Texas Official Appointed To Lead Alexandria

City Council hires James Parajon as city manager.

By Michael Lee Pope
GAZETTE PACKET

The Alexandria City Council is tapping Texas government official James Parajon to be the city’s 19th city manager, overseeing an operating budget of $770 million in a city with a population of 160,000. Council members formally voted to hire Parajon Wednesday night.

“We look forward to working with Jim, City staff and Alexandrians to accomplish great things together,” said Alexandria Mayor Justin Wilson. “With input through surveys, town halls and review panels, City Council sought to find a candidate who would reflect our values and we found that in Jim Parajon.”

Parajon, 58, comes to Alexandria from the other Arlington, the one in Texas, where he has worked for more than a decade.

His most recent role has been serving as deputy city manager overseeing a large portfolio including asset management, communications, legislative affairs, economic development, libraries, strategic initiatives, municipal airport operations and the fire department. Under his economic development role, he oversaw the Esports Stadium Arlington, which seats 2,500 people and is 100,000 square feet, and opened in 2018.

“I believe very strongly in community engagement. As a professional planner, that’s my background. That’s my DNA,” said Parajon in a meeting with reporters. “As a professional planner, you don’t develop a plan or a neighborhood effort or initiatives without robust community engagement.”

In the 100 years that Alexandria has been led by a professional city manager, 16 of the 18 people who have held the job have been white males. Parajon’s appointment to the chief executive’s position will be viewed by many as a missed opportunity to have some diversity in the role.

 Asked about his commitment to inclusion at City Hall, Parajon says he led two reorganizations in Arlington to inject more diversity into local government.

“Yet I’m a white guy. What I would ask is that people give me a chance and engage with me and understand my perspectives,” he said. “I really feel strongly that the organization should reflect what the community looks and feels like.”

Before his current role, he served as community development and planning director, where he was responsible for the housing authority, building inspections, federal grant programs, development services and civil engineering. Before working in Texas, he worked in the North Carolina cities of Raleigh and Cary.

“I’ve had a pretty good and long career in other places, and I really wasn’t looking necessarily to become a city manager, but Alexandria spoke to me,” he said. “This is a community that seems to be highly engaged and very involved, and that’s different. A lot of cities don’t have that these days. It’s more sterile.”

Raised in Poughkeepsie, New York, Parajon is a graduate of Dickinson College in Pennsylvania. He completed his master’s degree in regional planning at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. In 2014, he was elected to the College of Fellows for the American Institute of Certified Planners. He served as an adjunct professor for the University of Texas at Arlington.

He plans on relocating to Alexandria with his wife of 31 years, Elizabeth, who is an educator with experience in both public and private schools. His children, Eric and Stephanie, are currently attending university.

He will take office when current City Manager Mark Jinks retires in January.
Properties For Lease and For Sale

1420 Prince Street, Alexandria
For Lease: $1,155 per month FS
Second floor unit: 308 SF. Perfect opportunity for small office use. Shared conference room, private bathroom, access to first floor kitchen, 24/7 building security. Surface parking spaces. Short walk to retail and restaurants.

Hank Proctor | 703.582.4265
hproctor@McEnearney.com

1901 Mt Vernon Ave, Unit A, Alexandria
Lease Rate: Negotiable

John Ross | 703.867.0060
jross@McEnearney.com

300 N Washington St, Alexandria
For Lease: Office Suites
$25 psf FS, $7.139-SF building, 7 stories, built 1962, renovated 1998. Suite 300 (2,077 SF, vacant), Suite 304 (2,258 SF), or combine suites 300 & 304 (4,335 SF together). Suite 7 (1,395 SF), Suite 410 (1,582 SF, vacant), Suite 610 (1,613 SF).

Jaime Gallagher | 703.405.6489
jgallagher@mcenearney.com

530 Shawnee Rd Unit 350, Alexandria
For Sale: Approx. 856 SF

Evan Cass | 703.537.3354
eccass@McEnearney.com

3339 and 3341 Duke Street, Alexandria
Sale Price: $770,000
Includes fully leased units: 3339 & 3341. Unit 3339: 1,254 SF | Unit 3341: 1,266 SF. Professional Office. Zoning: CL. Great office layout. Includes reception area, waiting room, five offices, two private bathrooms, 2 large marketing or conference rooms.

Ed Cave | 703.537.3311
cave@McEnearney.com

1225 New York Ave NW, Washington, DC
For Sublease: $55 psf Suite 450 | $3,968 SF
Class A Office Building | RBA: 444,000 SF. Stories: 13 | Zoning: C-SL. Fully equipped office and auto repair with real estate in prominent location, fully fenced lot two short blocks to King Street Metro.

Ed Cave | 703.537.3311
cave@McEnearney.com

4808 Lee Highway, Arlington
Level Freestanding Building For Lease
Lease Rate: $35 psf NNN | 4,523 SF building, Zoned CL. Suitable for any type of retail or office. 5 Free surface parking spaces. Located just off of high traffic Route 29/Lee Highway/Langston Blvd, a major route connecting to I-66 and downtown Falls Church.

Evan Cass | 703.537.3354
cass@McEnearney.com

8328 Traford Lane, Unit A, Springfield
Office Suites For Lease - Can be modified

Evan Cass | 703.537.3354
cass@McEnearney.com

For Sale: Auto Repair and Auto Sales Business & Property, Old Town
New Price: $2,900,000. Lot Size: 8,370 SF | Building Size: 3,500 SF. Zoning: CSL. Fully equipped auto repair and auto sales business with real estate in prominent location, fully fenced lot two short blocks to King Street Metro.

Ed Cave | 703.537.3311
cave@McEnearney.com

3081 N. King Street, Alexandria
For Sale: $2,900,000. Lot Size: 8,370 SF | Building Size: 3,500 SF. Zoning: CSL. Fully equipped auto repair and auto sales business with real estate in prominent location, fully fenced lot two short blocks to King Street Metro.

Ed Cave | 703.537.3311
cave@McEnearney.com

801 N Pitt St, Alexandria
Fully-Leased Prof. Office Condo For Sale

Ed Cave | 703.537.3311
cave@McEnearney.com

1501 Duke Street, Alexandria
For Lease: 3rd Floor Office
Size: 6,000 SF. Fully built out as a standard office. Space is in excellent condition. Parking included. Furniture available. Built 1986. Zoned OCH. Two blocks to King Street Metro and convenient to many local restaurants and shops.

Bob Swearingen | 703.537.3320
rsweeringen@McEnearney.com

For Sale: Auto Repair and Auto Sales Business & Property, Old Town
New Price: $2,900,000. Lot Size: 8,370 SF | Building Size: 3,500 SF. Zoning: CSL. Fully equipped auto repair and auto sales business with real estate in prominent location, fully fenced lot two short blocks to King Street Metro.

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Senate Committees to Take Spotlight
Democrats plan to block Republican bills from reaching Senate floor.

By Michael Lee Pope
GAZETTE PACKET

ow that Republicans are about to take control of the Executive Mansion and the House of Delegates, many are hopeful that they'll be able to accomplish some of the things they talked about on the campaign trail — rolling back environmental regulations, undoing gun-violence prevention efforts and allowing the attorney general to take over prosecutions in cases where local commonwealth's attorneys haven't acted with enough force.

But in order to accomplish any of that, they'll have to get those bills through a series of Senate committees. And Senate Democrats are already mapping out a strategy to keep many of the top Republican priorities from reaching the Senate floor.

"Any initiatives considered leaning right or right initiatives are going to be stopped in the Senate, and they're going to be stopped mostly in committees rather than on the full floor," said David Ramadan, a former Republican delegate now at George Mason Uni-

versity Schar School of Government.

"The Senate caucus has more room to play in committees than they do on the Senate floor." Ramirez, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. "But I do expect Democrats to exert their ability to serve as a check on the governor in the Senate."

ROLLING BACK ENVIRONMENTAL regulations in the Virginia Clean Economy Act is a topic that has animated many Republican voters, especially now that the Virginia Clean Economy Act has put Virginia on track to ban fossil fuels by 2050. Many Republicans have criticized the mandates for investments into wind power and solar power. Now that Republicans will be in control of the House of Delegates, many are expecting action to undermine the Clean Economy Act.

"The Clean Economy Act is definitely something that people want to revisit and amend. Whether they want to repeal it outright, that's another question," said Stephen Haner, senior fellow at the Thomas Jefferson Institute. "But amendments for sure, and I think the amendments can get through the House." Passing a bill out of the Republican-controlled House is only half the story in the General Assembly. Assuming that the new Republican majority sends legislation rolling back the Clean Economy Act to the Senate, its first stop will be the Senate Commerce and Labor Committee. That's a panel that's stacked in favor of the Senate majority with 12 Democrats and only three Republicans.

"If the bill, a bill, does come over backing down on some of the climate change types of things from the House, and it's certainly possible it will, I think we have the ability to deal with it in the Senate and box it up and it'll probably never get to the floor and have the bill basically defeated in the committee," Sen. George Barker (D-39) told members of the Alexandria City Council last month.

GUN RIGHTS ADVOCATES are interested in rolling back some of the gun-violence prevention measures Democrats were able to pass since they took control of the General Assembly last year. At the top of their list is the new law that gives local governments the authority to ban guns from parks and government buildings. Since the governor signed that law last summer, Alexandria and many other localities passed new ordinances and installed new signs. Now those signs may be in jeopardy.

"I don't want to have to be in a position of going, 'Oh jeez I'm going to Alexandria I was going to meet somebody in the park. Oh, can I carry a gun there?' That's only a recipe to get someone like me, who doesn't commit any crime, inadvertently into trouble," said Philip Van Cleve, president of the Virginia Citizens Defense League. "You're disarming me. So that if something did happen in the park that day, I would be helpless when I didn't need to be helpless."

Advocates for preventing gun violence say local governments should be able to determine what's in the best interest of their local communities. If the House passes a bill to roll back local authority to ban guns last year, the odds of it getting to the Senate floor seem slim.

"Gun owners, for the most part, are law-abiding citizens," said Lori Haas, senior director of advocacy at the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence. "And I believe they are more than capable of learning the laws of whatever jurisdictions they're planning to visit."

"It'll probably never get to the floor."

— Sen. George Barker (D-39) on Republican efforts to roll back the Clean Economy Act

"You’re disarming me. ... I would be helpless when I didn't need to be helpless."

— Philip Van Cleve, Virginia Citizens Defense League

"I do expect Democrats to exert their ability to serve as a check on the governor in the Senate."

— Stephen Farnsworth, Center for Leadership and Media Studies, University of Mary Washington

"I am going to end the criminal-first, victims-last mindset and have a victims-first, criminals-last mindset."

— Attorney General-elect Jason Miyares (R)

DURING THE CAMPAIGN, Republican candidate for attorney general John Miyares said one of the things he wanted to do if elected was to take over local prosecutions in cases where local police chiefs or sheriffs didn't believe local prosecutors were serving the community. Now that he's been elected to the office, Miyares has already started talking to lawmakers about getting a bill through the General Assembly to the governor's desk.

"In all of this discussion about criminal justice reform the media talks about, you know the person they never talk about? Victims. They don't talk about the victims. And that has been a central plank of why I ran and a central plank of what got me elected. So I am going to end the criminal-first, victims-last mindset and have a victims-first, criminals-last mindset."

In order to make that happen, though, the bill will have to get through the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"There's no chance at all that's going to pass," said Sen. John Edwards (D-21), chairman of the Judiciary Committee. "He has no authority under the Constitution, and the likelihood of the General Assembly granting him that authority is zero."

example, will have some bipartisan support. And so I don't expect the Senate to be the chamber where everything goes to die," said Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington.
The building stood for over 70 years, serving as the home of Fire Station 203 on Cameron Mills Road and providing the Alexandria community with fire prevention and emergency lifesaving services.

But earlier this year, the city officially completed the replacement project for Station 203, celebrating a new two-story structure of over 15,000 square feet.

“What a difference the new building makes,” said Capt. Patrick Evans as Fire Prevention Month began in October. “This was my station when I was a rookie 21 years ago and the new station is night and day compared to the old facility. Everything is completely different, from the bedrooms to the kitchen, and office and watch tower, which before was like a closet.”

What was originally known as Station #3 opened in 1947 and the previous building completed in 1948. Construction on the new building began in 2019 and first responders returned to the facility in March of 2021.

The new facility, located at 2801 Cameron Mills Road, features two-and-a-half operational bays to house an engine, a medic, administrative units and all required personnel and has the capacity for special service units.

“The old facility was no longer able to support modern fire and EMS apparatus, equipment and operations,” said Fire Chief Corey Smedley. “This new facility provides better support for modern firefighting and emergency medical apparatus and technology and allows us to continue to improve our service to the Beverly Hills and Rosemont community.”

Due to safety precautions to limit the spread of COVID-19, city stations remain closed to the public but a virtual tour of the new Station 203 is available on YouTube to view the equipment bays and amenities for fire staff who live on-site during their 24-hour shifts.

Evans noted in particular the changes in technology over the years.

“The communications system is completely different,” Evans said. “When I was first here we actually had a pay phone in the lobby. Our phone system is now automated and everything about the station is new and up to date. It is definitely a breath of fresh air and helps us improve how we serve the community.”
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The Sept. 9, 1947, Alexandria Gazette features the newest fire station #3 opening on Cameron Mills Road.
Harlow at the lighting of the Grand Hanukkah Menorah Nov. 28 at the Lyceum.

Rabbi Mordechai Newman, left, is joined by Mayor Justin Wilson, Officer Yadiel Nunez and Officer Leah potato pancakes and doughnuts, singing of traditional songs. Hot 6-foot menorah followed by the included a public kindling of a the Festival of Lights celebration pression and the power of light over darkness,” said Newman, who presided over the ceremony. Hosted by Chabad Lubavitch of Alexandria-Arlington with assistance from the City of Alexandria, the Festival of Lights celebration included a public kindling of a 6-foot menorah followed by the singing of traditional songs. Hot potato pancakes and doughnuts, the traditional foods of Hanukkah, were served to the crowd which was limited in size due to ongoing pandemic concerns.

Newman shared the history and tradition of Hanukkah and the Festival of Lights, which is celebrated with a nightly menorah lighting, special prayers and fried foods. The Hebrew word Hanukkah means “dedication” and the observance is named because it celebrates the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem following the defeat of the Greek army by a small and outnumbered group of Jews in the second century BCE. “The flame of the Hanukkah menorah flickering in the darkness of a cold night has a special and timely message this year as we are still dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic,” Newman said. “The Hanukkah lights remind us to never give up.

The world around us may be dark, we may be experiencing challenges from within, but in the end light is stronger than darkness and having a positive and optimistic attitude will prevail over negativity.” www.chabadAA.org.
Golubin honored for work with Arthritis Foundation and veterans.

By Jeanne Theismann

A lexandria native Garrett Golubin was honored Oct. 28 at the Arthritis Foundation’s annual Commitment to a Cure Gala for his efforts in establishing a partnership between the foundation and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Held at DC’s District Winery, the third annual event was emceed by Shawn Perry of The Senior Zone radio program. In addition to Golubin, who was named the Arthritis Warrior honoree, the organization recognized President and Chief Medical Officer of MyMD Pharmaceuticals Dr. Chris Chapman as the medical honoree, and DTM Fitness founder and owner Dan Hill as the veteran honoree.

“Arthritis is the number-one cause of disability in this country,” said Golubin, who was diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis, a form of arthritis in the spine, in 2014. “And most people are not aware that one in three veterans is diagnosed with the condition, making it the leading disability among veterans.”

After receiving his diagnosis, Golubin, an account executive with software intelligence provider Dynatrace, began fundraising for foundation events. He eventually became the fundraising chair of the local leadership board, a position he continues to hold.

In 2020, Golubin forged a relationship with the Veterans Affairs at a national level, leading to a partnership that provides specialized support for veterans through the VA.

“It is important that we work not only to help our veterans but to improve the health of our current service members,” Golubin. “It is a real honor to be here tonight but there is still a lot of work to be done to raise awareness and fund a cure for this disease.”

www.arthritis.org

Garrett Golubin, left, is presented with the Arthritis Warrior award by emcee Shawn Perry at the Arthritis Foundation’s Commitment to a Cure Gala Oct. 28 at the District Winery.

Commitment to a Cure

Garrett Golubin, left, celebrates with family and friends after being honored with the Arthritis Warrior award at the Arthritis Foundation’s Commitment to a Cure gala Oct. 28 at the District Winery.

I-395/Seminary Road HOV Ramp
City of Alexandria

Virtual Public Information Meeting

Monday, December 6, 2021, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
https://www.virginiadot.org/395ExpressLanes

Find out about plans to convert the 395 Express Lanes and Seminary Road ramp from a High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)-only ramp to a High Occupancy Toll (HOT) ramp. This south-facing reversible ramp at Seminary Road falls within the limits of and provides access to the 395 Express Lanes and currently operates as an HOV- and transit-only ramp. Transurban, VDOT’s private operator of the 395 Express Lanes, has proposed converting this ramp from HOV to a HOT lanes ramp. The ramp would continue to provide access to the 395 Express Lanes, but would be available to vehicles with fewer than three occupants who pay a toll, and for free to vehicles with three or more occupants.

The meeting will be held as a virtual/online meeting. Information for accessing and participating in the virtual meeting is available at https://www.virginiadot.org/395ExpressLanes. The project team will make a presentation beginning at 6:30 p.m. followed by a question and answer period.

Review project information and meeting details on the webpage above or during business hours at VDOT’s Northern Virginia District Office, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please call ahead at 703-691-6715 or TTY/TDD 711 to make an appointment with appropriate personnel.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR 771, VDOT has received guidance from the Federal Highway Administration that if the modification was to proceed, no additional environmental documentation would be required for converting the 395 Express Lanes/Seminary Road ramp from an HOV-only ramp to a HOTramp. The findings documented in past Environmental Assessments and subsequent Findings of No Significant Impacts from the Federal Highway Administration remain valid.

Give your comments during the meeting, or by December 16, 2021 via the comment form on the project website, by mail to Mr. Abi Lerner, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030 or by email to meetingcomments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference “I-395/Seminary Road HOV Ramp” in the subject line.

VDOT ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact VDOT Civil Rights at 703-259-1775.

State Project: 0395-96A-206, P101
UPC: 108361

Past issues of THE CONNECTION back to 2008 are available at http://connectionarchives.com/PDF
Budget Surplus in a Time of Need

Del. Kenneth R. “Ken” Plum

A combination of an economy producing much more strongly than expected during the pandemic and a frugal state budget in anticipation of a revenue shortfall combined with several federal programs sending enormous amounts of cash to the states has resulted in Virginia having a strong cash position—possibly the greatest ever. Some choose to call the available cash a surplus, but I think a much more accurate term to describe it is an unappropriated balance. The amount involved is more than $4 billion!

Using the term surplus implies to me that the needs of the state have been met and that there is money left over. As I indicated above, the existing state budget was put together with a very conservative estimate of tax revenue based on a contraction in the economy. Programs were minimally funded or needs were not addressed in order to ensure that the budget would be balanced at the end of the year as constitutionally mandated. Likewise, the availability of cash flowing from the federal government has been much greater than ever before with an expectation that even more dollars will be coming to the states.

With the numerous challenges facing government in general it is reassuring that the availability of funding will not be as great an issue as it has been in recent years. The list of unmet needs for those who view government’s role broadly can be reduced by the available cash. For others, the availability of cash in government coffers raises the prospect of tax cuts. The incoming governor has indicated that he favors tax cuts. Virginia’s tax rates are among the lowest in the country and should a policy of tax reductions be pursued it should be targeted to those with the lowest income.

Certainly tax revenues should never be allowed to exceed the wants and needs of citizens for government services. When there are dollars available the question becomes one of giving monies back to citizens in the form of tax reductions or rebates or using it to provide needed services. Cutting taxes is an approach that is appealing to most politicians and is one that I think should be pursued when it can be done responsibly. In Virginia at this time I believe there are too many unmet needs to be doing anything in the budget other than providing funding for programs and services that have been needed but unfunded for years.

There is a waiting list estimated at over 12,000 individuals who qualify for assistance because of a developmental disability, but that list is reduced by only a few thousand persons per year with the need growing faster than programs or services to meet them.

There is a wide disparity of funding across jurisdictional lines for public education even though there is a composite index that is supposed to smooth out the differences. The lack of equity in funding among counties and cities is unjustifiable as are the differences across colleges and universities.

In coming columns I will be discussing other unmet needs. It is not possible to have a budget surplus when there is so much left to be done.

Children’s & Teens’ Connection 2021

Deadline extended, please send all submissions via email by Friday, Dec. 10, but earlier is better.

During December of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, families, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish every kind of artwork that can be submitted to us as a jpeg, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts.

Pandemic planning has made for a short deadline, and, like everything else, the 2021 Children’s Connections will be different than in the past. For 2021, please send a curated collection of art from your class. We will do our best, but we are unlikely to be able to print every item submitted. Please include the first and last name of the student with each submission.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email. Writing should be submitted in .docx format or in google doc. If you are sharing a google doc with us, please turn on link sharing so that anyone with the link can edit the document and share with kimm.mary@gmail.com. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format.

Some suggestions, but different ideas are welcome:

To be published, we must have the full first and last name of the student artist or writer. Identify each piece of writing or art, including the student’s full name, age, grade and town of residence, plus the name of the school, name of teacher and town of school location.

Home schoolers’ contributions are welcomed.


You can see the 2019 editions (pre-pandemic) by visiting www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/ and scrolling down to Children’s Editions for the Children’s Editions to kimm.mary@gmail.com.

For advertising information, email Debbie Funk at debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com.

For more, see http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2021/nov/17/childrens-teens-connection-2021/

Mary Kimm
Editor and Publisher

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 print your name and town name. Letters are regularized sized for length, like, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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https://www.earthsangha.org/
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https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/
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Afghan refugee resettlement
https://lssnca.org/take_action/afghan-allies.html
Afghanistan Youth
Relief Foundation
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https://ayrf.org/

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Virginia Press Association Award Winning Newspaper

2019

8 ❖ Alexandria Gazette Packet ❖ December 2-8, 2021

Letters to the Editor

More Places To Give for Local Impact

Dear Editor: I’d like to suggest more places to give for local impact. Please consider publishing a second list with these options.

Thanks

Sara H. Oakton

Fairfax County Park Foundation
https://fairfaxparkfoundation.org/
Earth Sangha
native plant nursery
https://www.earthsangha.org/
Volunteer Fairfax
https://www.volunteerfairfax.org/
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Afghan refugee resettlement
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Afghanistan Youth
Relief Foundation
Afghan refugee resettlement
https://ayrf.org/

You can comment on our Facebook page or find us on Twitter

(Graph)
Improving Brain Health

Goodwin House hosts Stronger Memory program.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Goodwin House was the site of a Stronger Memory presentation Sept. 17 as part of Alzheimer’s Awareness Month and its brain health programs.

Goodwin House Inc. has partnered with George Mason University to study the impact of the Stronger Memory program on memory, cognition and life satisfaction of participants.

“We are partnered with Mason to research the effectiveness of the Stronger Memory program,” said Jessica Frederickson, the Brain Health program manager for Goodwin House Inc. “I’ve seen it change lives and improve the cognitive memory of patients.”

Sen. Mark Warner made a virtual appearance at the event in support of the Stronger Memory program.

“I want to say a special thank you to all my friends at Goodwin House and their involvement in their Stronger Memory program,” Warner said in a prerecorded video. “We all know someone who has to deal with either dementia or Alzheimer’s. My mom had Alzheimer’s 11 years, so anything we can do to improve cognitive facilities as we age is something I strongly support.”

The Stronger Memory program consists of three basic activities: writing, reading aloud and simple math exercises. The program was started in 2011 by Goodwin House CEO Rob Liebreich, a featured speaker at the event, to help his mother address cognitive decline. Since that time, Stronger Memory has gained a loyal following and yielded positive results.

“I entered the program skeptically but thought I would try it and so far I am impressed,” said Dr. Robert Wallace, Goodwin House resident and Stronger Memory program participant.

“I entered the program skeptically but thought I would try it and so far I am impressed.”
— Dr. Robert Wallace, Goodwin House resident and Stronger Memory program participant
More than 1,000 families across the city were able to celebrate Thanksgiving as ALIVE!’s legion of volunteers distributed turkey baskets to families in need in the city of Alexandria, said ALIVE! Executive Director Jennifer Ayers at the organization’s food warehouse on South Payne Street. “That is on top of another 1,000 that are going out in other distributions this weekend.”

Volunteers spread out across the city to distribute the pre-packaged meals. “Volunteers packed the baskets and are loading them into vehicles,” Ayers added. “Because of them, these families can celebrate Thanksgiving.”

www.alive-inc.org

–Jeanne Theismann

Giving Thanks

ALIVE! distributes over 1,000 turkey meals.
I t's a long way from the hallways of Fort Hunt High School to a huge mural on the 110 freeway near downtown Los Angeles, but that's where Fort Hunt alumni Julie Gigante's picture is, representing the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. The 8-story-tall “Harbor Freeway Overture,” is a mural painted by Kent Twitchell that pays tribute to the orchestra.

“It is a little embarrassing for me, I didn’t know it was going to be so big,” Gigante said. Thousands of drivers see it on the way to work every day, and some let her know they saw her on the building. “I get that a lot,” she said, but it’s all part of the professional musician’s life in LA.

It all started in Alexandria when she was a 5-year-old, taking lessons and getting encouragement from her mother who is also a musician. It took years of practicing and climbing the musical success ladder from the Mount Vernon Symphony, and growing from there. They saw her on the building. “I get that a lot,” she said, but it’s all part of the professional musician’s life in LA.

Annmarie, 25. The musical side of the family didn’t transpire to the children, although Annmarie was into opera at first, but both are now employed in the tech world. They live in a mountainous part near Los Angeles, and she loves to hike and engage in other outdoor activities when she's not playing music. “There’s a lot of cultural activities out here,” she said.

Westward Expansion

Being in LA, it isn’t unusual for people to come from all over the country to make it in the entertainment world. Gigante landed the position on the orchestra shortly after moving and has excelled since then. “On top of her natural musical ability and stellar technique, Julie is a natural on the violin at age 5 and now is featured on an 11,000-square-foot mural in Los Angeles.

Julie Gigante warms up on the violin prior to a Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra concert at the Alex Theatre in Glendale, California.
Some of the Best-Loved Pets Have ‘Hospice’ Status

Just Ask Smokey and Sadie

BY BARBARA S. MOFFET
ANIMAL WELFARE LEAGUE OF ALEXANDRIA

It took only one photo of a little Chihuahua named Smokey for Megan Hess to make her choice. Yes, the dog had chronic kidney disease, heart problems and arthritis. And, yes, Hess’s family already included three children and two senior dogs.

“The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA) posting on Instagram said his kidney failure might mean a prognosis of six months to a year,” Hess recalled. “I just thought he needs to do his hospice time in this house.’ I dropped everything and went to the shelter with my son to meet Smokey.”

Smokey didn’t look quite like your average Chihuahua. Long, sticklike legs. Beady eyes. Only two teeth and a tongue perpetually hanging out of his mouth. Once at Hess’s Alexandria home, his personality was equally quirky. Some days, she says, he mostly snoozes, but other days his feisty side takes over. Despite being dwarfed by the two other puppies the family adopted after bringing Smokey into their home, Smokey chases after the dogs, leaping on their heads and necks. Fortunately, the young dogs seem to sense Smokey’s delicacy and put up with the attention.

Smokey’s conditions require several medications daily. “At first it was a pain to keep up with, because all of them have to be crushed and mixed into his food,” Hess said. “We just weren’t used to that.” Now, the medical regimen has become routine for the household, and they’ve installed a baby gate to make sure one of the puppies doesn’t swoop in and gobble up Smokey’s chow.

Smokey has forged a special bond with Hess’s 13-year-old daughter, Lynn, and scampers down the hall with Lynn when it’s bed-time. He then dives into a nest of stuffed animals on the bed, spending the night there. “You have to really search to find him in there,” Hess said.

Animals with terminal or chronic illnesses can make wonderful pets, said AWLA Director of Marketing and Communications Gina Hardrez. Animals who come to the shelter with serious conditions are evaluated by the shelter veterinary staff and treated as necessary. Potential adopters are informed about their prognosis and told about any medications they will need, temporarily or perhaps for the rest of their lives. Fortunately, the AWLA’s community includes many people who are happy to seize the opportunity to help such animals.

When Joyce Acton adopted a 17-year-old cat with several medical conditions from the AWLA, she didn’t know she’d end up spending time daily dragging a “fishing pole” toy across the floor, crawling into bed with Acton and the other cat, Marmo, 13, at night. “Sadie likes to get close to your face and then makes a little snort, sort of like breathing you in,” she said.

“Being a senior myself and having all senior pets,” said Acton, “I wanted to give Sadie a chance.”

Celebrating its 75th year, the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is a local 501(c)(3) organization that operates the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, Alexandria’s only open-access animal shelter. In response to the global pandemic, the AWLA has established a virtual adoption process and is operating a Pet Pantry that provides pet food and supplies to community members in need. The AWLA also offers assistance to Alexandrians with questions about wildlife and animals in the community. More information can be found at Alexandria-Animals.org.
NOW THROUGH DEC. 12
Fall Salon. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Torpedo Factory Art Center is encouraging people to bring home original work from local artists this fall with major offerings dedicated to making art buying simple and affordable. Target Gallery's next group exhibition, Fall Salon, features 70 works by artists from the greater metropolitan region, all priced at $1,000 or less.

NOW THRU DEC. 17

THE HOLIDAYS IN DEL RAY
Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Del Ray Tree and Wellness. At Magnolia Tree House, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel Frazelle (clarinet) and Sophia Kim Cook (piano) for an even of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of chamber music followed by a post-concert reception with light refreshments. This recital is presented as part of the Adopt a Chair program. Cost: $40 Adult • $5 Youth • $5 Student. Visit the website: https://alexsym.org/performance/winter-recital/

SATURDAY/DEC. 11
Market Square Concert. 3 p.m. At Market Square, 300 King Street, Alexandria. Featuring the Alexandria Harmonizers Men's Chorus as it brings fun and good cheer to the holiday season. Enjoy one of the best a cappella singing in the region by a group that never fails to surprise and entertain. A wide variety of seasonal music will be performed and the men promise a spirited and moving experience. Visit the website: www.harmonizers.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 11
Storytime with Young Historians. 10-10:30 a.m. Virtual. Only. Pick up an activity kit at Beatley Central Library before the event. Geared for ages 4-8, but all are welcome. December's theme is Kwanzaa.

CATHERINE'S
Dec. 8-19
Twelve Days of Wellness. At Catherine's, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Join Catherine's for a spirited and moving experience. A wide variety of seasonal music will be performed and the men promise a spirited and moving experience. Visit the website: www.harmonizers.org.

NEWTON'S
Dec. 5 at 6 p.m. Dec. 11 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. 6th Dec. 6 from 6 p.m.-9 p.m. Shops of Fall Salon. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel Frazelle (clarinet) and Sophia Kim Cook (piano) for an even of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of chamber music followed by a post-concert reception with light refreshments. This recital is presented as part of the Adopt a Chair program. Cost: $40 Adult • $5 Youth • $5 Student. Visit the website: https://alexsym.org/performance/winter-recital/

NOVEMBER/DEC. 12
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Winter Recital. 7:30 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel Frazelle (clarinet) and Sophia Kim Cook (piano) for an evening of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of chamber music followed by a post-concert reception with light refreshments. This recital is presented as part of the Adopt a Chair program. Cost: $40 Adult • $5 Youth • $5 Student. Visit the website: https://alexsym.org/performance/winter-recital/

SUNDAY/DEC. 12
"Simple Gifts" with the Colonial Handbell Ringers. 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. At Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum, Alexandria. The Colonial English Handbell Ringers are excited to return to ring in the holiday season with you with the holiday concert, "Simple Gifts.

The program will include several traditional carols, kids classics like "Frosty the Snowman," the "Song of Gladness" and "Bell Talk!

The performance is appropriate for all ages and is free.

JAN. 7-29
The "Little Monsters" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features artists' interpretation of their own little monsters—from fantasy to reality, from cute to terrifying. Take a peek at some fun workshops available to you during the exhibit. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed January 30).

THE BIRCHMERE
At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All shows are at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted. Tickets available at Ticketmaster.com. Contact The Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or www.Birchmere.com.

December
Thu. 2: Squirrel Nut Zippers "Holiday Caravan Tour 2021" $45.00
Fri. 3: Chris Botti $110.00
Sat. 4: Chris Botti $110.00
Sun. 5: Dar Williams w/ Emily Scott Robinson. $45.00
Mon. 6: Steven Curtis Chapman Acoustic Christmas! $49.50
Tue. 7: America "50th Anniversary" $99.50 SOLD OUT
Wed. 8: Eric Benet $69.50
Sat. 9: KT Tunstall w/ Haley Johnson $45.00
Fri. 10: Maggie Rose "Have A Seat Tour 2021" w/ Thenn Vibes & Dylan Hartigan $29.50

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Alexandria Gazette Packet December 2-8, 2021 13
**DEC. 1**

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Open nightly 5 to 10 p.m.; January 8 to February 27, 2023 (ice skating only). Open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring an ice rink, multiple new holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, a retail area, food, music and more. Admission: $9 for general admission to Village; $22 for village admission and skate; beginning January 8, $14 for ice skating; free for ages 2 and under. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

**SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS**

Waterfront Art Market. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center’s waterfront entrance, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Visit the Waterfront entrance at Torpedo Factory Art Center to discover new artwork from a rotating lineup of the Art Center’s studio artists. Find paintings and photographs to jewelry and wearable art, then step inside to browse the three floors of the Art Center for even more original art for purchase. Visit torpedofactory.org

**NOW THRU DEC. 31**

Jingle Journey. At various locations in the Del Ray neighborhood, Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. With your little ones, go on a magical scavenger hunt through Del Ray and piece together the Jingle Journey story. This event is free but requires online registration. Visit https://www.artonthehorizon.org/jingle-journey.html

**BREAKFAST WITH SANTA**

Saturdays and Sundays in December. 8-10 a.m. Invite friends and family to celebrate the holidays with Alexandria Restaurant Partners’ Breakfast with Santa. Enjoy a festive breakfast menu, Prosecco Bellinis (for adults), takeaway treats for the kids, and a family photo with Santa Claus. (Saturday, 12/4; Sunday, 12/5; Saturday 12/11; Sunday 12/12; Saturday, 12/18; Sunday, 12/19; and Friday, 12/24) and Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24th at the locations below:

Ada’s on the River ($55 adults/$35 children)  
Phone: 703-638-1400

Mia’s Italian Kitchen ($49 adults/$29 children)  
Phone: 703-997-5300

Thiesman’s Restaurant ($45 adults/$25 children)  
Phone: 703-739-0777

**DEC. 2, 3, 9, 21**

Museum Shopping Evenings at Carlyle House. 5 to 8 p.m. At the Carlyle House Museum Shop, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Enjoy shopping shopping small and local. Stop by the Carlyle House Museum Shop for wonderful holiday gifts. An assortment of Virginia made items, ornaments, soaps, and more are available for purchase. Visit novaparks.com.

**DEC. 3-4**

The Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend and Parade will be held Dec. 3-4 in Alexandria. Campagna Center is thrilled to celebrate the 50th Anniversary Scottish Walk Weekend in Alexandria. In 1749, the City of Alexandria was established by Scottish merchants. Dozens of Scottish clans dressed in colorful tartans parade through the streets of Old Town, joined by pipe and drum bands from around the region, as well as terriers and hounds. The weekend kicks off with the Taste of Scotland Scotch Tasting on Friday evening in the Atrium Building. The parade will depart from St. Asaph St. heading north, head east from Queen St., head south from Fairfax St., and head west from King Street, ending right in front of City Hall. Admission: Free to view; $75 registration fee to march in parade; $200 and above for Taste of Scotland Scotch Tasting. Visit the website: campagnacenter.org

**DEC. 3, 4, 10, 11**

Mount Vernon by Candlelight. At George Washington’s Mount Vernon, 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. Take a candlelit guided tour and learn about holiday traditions in 18th-century Virginia. Visit with Mrs. Washington and other 18th-century residents of Mount Vernon in a 45-minute candlelit tour of the Mount Vernon estate, followed by a reception. Hear stories of Christmas past and future to find the true meaning of the holidays. Visit the website: thelittletheatre.com

**DEC. 3 TO 5, 10**

TO 12, 17 TO 19  
Del Ray Artisans’ Fine Art & Fine Craft Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Fridays, 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Featuring unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass and much more from different artisans each weekend. Plus, purchase 2022 wall calendars, cookbooks and tote bags to support Del Ray artisans. Visit the website: delrayartisans.org

**DEC. 4**

“The Nutcracker.” 12 p.m. and 5 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. Enjoy this exciting Metropolitan School of the Arts production as Clara fights the evil Mouse Queen and her army of fierce mice to save her and kind Nutcracker doll. On this great adventure, Clara will be transported to a fantastical land where she will meet the dazzling Snow Queen, dancing snowflakes, the Sugar Plum Fairy and many more wonderful characters. Visit the website: metropolitanschools.org

**DEC. 4, 11, 18**

Candlelight Tours at Lee-Fendall House. On the half hour from 5:30 p.m. through 7:30 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Celebrate the holiday season with evening candlelight tours of the Lee-Fendall House decked out in Victorian splendor. Visit the website: candlelighttouralex.org

**DEC. 5**

**ALL THROUGH JAN. 2**

Ice & Lights: The Winter Village at Cameron Run, 4001 Eisenhower Ave., Alexandria. Open nightly 5 to 10 p.m.; January 8 to February 27, 2023 (ice skating only). Open Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featuring an ice rink, multiple new holiday light displays perfect for Instagramming, a retail area, food, music and more. Admission: $9 for general admission to Village; $22 for village admission and skate; beginning January 8, $14 for ice skating; free for ages 2 and under. Visit novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

**SATURDAY/DEC. 4**

Holiday Festival at Torpedo Factory Art Center. 2 to 8 p.m. At Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St., Alexandria. Torpedo Factory Art Center joins the fun on Alexandria’s most festive weekend of the year. Santa and Mrs. Claus arrive by fireboat at 5:30 p.m. on the Waterfront. Music fills the halls and the waterfront, beckoning people to browse three floors of open artists’ studios. Visit the website: torpedofactory.org

**SATURDAY/DEC. 4**

Scottish Walk Open House at Carlyle House. 12 to 4 p.m. At Carlyle House, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. After the Scottish Walk Parade, enter the museum gates and step back in time for a free open house in the spirit of the holiday season. Please note that Carlyle House will letting smaller groups in at a time to allow for social distancing inside the museum. Visit the website: novaparks.com

**SATURDAY/DEC. 4**

Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Old Town’s historic waterfront will shine bright for the 21st annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon. Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.; Dockside festivities 2 to 8 p.m. at Waterfront Park (1A Prince St.). Parade viewing areas along one mile of the Old Town Alexandria waterfront stretching from Founders Park (351 N. Union St.) to Ford’s Landing Park (99 Franklin St.) Boat parade dockside festivities will entertain parade-goers from 2 to 8 p.m. in Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street. Festivities include a pop-up beer garden from Port City Brewing Company. At 3:30 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina before attending the annual Torpedo Factory Art Center Holiday Festival. Admission: Free; $ for food/drink and some activities visit Alexandria-VA.com/boatparade
The antique toy exhibit will also be on view. Space is limited to 10 people at a time, and advance reservations are required. Visit the website: leefendallhouse.org

BEGINNING DEC. 5
Old Town Boutique District’s Holiday Week. At various boutiques throughout Old Town Alexandria. Head into December with the first-ever OTBD holiday week, kicking off Sunday, December 5. Look out for a kick-off event at Hummingbird, tastings, trunk shows and doorbuster deals, and spend the holidays in the most magical place on earth. Visit oldtownboutiquedistrict.com

SUNDAY/DEC. 5
Town of Herndon’s Holiday Arts & Craft Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. At the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Over 70 artisans and crafts people will exhibit and sell their handmade work at this annual arts and crafts show sponsored by the Herndon Parks and Recreation Department. A variety of handcrafted items and fine art will be on sale at the show including jewelry, Christmas ornaments, decorations, original artwork, baked goods, stained glass, wooden crafts, doll clothes, and much more. Visit herndon-va.gov/recreation.

SUNDAY/DEC. 5
Del Ray Holiday Tree & Menorah Lighting. 6 p.m. Pat Miller Neighborhood Square at Mount Vernon Ave. and E. Oxford Ave., Alexandria. Kick off the holidays with a visit to Del Ray for the annual holiday tree and menorah lighting. Continue the celebration and start your holiday shopping with a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue, which will be illuminated by thousands of luminarias and feature storefront windows hand-painted for the holidays. Visit visitdelray.com

DEC. 5 AND 12
Holiday Kissing Ball Workshops. 2 p.m. At Lee-Fendall House, 614 Oronoco St., Alexandria. Learn the history behind using greenery to decorate homes for the holidays, then craft your own boxwood kissing ball using fresh cuttings from the Lee-Fendall garden. Note that these workshops will be held outdoors, so please dress appropriately. Admission: $25 per person (advance registration required). Visit the website: leefendallhouse.org

DEC. 5, 12, 19
Old Town North Holiday Markets. 1 to 3:30 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 N. Royal St., Alexandria. In addition to Old Town North’s weekly Thursday Farmers Market, the Old Town North Community Partnership will be hosting three holiday markets at Montgomery Park. Explore the festive, European-style markets for hand-crafted gift items and specialty food items. Visit the website: www.oldtownnorth.org

WEDNESDAY/DEC. 8
Winter Recital. 7:30 p.m. at The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street, Alexandria. Join Alexandria Symphony Orchestra musicians Meredith Riley (violin), Daniel

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Holiday Calendar

FRIDAY/DEC. 10
Alexandria's Holiday Concert. 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Del Ray United Methodist Church, 100 E. Windsor Ave., Alexandria. Celebrate the season together again at the always popular -- and free -- Alexandria Holiday Concert. Conductor Mike Evans and the hometown Alexandria Citizens Band will play your holiday favorites, and ask you to sing along for a few of the pieces. Dress in your holiday sweaters and Santa hats. Free tickets available at: https://alexym.org/performance/winter-recital/

SATURDAY/DEC. 11
Christmas Market and Holiday Craft A Victorian Christmas. 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Carlyle Square Park, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Experience the holiday season with Carlyle House focusing on how the Carlyles and their enslaved workers observed the holidays during the 18th century. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. All participants including those under the age of 5 must be registered. Visit novaparks.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11
6th Annual Del Ray Candy Cane Bar Crawl. 1 to 6 p.m. At various locations along Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Take a break from the bustle of holiday preparations and enjoy specialty drinks and delights at Del Ray restaurants during a neighborhood bar crawl to benefit Neighborhood Health. Enjoy holiday costume contests for individuals and groups, raffle prizes and live music. Trolley transportation will be provided along the avenue. Visit the website: visitdelray.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 11
Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon. 5 to 8 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial. Under the direction of Music Director James Ross, the program will include excerpts from Handel's Messiah and familiar holiday carols and melodies. For Friday's performance, dancers from BalletNova take the stage with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker interspersed with music from Ellington's Nutcracker Suite. All children attending will be provided with sleigh bells for a surprise audience participation activity. Visit www.alexym.org or call (703) 548-0885.

DEC. 12, 18, 19
Tall Ship Providence Christmas Story Time. At 12 p.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. at Tall ship Providence, 1 Cameron St., Alexandria. Come aboard the tall ship Providence for a special Christmas story time. This year's tale will be "The Christmas Ship," the true story of the schooner Rose Simmons, the ship that for years supplied Christmas trees to the people of Chicago by making a dangerous winter crossing of Lake Michigan. This story is sure to delight young sailors ages 5 to 12. Check in at the Gazebo on the G-H Pier next to Founder's Park. Visit the website: tallshipprovidence.org

DEC. 17 AND 19
Holiday Concerts. Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m. at Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, and Sunday, Dec. 19 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial. Under the direction of Music Director James Ross, the program will include excerpts from Handel's Messiah and familiar holiday carols and melodies. For Friday's performance, dancers from BalletNova take the stage with selections from Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker interspersed with music from Ellington's Nutcracker Suite. All children attending will be provided with sleigh bells for a surprise audience participation activity. Visit www.alexym.org or call (703) 548-0885.

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N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. Discover how Christmas was celebrated when the Green family lived at Carlyle House and the Mansion House Hotel was being used as a Civil War hospital. Stay tuned for updates about live music. Tours offered of the first floor with timed entry on the hour and half hour. Space is limited and reservations are required. Visit the website: novaparks.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 17
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Presents: Home for the Holidays. 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Händel’s Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

SUNDAY/DEC. 19
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra Presents: Home for the Holidays. 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr., Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Händel’s Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

FRIDAY/DEC. 24
Waterskiing Santa. 1 p.m. At Waterfront Park (1 King St. and 1A Prince St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Founders Park (351 N. Union St.) and Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.) Gather along historic Alexandria’s Potomac River waterfront for a spectacular show by Waterskiing Santa and his merry crew. Come early to see the pre-show (on jet skis). Visit waterskiingsanta.com

FRIDAY/DEC. 31
Olde Year’s Day at Torpedo Factory Art Center. 1 to 5 p.m. At The Rachel M. Schlesinger Center for Performing Arts NOVA Alexandria Campus, 4915 East Campus Drive, Alexandria. This December, the ASO brings back the joy of live holiday music that audiences yearned for in 2020. ASO will accompany dancers from BalletNOVA with selections from Tchaikovsky’s Nutcracker. Alexandria Choral Society joins the ASO for choruses from Händel’s Messiah and will lead the audience in popular holiday carols. Visit the website: alexsym.org

N. Union St. and Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.) Gather along historic Alexandria’s Potomac River waterfront for a spectacular show by Waterskiing Santa and his merry crew. Come early to see the pre-show (on jet skis). Visit waterskiingsanta.com

Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon will be held Dec. 17-18 in Mount Vernon.

Alexandria. Experience the region’s signature New Year’s Eve festival of music and more. Enjoy live performances throughout the day and into the evening for kids, teens, adults and seniors. New events include a kick-off at Market Square and a “Battle of the Buskers,” leading up to the midnight countdown and fireworks finale over the Potomac River. Visit the event website for a full schedule of events. Visit the website: firstnightalexandria.org.

### Holiday Calendar

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**Christmas Illuminations at Mount Vernon**

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**Children’s & Teens’ Connection 2021**

During the last weeks of each year, this newspaper devotes its pages to the creativity of local students and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The annual Children’s Connection (including Children’s Gazette and Children’s Almanac) is a long-time tradition.

With high visibility, this is a great advertising opportunity for every industry, so give us a call about rates and ad sizes at 703-778-9431 or email sales@connectionnewspapers.com.

To submit art, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture or gardens or other creative efforts, please email kimm.mary@gmail.com.
Teen Film Makes It to the Alexandria Film Festival
A story about friendship, schoolwork and assumptions was shot in Old Town.

By Mike Salmon
The Connection

There were four teen-age girls embarking on a school project that turned out to be a small part of what they really learned about each other and relationships in general. This was the plot of a film called “The Homework Club,” created by 15-year-old Hallie Crawford that landed a spot in the 2021 Alexandria Film Festival.

“We don’t really know that we have things in common until we get to know each other,” Hallie said. Set on the streets and waterfront area of Old Town, Alexandria, the short film involved the girls doing the project as a punishment of sorts for doing something wrong in school, similar to the brat-pack classic “The Breakfast Club,” from the 1980s. “I love that movie,” said Hallie. The girls went from the waterfront to the Torpedo Factory, where they remembered an experience years ago when they were younger. An argument ensued, and the fledgling actresses gave stress on camera their best shot.

The cast included Sophia Webster, who is a sophomore at West Potomac High School, Jasmine Williams, who is home schooled, and Charlotte Benson, who is a classmate of Hallie’s at Bishop Ireton. The co-producer was Ella Schmutz, the screenwriter was Olivia Dedham, and Hallie’s father, Brett Crawford, did some of the camera work and editing.

At school, the Cappies Theater Award program was announced, and it included an award for films too, so that gave Hallie the inspiration to make a movie and possibly submit it for a Cappie. “That got me really interested,” she said.

Before shooting last winter, they planned it out, and held a casting call to find the rest of the cast, and pulled it all together. It was a lesson in perseverance, her father Brett Crawford said. “A fun experience but a challenging one,” he said.

For one thing, they started filming in February, but as they got into spring, flowers bloomed and trees got leaves, so the background was changing. This presented a challenge since the plot is all set in one day. “This required some creative editing,” he said. “It was something that everyone enjoyed,” he added.

There was a dance scene to some non-descript music so there weren’t copyright issues, and arguments and thoughts that were expressed covertly, but all worked out in the end. One thing they didn’t have was a stage director that ran around with a storyboard, mapping out the scenes. The cell phone worked for that. “We watched the dance scene on our phones,” Hallie said.

Hallie noticed a film festival was happening in the city, so she looked into it. “I got excited about it,” she said.

Cell Phone Cinema

Technology makes filmmaking more accessible to everyone these days, since just about everything can be captured with the cell phone. “Filmmaking is no longer a Hollywood-studio-only enterprise,” noted Patti North, executive director at the Alexandria Film Festival.

“That’s one of the reasons the film festival exists—to give independent filmmakers an audience for independent films. Hence our motto ‘celebrating independents,’ North said.

Although Hallie has achieved a lot by being in the Alexandria Film Festival at the age of 15, another teen named Julia Hocker was in the festival a few years ago. Hocker’s first film was a winner in the Burke & Herbert Bank “Lights, Camera, Save” competition, and she went on to produce others.

Aladdin, Now 14, Is Back

In 1787, George Washington paid 18 shillings to bring a camel to Mount Vernon to entertain his guests. Now you can come to Mount Vernon and meet Aladdin, the Christmas Camel through Jan. 7.

When Aladdin hears the familiar hum of the engine and tires rolling across the gravel path, the 7-foot-tall camel stands up and hurries to the fence. Having stayed at Mount Vernon every holiday season since he was eleven months old, the camel knows the approaching vehicle is bringing him food. Lisa Pregent is a member of the Mount Vernon livestock team and the resident camel connoisseur. She has worked at the estate for 21 years and has taken care of Aladdin since his first visit.

Pregent and the livestock team begin their day long before visitors arrive. They feed the 1400 pound camel at 7:30 a.m. and again later in the day.

Aladdin has lived in Virginia his entire life and is well acclimated to the cold weather. “I brought Aladdin home at 3 months old and took on the ‘mothering’ duties of bottle feeding and play teaching,” said Jennifer Cossette, Aladdin’s owner. As part of the Pony to Go family, Aladdin lives in Berryville, Va. with an emu and miniature horse. “He seems to enjoy the company and always comes to the fence to greet visitors,” said Cossette. “He definitely has the personality of a dog, coming when you call him and eager to give kisses.”

The rest of the year, Aladdin entertains at birthday parties and weddings. Although he is not the camel in Geico’s “Hump Day” commercial, he has made special appearances at Geico events.

Visit Aladdin at Mount Vernon during the holiday season, until Jan. 7.
Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of Family Services’ BeFriend-A-Child mentor program. The mentors provide opportunities for companionship, guidance and support to children who have been abused and neglected, or who are at risk of abuse and neglect. Contact Ibrahim Khalil (ibrahim.khalil@fairfaxcounty.gov) at 703-324-4547.

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteers.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

RSVP, a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional mileage and meal reimbursement, and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria’s preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for “Space of Her Own,” and “Space of His Own,” serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making positive choices.


CALCER

Sat. 11: Southside Johnny & The Asbury Jukes $49.50
Sun. 12: “Seasons Greetings from the Ozone” Bill Kirchen & Too Much Fun with Lost Planet Airmen #1 $39.50
Mon. 13: Dr. John Tichy – A Honky Tonk Holiday & Tribute to Commander Cody $39.50
Tue. 14: Shaun Cassidy $55.00
Wed. 15: A John Waters Christmas $55.00
Thu. 16: Carbon Leaf $39.50
Fri. 17: Carbon Leaf $39.50
Sat. 18: Tom Papa $35.00 (Resched from 3/26/21. All 3/26/21 tickets honored) SOLD OUT!
Sun. 19: Luther Re-Lives Holiday Show featuring William “Smooth” Wardlaw $45.00
Mon. 20: Puddles Pity Party $49.50
Sun. 26: MAYSA Holiday Show $69.50
Wed. 29: Hank Williams Tribute w/ Cathy Fink & Marcy Marxer, Robin & Linda Williams, Phil Wiggins, Patrick McAvinue, Mark Schatz $29.50
Thu. 30: Bela Dona Band $35.00
Fri. 31: New Years Eve with The Seldom Scene, Eastman String Band, & Wicked Sycamore - 8pm - $49.50

Join Friends’ Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make sure the City’s most vulnerable residents have a chance to thrive, then consider joining the Board of Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center. The Friends Board is an all-volunteer group of residents that oversees the administration of one of Alexandria’s top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsofAMHC@gmail.com.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or donalrea@aol.com.

Volunteer Drivers Needed. Drivers needed by the American Cancer Society to take cancer patients to treatment in Northern Virginia. To volunteer, call 1-800-227-2345 or go to cancer.org/drive.

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Obituary

Cyril Desmond Calley

Cyril Desmond Calley, known as “Dez” Calley to many, passed away on November 18, 2021, after sustaining major injuries from a car accident on November 10th. He was 90 years old, and is pre-deceased by his wife, Elizabeth Lula Calley. Born on November 9, 1931 in Jersey City, New Jersey, he was raised there until the age of eight, when he moved to Bayonne, New Jersey. He was an only child until age 14, when he was joined by his younger brother Bob Bozzo. Upon graduating from Bayonne Senior High School in 1949, he attended George Washington University and later the Naval Academy, from which he graduated in 1953. Dez then attended USAF Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he also played on the varsity football team. In January, 1953, he was sent to Frankfurt, Germany and then Pisa, Italy for an eighteen month tour. Upon return to the U.S., he continued to be stationed at Air Force bases in Oklahoma and Pope Air Force base in Fayetteville, North Carolina, until his discharge in February, 1955. Dez then continued his studies at Parks College, a part of St. Louis University, graduating with an Aeronautical Engineering degree in 1957.

At the same time Dez was completing his studies, he met Elizabeth “Betty Lou” Soule. They were married in 1956 and had the first of eight children in 1957. Upon graduation, Dez worked briefly for McDonald Aircraft Corporation, then relocated to Arlington, Virginia to work for the U.S. Navy. In his spare time, he applied for and was accepted to Georgetown University to attend Law School from 1958 through 1962. At that point, he shifted focus to practicing law and secured a job as a Securities and Exchange Commission in Washington, then as Assistant City Attorney in Alexandria, Virginia, from 1964 through 1976, followed by election three times as City Attorney from 1976 through 1986.

After many years in public service, Dez Calley, Bud Hart and Herb Karp formed a partnership practicing law in Alexandria, Virginia, focusing on land acquisition and development. One of the most notable cases handled by the firm was the acquisition and development case of the Alexandria Railway, Potomac Yards. Eventually, Dez and Betty Lou sold their house in Alexandria and moved to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, where they remained until their recent deaths. Cyril Dez Calley, along with his wife Betty Lou, who were married for nearly 65 years, leaves a legacy of focusing on love of family, including eight children: Susan (Edmund) of Orlando, Florida; William (Suzanne) of Virginia Beach, Virginia; Robert (Joelyn) of Elkton, Maryland and Safety Harbor, Florida; Mary (Dexter) of Bullock, North Carolina; Michael (Susanna) of Middleton, Virginia; Elizabeth (Tony) of Haymarket, Virginia; John (Jennifer) of Richmond, Virginia; and Daniel (Nicola) of County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, as well as thirteen grandchildren: Michael, Ryan, Wesley, Emily, Taylor, Christopher, George, Shannon, Edward, Nicholas, Georgia, Erin and Jack. Dez’s brother Bob (Merci), of Wyoming, Delaware, and their children Daniel, Amy and Laura, also have been close to the immediate family.

A funeral Mass will be held at the Basilica of St. Mary Catholic Church, located to the immediate family.

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A funeral Mass will be held at the Basilica of St. Mary Catholic Church, located at 310 South Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia at 2 pm on December 3, 2021, followed by a graveside service at St. Mary’s Cemetery at 1000 S Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, and a reception afterward. The family welcomes all who would like to participate at either location.

Legals

NOTICE FOR BID

BIDS IN THE FORM OF A PROPOSED AGREEMENT ARE INVITED BY THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA, FOR THE GRANT OF A NON-EXCLUSIVE FRANCHISE PERMITTING FRANCHISEES TO USE THE PUBLIC RIGHTS-OF-WAYS IN THE CITY FOR THE DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE, REPAIR, UPGRADE, REMOVAL AND OPERATION OF A BROADBAND NETWORK FOR OFFERING INTERNET ACCESS AND RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CITY.

THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR THE FRANCHISE ARE ATTACHED TO THE ORDINANCE AND ARE ON THE CITY’S WEBSITE: https://www.alexandriava.gov/Broadband

THE TERM OF THE FRANCHISE IS NEGOTIABLE BUT SHALL BE FOR AN INITIAL TERM OF 20 YEARS WITH UP TO 3 ADDITIONAL EXTENSIONS OF 3 YEARS EACH.

ALL BIDS ARE TO BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 4201 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, AT OR BEFORE 11:00 AM ON DECEMBER 21ST, 2021.

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

Obituary

Safe and Conflict-free Holiday Cheer

Celebrating the holidays with both vaccinated and unvaccinated friends and family.

By Marilyn Campbell

E ggnog, yule logs and champagne cocktails are making a reappearance this year as in-person holiday parties resume and virtual gatherings go into hiatus. Joining these celebrations might be guests who have not been fully vaccinated. Asking for proof of vaccination at the door does little to create a festive mood, but celebrating safely is a priority this season.

There are several ways to enjoy holiday traditions and protect your health, said Kurt Larrick, assistant director, Arlington County Department of Human Services. “The best way to minimize COVID-19 risk and keep your family and friends safer is to get vaccinated if you’re eligible.”

From keeping a space well ventilated to holding celebrations outdoors if the weather permits, Larrick says that it is possible to maintain a semblance of safety at celebrations where there are some in attendance that have not been fully vaccinated.

Taking layered precautions provides an extra level of safety, said Lucy H. Caldwell, Director of Communications for the Fairfax County Health Department. “Including wearing a mask indoors when you’re around those not in your house hold. … Getting booster shots if appropriate and staying home if you’re sick,” added Caldwell.

Hosting smaller gatherings this year can also help minimize the risk of COVID-19. “You might choose to wear a mask, regardless of the level of transmission, if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated,” he said. “If you are gathering with a group of people from multiple households and potentially from different parts of the country, you could consider additional precautions like taking COVID-19 tests … in advance of gathering to further reduce risk.”

Having conversations to discuss whether guests have been vaccinated can be fraught with apprehension and discomfort. “Establish contact with all guests in a general way, and say you are looking forward to them joining you for a holiday party, dinner, or open house,” said Linda McKenna Guly, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at Marymount University. “In that general invitation, like an Evite or group email, state something like, ‘Sadly, we are not out of the woods yet. Everyone in our home is expected to be vaccinated.’”

Be clear about your decision and avoid defending or debating your stance on vaccinations. “Issue the invitation as soon as possible, giving people time to respond or at least consider your requirement,” said Guly. “In other words, no last-minute battles.”

“It’s important to make sure unvaccinated friends or family don’t feel like they have a scarlet letter on their chest,” added Allyson Bohlke, LCSW, a Bethesda therapist who specializes in conflict resolution. “Show compassion. You don’t want anyone to feel judged or shunned. Remember that they have the right to make their own choices and those choices should be respected.”

Treating all guests as equals will help quell any dissonance between those who’ve been vaccinated and those who have not. “At an office party, for example, you can take everyone’s temperature before they enter the venue,” said Bohlke. “If it’s financially and logistically doable, you can give everyone a rapid test before they enter. Regardless of their vaccination status, asking those who are positive or doubtful to use an antiseptic or climb into a separate room if they feel like they have some input into the decision.”

If you welcome only people who are vaccinated to the event, be sure to say so up front in the evite or general email invitation, suggests Linda McKenna Guly, Ph.D.
The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and canative resources to assist them with caregiving.

The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAOSS@alexandriava.gov. FACES Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children’s learning.

Support Group in English, every Monday, 6-7:30 p.m. at ARHA Main Building, 401 Wythe St.

Support Group in Spanish, every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at Community Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road.

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8035 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m. 1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce in a logical, yet compassionately way. The workshop fee is $25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

ONGOING
Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program. The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of $2,000. The current program period is through Dec. 31, 2019. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit www.alexandriav.gov/tes.

Robust Walking. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m. at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Ave. Free 55+ robust walking 1-hour exercise class (with chair exercise option). No class on holidays. Contact jflkriegconsulting@yahoo.com.

Seeking Donations. Computer CORE, which is dedicated to helping low-income adults become computer literate is seeking donations. Visit www.computercore.org/contribute.

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4600 Toney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Tooyer, ktooyer@ccda.net.

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By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For the moment, I’m going to roll with the punch and not slip on any slope, real or imagined. The slope, metaphorically referred to, is my calcium level. A measure in my monthly lab work which needs to be normal-ish for me to continue receiving a bone-strengthening injection (Denosumab), a parallel treatment to my thyroid cancer medication. The reason I even have to get this shot is, you guessed it, it’s a side effect of my thyroid cancer drug. In early Nov., and the following week’s re-test, the calcium level remained abnormally low. As of this result, my monthly treatment has been delayed until early Dec. That means, I will have missed a month of treatment; in my mind never a good thing. Whether skipping one dose like this could actually cause irreparable damage, I certainly don’t know. But I have to admit, it worries the hell out of me, and at this late stage of my stage-IV cancer life; with a re-diagnosis to consider, I don’t need anything else to worry about. I mean, for all I know, the shot is actually working, and not receiving my every-four-week injection might put me at some kind of risk. The most significant risk being that if my calcium level does not improve, I might have to stop the treatment, or possibly, reduce the dosage of the pill I take for the thyroid cancer, a dosage which has been reduced twice already. This has always been a concern of my oncologist: the side effects of the treatment for side effects detailing the treatment for the underlying cancer. And generally speaking, untreated cancer doesn’t usually resolve itself in the patient’s favor. A side effect, in and of itself, is a problem, but more so the problem, its potential impact on your primary cancer treatment/protocol. I can’t help but wonder if I’m, after nearly 13 years, finally heading down that dusty trail. However, I’m not going to go there yet, right? Where I hope I’m going, as I’ve gone before, is the sweet spot, so to speak. The sweet zone where the dosage is high enough to combat the cancer but low enough to sustain one’s quality of life. This has been a guiding tenet of my oncologist’s treatment plan for me. He’s always been sensitive to the demands of this patient on chemotherapy, and even on occasion, was not uncomfortable suggesting that I take a break from treatment and try to enjoy life while I felt good enough. I never took him up on the offer as I remained hopeful and tried not to think too deeply about what he was inferring; that my life was going to be getting worse/more demanding and that ultimately, I would have to stop my treatment and eventually succumb to the disease. Instead, I just chose to continue the treatment and not think about the unpleasant possibilities.

Though this ‘sweet-spot issue has only occurred recently, my concern of it happening has existed since my original diagnosis. I remember asking the oncologist about this medication-having-to-be-stopped issue at our original Team Lourie meeting in late Feb., 2009, he acknowledged the possibility. (As did I; remembering the circumstances surrounding my late mother-in-law’s death from cancer.) I wouldn’t say I’ve anticipated it, exactly, but I have been fearful of its inevitability. Nonetheless, until recently, it was hardly a blip on my radar; more like it was tucked away in a filing cabinet. Well, it’s here now. And so are you regular readers. No worries, really. This is life in the cancer whirl. Up and down and all around. Between office appointments, referrals, lab work, various scans, X-Rays, medication-side effects, the sleepless nights and agonizing waits for results, unless you find a way, emotionally, to balance all the news, good or bad, the actual cancer is the least of your problems. Coping becomes the most of it.

I can’t say any of it has been fun, but occasionally there’s been a wry smile. Cancer is a very serious business. Contributing to its seriousness seems counter productive. I’ve never been one to make a bad situation worse. And I’m certainly not going to start now.

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Delegate Kaye Kory (D-38th) chairs the Virginia General Assembly Animal Welfare caucus and has sponsored several bills to protect animals.

What is a ‘puppy mill?’ Kory explains, “It’s commonly understood that puppy mills are facilities that breed many dogs at the lowest expense and dogs aren’t treated well; are even treated cruelly. Some conditions are such that it hurts your heart and turns your stomach. Banning puppy mills is the way this country should go.”

Where do puppy stores get their dogs? Kory says, “In the past, this has been largely puppy mills ... That was the reason legislation we’ve worked on required certification of health; to protect dogs and owners, and detect puppy mills.”

Kory advises that it’s good to avoid puppy mills. She adds that as long as there is consumer demand, it will perpetuate puppy mills. She suggests “instead to adopt rescue dogs and cats, or seek out reputable small breeders ... but please visit rescue more than once before you purchase.”

Dogs at a Virginia puppy store sourced from out of state puppy mills before seizure by animal control for medication violations (May 2019)
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Stunning 3-bedroom, 3.5-bath townhouse walking distance to Ballston Metro, Ballston Common, restaurants, and shopping. Fully fenced front yard, open floor plan with morning and evening light, rooftop terrace, and 2-car garage. 4338 N Henderson Road Ann Dozier Michael 703.608.5218 www.AnnDozierMichael.com

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