with all cash payments being “adjusted pro rata” if claims totaling more than the two million dollars are filed. The settlement proposes, subject to the court’s approval, that the medical provider network also pay attorney’s fees and costs of over a million dollars.

The postcard includes Instructions to go to a website to make a claim, but, while recipients of the postcard are told they have a right to “opt out,” the postcard does not explain how to do so, nor even does it identify in which court the class action was filed. It does give a deadline date for those who “wish to object to the Settlement or exclude” themselves, but it does not note that the word “or” is used to mean “exclusive or” as in they may not do both; only by drilling down into the details of the settlement website the postcard references, does one learn that if one excludes oneself, one no longer has a right to object to the attorney’s fees or any of the settlement’s provisions.

So the companies involved have damages conveniently capped; a deadline of January 15, 2022 is set for filing claims so that, even if someone suffers an “extraordinary loss” after that date, the settlement seemingly shields the medical provider network from liability, while the attorneys suing them gross over a million dollars, if the judge approves the settlement terms. Standard tort practice is for plaintiff attorneys to set their contingency fee at one-third of the award settlement, so one is tempted to wonder whether the two-million-dollar cap may have been reverse engineered from the attorney’s fees or vice-versa. This is an example of how class action lawsuits function and why the Virginia legislature was well advised to not allow them in the Commonwealth’s courts.

Dino Drudi
315 N West Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
202-526-0891(c)

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Feed Hungry Children in Alexandria

ALIVE! resumes food donations.

By Shirley Ruhe
Gazette Packet

ALIVE! resumes its food collection from the community. While the warehouse was open and food distribution continued during COVID, they didn’t accept individual donations to limit exposure.

Food donations are now accepted at the food warehouse at 801 S. Payne Street on Thursday from 3 p.m.-7 p.m. and on Saturday from 9 a.m.-noon. Food may also be dropped off by appointment. Call 703-837-9300 or email info@alive-inc.org.

Donations must be from the current list of needed donations which can be found on the website at www.alive-inc.org.

Lauren Poon, ALIVE! development and communications manager says at this time of the year, fruit cups, juice boxes, small cereal packages and granola bars are more seasonally important because of their supplemental kids’ program. “We distribute kids bags of food this summer that include breakfast, lunch and healthy snack foods thanks to a grant from No Kids Hungry.”

Poon adds the majority of food is purchased with continued CARES funding ($750,000 received in 2021) from the City of Alexandria for the Food Program to purchase and distribute food to City residents facing financial hardship and families and individuals quarantined because of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic. “Food donations from the community help us get high demand items and fresh foods that are hard to buy in bulk.”

She says although some goods like rice were affected by COVID which delayed delivery, ALIVE!’s strategy of buying in bulk when it was available allowed them to avoid food shortages.

Donated food is distributed at the weekend sites and neighborhood pop-ups to 4,000 families a month including 8,000 children.

CURRENT NEEDS:
FRUITS AND VEGETABLES
canned fruits and vegetables
fruit or vegetable juice
applesauce
fruit cups

GRAINS
Brown or wild rice
Quinoa
Oatmeal and cereal
Pasta and Pasta Sauce
Wheat or multigrain crackers
Granola bars

PROTEINS
canned or dried beans & peas
canned beef stew, chili, bean soup
peanut butter

OTHER
Liquid shelf stable milk
Canola, olive and vegetable oil

Feed Hungry Children in Alexandria

ALIVE! resumes food donations.

By Shirley Ruhe
Gazette Packet

ALIVE! community food donations resume after COVID.

Alexandria
Love Your Pet Day

FROM PAGE 5


“In past years, we’ve enjoyed having hundreds of visitors — both human and canine — come by to show how important pets are in Alexandria,” said festival founding member and Event Coordinator Stephanie Frederick.

“With the new, easy walk-up location in Oronoco Bay Park, we look forward to welcoming even more attendees.”

The Oct. 3 event is also open to friendly, leashed pets, and more information about the entertainment schedule can be found at AlexandriaLoveYourPetDay.com/Schedule. Adoptable animals from the AWLA and several other regional rescues will be in attendance, and those interested in participating as a vendor or sponsor of Alexandria Love Your Pet Day can learn more at AlexandriaLoveYourPetDay.com/HowtoPartner.

Alexandria
Love Your Pet Day

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THURSDAY/AUG. 5
“A Caruso and Lanza Celebration” with Errin Duane Brooks.
7 p.m. At The Secret Garden of the Rectory, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. Metropolitan Opera tenor Errin Duane Brooks makes his Washington, D.C. debut celebrating the centennial of Enrico Caruso’s death and Mario Lanza’s birth with beloved songs and breathtaking arias by Verdi, Puccini, Bizet and Leoncavallo— including “Nessun dorma.” Visit the website: https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/

AUG. 6-28

SATURDAY/AUG. 7
Friendship Firehouse Festival. 9 a.m.–2 p.m. At 100 block of South Alfred Street, Alexandria. Celebrate Friendship’s 247th birthday. Visit the historic Friendship Firehouse Museum, learn about fire safety past and present and see City firefighting equipment up close. There will be displays by community organizations, craft vendors, and food and beverages available. Children receive free Friendship fire hats. For COVID safety, museum entry will be staggered during the Festival. For more information see https://www.alexandriava.gov/FriendshipFirehouse and https://www.friendshipfireco.org/.

SATURDAY/AUG. 7
Floral Design Workshop: Summer Edition. 1-2:30 p.m. (16-Adult) Create a beautiful summer flower arrangement with the help of certified floral designer Betty Ann Galway. Learn how to properly care for and handle flowers along with creative design ideas. $39 per person (plus $30 supply fee). Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes (0D2.NDJ4) or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173.

SUNDAY/AUG. 8
The U.S. Park Service presents a free concert at Ft. Hunt Park, 8999 Ft. Hunt Rd. in Alexandria, Sunday, August 8 from 7 to 8 p.m. featuring Oasis recording artist Lesson Zero. For more information see: www.youtube.com/lessonzero or www.reverbnation.com/lessonzero

SATURDAY/AUG. 14
Original Summer Picnic. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. At the Original Mount Vernon High School, 8333 Richmond Hwy, Alexandria. Join SFDC Saturday, August 14 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. for the original Summer Picnic at Original Mount Vernon High School.
There will be live music, food trucks, local vendors, and more! All you need is a blanket or chair and they’ll provide the rest. Visit the website: sfdc.org/picnic. Register here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/original-summer-picnic-tickets-162577151637

See Calendar, Page 12
Alexandria Restaurant Week Returns With In-Person and To-Go Offerings

70+ Restaurants to Participate
Aug. 20-29, 2021

For 10 days and two weekends, more than 70 restaurants in Alexandria, Va., will offer a $49 in-person and/or to-go dinner for two during Alexandria Restaurant Week, Aug. 20-29, 2021. www.AlexandriaRestaurantWeek.com

Nearly 50 of the participating restaurants will offer solo diners a $25 in-person and/or to-go dinner for one, in addition to serving the $49 dinner for two. This dinner-for-one offering was created during Alexandria Restaurant Week To-Go in January 2021 in response to increased interest from single diners during the pandemic. The online menu book makes it easy to browse delicious selections from dozens of Alexandria eateries and enjoy special menus in-person or from the comfort of your own home.


New Alexandria Restaurant Week participants include Addi’s on the River, a new riverside eatery in Old Town built around a custom wood-burning oven; KungFu Kitchen, known for its Northern-style authentic Chinese food in the West End; and Sisters Thai and the Magnolia Dessert Bar, a new restaurant duo in Old Town North’s EDENS development. More than 40 restaurants will offer the $49 dinner for two and $25 dinner for one both in-person and to-go, including Cedar Knoll, Myron Mixon’s and Royal Restaurant.

Alexandria Restaurant Week showcases the inventiveness of local chefs in neighborhoods throughout the city, including Old Town, Del Ray, Carlyle and Eisenhower, and the West End. From neighborhood favorites to restaurants specializing in international cuisine, guests will savor the flavors of Alexandria’s distinctive collection of eateries.


Alexandria Restaurant Week To-Go Menu Highlights:

- Enjoy unparalleled views of the Potomac at newly opened Ada’s on the River with Scallop Crudo or Melon Salad to start followed by Prime NY Strip Au Poivre or Pan Seared Branzino Fillet.
- Head to French eatery Bistro Sancerre in Old Town for date night and choose from Escargot, Truffled Deviled Eggs and more to start and end with delectable Profiteroles or Choco Mousse.
- Enjoy an Instagrammable setting at The Loft at Lena’s Wood-Fired Pizza and Tap in Del Ray with a three-course offering for one or two people featuring Grilled Chicken Alfredo, Italian Lemon Cake and more, or take it to-go.
- In Old Town, The Light Horse’s dine-in or to-go dinner offering includes an abundance of options, including Build Your Own Mac N Cheese, Duck Confit Empanadas and more.
- In the Carlyle neighborhood, Tequila & Taco offers a three-course dinner for two in-person or to-go featuring a Dip Trio, Mixed Enchiladas or Tacos + Empanadas plus a Key Lime Pie dessert.
- Old Town North’s Yumna by Potomac, a southwestern Chinese noodle house, recently reopened after reconfiguring its dining room and offers a hearty meal filled with steamed Lotus-Leaf Buns, Handmade Dumplings and Mixian Noodles.
An expert is someone who knows some of the worst mistakes that can be made in his subject and how to avoid them.
-Werner Heisenberg

Legals

Etasse Limited
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NOTICE is hereby given, in accordance with the BVI Business Companies Act, 2004 that the above named company, is in voluntary liquidation. The voluntary liquidation commenced on 14 July 2021 and Sharon Mungall of Little Bay Consulting, PO Box 3042, Road Town, Tortola, VG1110, British Virgin Islands is the voluntary liquidator.

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(Sgd) Sharon Mungall
Voluntary Liquidator

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET August 5–11, 2021
Still Bedridden in Burtonsville

By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Though not nearly so much as last week, improving for sure, but “slowly and painfully,” as the Emergency Room doctor predicted. “Weeks, not months,” she replied in response to our “How long?” question. Now back to Gate A17 in Houston:

“Would you mind if I said a healing prayer for you?” I looked over at Dina, and we both said “No, not at all!” The lady, Solange was her name; mothered for a mate companion standing a few feet away to come over to where she and I were sitting. She explained to him the reason and within a few seconds, they both began praying for me. Though their words were not identical, they both invoked “God, Jesus Christ, the father, his children, died on the cross” and so forth for about 15 seconds in a sincere attempt to heal my burns. After her companion walked away, I looked back over to her and said: “Actually, my feet are not the worst problem I have. I have cancer.” Which prompted her, this time alone, to invoke similarly powerful references on my behalf. When she completed her healing, we both thanked her. She asked if we were in Houston and told us of her church where healing, as I witnessed today, is a regular element and she assured me that some of her fellow parishioners have been healed. Who am I to question the power of God? Nobody, that’s who. Praise the Lord and pass the scepter.

Now I sort of looking forward to my next recurring quarterly scan scheduled for mid-September to see what happens. My last few scans have been characterized as “stable.” Shrinkage would be a change and a welcome one at that. However, after being given a terminal, stage IV non small cell lung cancer diagnosis in Feb. 2009 with a “13 month to two year” prognosis, 12 and one half years later, I have learned to embrace “stable.” It may not cure, but neither will it kill. Nor is it ideal, but it’s a living for which I’m extremely grateful.

Anyway, back to real-time. It’s now a bit more than two weeks since “the burning.” I am sort of ambulatory but only by using a “walker,” and quite considerably handicapped. The more I lay off my feet, the less damage I will do to the skin as it heals from the inside out, the main reason the recovery is so slow and arduous. But I am able to “walker” now to my in-home office from my den where I’ve been laid up, literally, approximately ten feet, where I can access my desktop computer and type this column, email and on-line bank, et cetera; a distance which would have been too painful to do to the skin as it heals from the inside out; more I stay off my feet, the less damage I will do to the skin as it heals from the inside out; more I stay off my feet, the less damage I will do to the skin as it heals from the inside out

Northern Virginia Senior Olympics Opens 39th Year in September

By Shirley Ruhe

Arlington Connection

S tep up and claim your Olympic medal awarded after each event. There is something for everyone at the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO), set to begin Sept. 18 with the opening ceremony at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center in Arlington at 9:30 a.m.

More than 50 events will be offered from swimming, tennis and the softball throw to jigsaw puzzle and bowling. Although some past events will no longer be offered this year, crossword and table tennis doubles have been added.

Herb Levitan, this year’s event director, says NVSO eliminated events this year such as bridge and Mexican train dominoes where people had to sit close together. Levitan has been competing himself since around 2007. He says it’s good to try new things and even though you see the other competitors once a year, you make friends for sure.

The events will be offered at 17 community centers, parks, schools and clubs from Sept. 18-30th beginning with the 1600 meter run and ending with bocce and horse-shoeing.

Participants must be 50 years old by Dec. 31, 2021 and live in the counties of Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun, Fauquier, Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. County.

This is the 39th season for Northern Virginia Senior Olympics, and a number of participants have been competing for years.

Some have returned to a college sport while others have retired and taken on a new challenge. Some enter as many as 10-12 events and train most of the year while others join an event with a friend and just for fun.

Registration this year is online only with a $15 registration fee which covers multiple events. Registration closes Monday, Sept. 6. It is expected that all participants will have been vaccinated against COVID-19 and will follow all protocols during the competition.

See https://nvso.us/ to register and for a schedule of events.
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