

# Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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JUNE 23, 2022

## Journey to Freedom Freedom House Museum celebrates grand opening.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
GAZETTE PACKET

**I**t was one of the largest slave trading companies in the country. In the mid-19th century, the Franklin and Armfield Slave Pen at 1315 Duke Street trafficked thousands of slaves through Alexandria with slave traders continuously owning the property until 1861.

Now known as the Freedom House Museum, the historic site, originally built in 1812, celebrated

“The city is to be applauded for what has been preserved and presented here at the Freedom House Museum.”

— Virginia Del. Delores McQuinn (D-70th)

its opening June 20 as part of the city’s Juneteenth events.

“This is very exciting and the culmination of many years of work,” said Audrey Davis, Director of Alexandria’s Black History Mu-



A Civil war-era image of 1315 Duke Street, the site of Franklin and Armfield, one of the nation’s largest slave trading companies. The site is now home to the Freedom House Museum.

seum. “But this is just the first mile marker. We want to do so much more with the site so we are looking for a lot of community engagement and hope that people in the community will want to work with us for the next stage.”

The opening celebration took place at the Shiloh Baptist Church Worship Center and featured speakers including Mayor Justin Wilson, former City Manager Mark Jinks, Northern Virginia Urban League board chair Letty Maxwell and City Poet Laureate Zeina Az-zam. Virginia Del. Delores McQuinn (D-70th), a leader for the state’s African American initiatives, provided the keynote address.

“I want to thank Alexandria for its preservation of history,” McQuinn said. “It is only when people pause, stop and look at what has happened in the past and say ‘this is worthy to be exposed’ that history will be told. The city is to be applauded for what has been preserved and presented here at the Freedom House Museum.”

Exhibits inside the museum depict the roles of the site, now designated a National Historic Landmark, and Alexandria in the domestic slave trade and include the 1315 Duke Street exhibit. Included are archaeological artifacts and a model of the complex.

The exhibit highlights the sto-  
SEE FREEDOM HOUSE, PAGE 6

OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA



Juli Blacker, a Museum Educator for the Office of Historic Alexandria, describes artifacts on display at the Freedom House Museum June 20.



Virginia Del. Delores McQuinn (D-70th) provides the keynote address at the grand opening celebration of the Freedom House Museum June 20 at the Shiloh Baptist Church Worship Center.



Destiny Wright, 2, holds a candle in memory of one of enslaved people whose names were remembered as part of the grand opening ceremony for the Freedom House Museum June 20 at the Shiloh Baptist Church Worship Center.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

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# Candidates Are Set for Fall Election

Don Beyer secures nomination as Republicans select candidates for fall election season.

## Election Results

- ❖ Don Beyer: 38,000 votes; 77 percent
- ❖ Victoria Virasingh: 11,000 votes; 23 percent

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
GAZETTE PACKET

Voters in Northern Virginia overwhelmingly supported four-term incumbent U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8), who received 77 percent of the vote on Tuesday against challenger Victoria Virasingh. It was one of five primaries in congressional districts across Virginia, which includes two of the most competitive races in the country this year: the 2nd Congressional District in Virginia Beach, where incumbent U.S. Rep. Elaine Luria (D-2) will face state Sen. Jen Kiggans (R-7) and the 7th Congressional District between Northern Virginia and the Richmond suburbs, where incumbent U.S. Rep. Abigail Spanberger (D-7) will face Prince William County Supervisor Yesli Vega.

“Here in our region and across the country we face a stark contrast between those who believe in building a strong and equitable economy, protecting our democracy, confronting the threat of climate change, making health care and housing more affordable, protecting Americans from gun violence, and protecting a woman’s right to choose, and those who do not,” said Beyer in a statement shortly after securing the Democratic nomination. “This is a challenging moment for the Democratic Party, and I look forward to throwing myself into that fight and making the case for equality, shared prosperity, and progress.”

**THE MOST** surprising result of the evening was in the 7th Congressional District, which stretches from Woodbridge and Dale City in Prince William County through Fredericksburg all the way down to Caroline County in the Richmond exurbs. Vega secured the Republican nomination with 29 percent of the vote in a crowded field that included state Sen. Bryce Reeves (R-17), who enjoyed wide name recognition from his decade in the Senate. But Vega secured

the support of conservative heavy hitters, including former Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas), U.S. Rep. Louie Gohmert (Texas-1), former U.S. Rep. Dave Brat (R-7) and Ginni Thomas, wife of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

“Vega’s very aggressive effort at courting very conservative voices in Virginia and nationally really paid off here,” said Stephen Farnsworth, director of the Center for Leadership and Media Studies at the University of Mary Washington. “In a race where a lot of the candidates on the ballot are going to be relatively unknown to a lot of the voters, Vega’s decision to come in with a lot of high-profile conservative endorsements helped push her across the finish line.”

In Virginia Beach, Kiggans was able to secure the Republican nomination against three competitors with 56 percent of the vote. First elected in 2019, she filled the seat of longtime state Sen. Frank Wagner (R-7) who did not seek reelection in a year that was ex-

**“Here in our region and across the country we face a stark contrast between those who believe in building a strong and equitable economy, protecting our democracy, confronting the threat of climate change, making health care and housing more affordable, protecting Americans from gun violence, and protecting a woman’s right to choose, and those who do not.”**

— U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (R-8)

pected to be difficult for Republicans. In the Senate, Kiggans has championed an unsuccessful bill to ban “inherently divisive concepts” from the classroom. She also supported an unsuccessful budget amendment to spend \$70 million to audit the 2020 election in Virginia. One of her opponents in the race was Jerome Bell, who called himself the “MAGA candidate” and called for executing anyone involved in what he false-



FILE PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE

This fall, incumbent U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-8) will face Republican challenger Karina Lipsman.

ly claimed was widespread voter fraud.

“Kiggans ran slightly left of Bell, but she was able to do that because Bell was so far to the right,” said Quentin Kidd, director of the Wason Center for Public Policy at Christopher Newport University.

Republican nomination against challenger Merritt Hale. For Beyer, the campaign against Virasingh featured an attack against his personal wealth.

On the campaign trail, she criticized the performance of his stock portfolio at a time when he was

Lipsman, who secured the Republican nomination in a convention last month. During a candidates forum before the convention she called for President Biden’s chief medical advisor Anthony Fauci to be jailed. After securing the nomination, she flip flopped and now says that she no longer believes Fauci should be jailed. In a written statement announcing her new position, she said data on the “effectiveness of many of the forced government recommendations is contrary to previous messaging from our government.” Through a campaign spokesman, Lipsman declined several requests to be interviewed about her flip flop on Fauci.

“It is deeply unfortunate, though not surprising, that some right-wing politicians have chosen to scapegoat Dr. Fauci and other public health officials,” said Aaron Fritschner, a spokesman for the Beyer campaign. “Congressman Beyer strongly opposed anti-science rhetoric and attacks on federal employees for doing their jobs during the previous administration, and he continues to be a stalwart supporter of science, and a defender of the civil service and the rule of law.”

“So it looks like a pretty clear and resounding victory for what might be called the middle of the Republican pack in the 2nd District because Bell stretched out the right side of the ideological spectrum so far.”

**BEYER WAS** one of two incumbents who beat back primary challengers Tuesday night. The other was incumbent U.S. Rep. Ben Cline (R-6), who secured the

in a position to have what she calls “privileged information” as a member of Congress. Beyer responded by moving all his investments from stocks to mutual funds to neutralize the criticism.

“Our campaign brought under-represented stories of Virginia’s 8th District to light and created a movement that we should all feel proud of,” Virasingh posted on Twitter.

This fall, Beyer will face Karina

## What to Expect on July 1st

BY DELEGATE PAUL KRIZEK



Krizek

The days are getting longer, and it is clear that summer is finally here to stay. There is much to be excited about over the warm months ahead, and included in that are the numerous new laws slated to go into effect next Friday, July 1st.

As you may know, on July 1st, Virginia's next fiscal year begins (FY23), and laws passed during the 2022 Regular Session become law. In a standard year, all laws passed during a regular session of the General Assembly take effect on the first day of July, unless another date is specified. Some laws may be passed with "emergency clauses", meaning they go into effect immediately upon the Governor's signature. Others may be passed with a delayed enactment, meaning they go into effect at another specified time, and yet others are passed with reenactment clauses, meaning they must be passed again in a consecutive year in order to become law. Below I highlight some laws going into effect next week, and what the consequences are that they will have on the Commonwealth.

❖ My legislative package (six bills) on charitable gaming will go into effect, ensuring that Virginia's charitable gaming system is a transparent and fair system, free from conflicts of interests, with clear definitions, serious penalties, a powerful enforcement arm, and with the goal of raising funds for charity as first and foremost in mind. The enactment of these laws could not come at a more ap-

propriate time, as cases have recently come to light where unscrupulous gaming operators extended predatory and irresponsible lines of credit to vulnerable gamblers, sometimes leaving them hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. Under these new strict laws, these practices are illegal.

❖ Delegate Carr's HB 632 (I originally copatroned Delegate Watts' similar HB 367, which was rolled into this legislation) will finally go into effect, allowing law enforcement to ticket drivers whose vehicles create excessive noise. Drivers who purposefully alter their vehicles by removing sound reduction exhaust mechanisms have created a scourge of noise across Virginia, but this is especially felt here in our community near the Beltway and along Richmond Highway. This will be a welcome policy change. HB 740 makes it a Class 6 felony for a person to willfully break, injure, tamper with, or remove any part or parts of any vehicle, aircraft, boat, or vessel to remove a catalytic converter or the parts thereof.

❖ Road safety is further improved with House Bill 67, which requires drivers who are transporting oversized loads that protrude from the sides of the vehicle by at least 4 inches or from the back by at least 4 feet, to mark the load with orange or red warning flags. This bill will keep our drivers more aware of hazards on the road around them and takes effect July 1, 2023.

❖ We further protect our communities with House Bill 283 and

Senate Bill 467, sponsored by Delegate Brewer and Senator Vogel, which establish training standards for law enforcement to recognize, prevent, and report human trafficking. Comprehensive training for our officers on human trafficking will help increase awareness about this criminal enterprise and reduce its incidence. I am glad to see laws such as this go into effect that complement my successful creation two years ago of the position of the State Trafficking Response Coordinator at the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

❖ Senate Bill 755, introduced by Senator Lucas, admits that our judicial system makes mistakes by compensating wrongfully incarcerated people \$55,000 per year of incarceration, adjusted for inflation. The bill requires 25% of the total compensation be paid immediately, with the remainder to be paid out over the next ten years. The bill also provides an income tax subtraction for any compensation awarded to the wrongfully incarcerated person.

❖ We also protect our youth from violence with HB 741, presented by Delegate Bell, which requires local schools to create detailed and accurate floor plans for school safety audits. This bill will enhance the security of our schools through the creation of more informed safety protocols and increase protection of our children at school. Also from Delegate Bell, HB 750 will prohibit any law enforcement agency in the Commonwealth from establishing a formal or informal quota that requires a law-enforcement officer to make a specific number of arrests or issue a specific number of summonses within a designated period of time.

❖ Delegate Roem's HB 925 requires health insurers, corporations providing health care coverage subscription contracts, health maintenance organizations, and the Commonwealth's Medicaid program to provide coverage for medically necessary prosthetic devices.

❖ In changes to workers compensation laws, HB 392 extends the date by which COVID-19 causing the death or disability of a health care provider is presumed to be an occupational disease compensable under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act. This date is extended to December 31, 2022. Another bill goes into effect which expands cancer presumption benefits for our firefighters who are at a far higher risk for developing cancer than the general public.

❖ In education, Delegate Roem's HB 583 requires each school board to adopt policies that prohibit the school board or any school board employee from denying a student the opportunity to participate in any extracurricular school activity because the student cannot pay for a meal at school or owes a school meal debt.

This year's General Assembly was filled with victories and defeats, with compromises and on-going stalemates. While I was dissatisfied with some of the bills passed, a majority of the bills this year were a victory, albeit small ones for the most part, and I was glad to help our Mount Vernon and Lee community by voting for legislation to protect our residents and improve our lives in this wonderful Commonwealth we call home. As always, it is my honor to represent the good people of the 44th (and future 16th) District.

## Unbalanced on Guns

Premier political pundit Michael Lee Pope strives for balance in "Ban Battle Botched," but struggles to attain it, giving quotes and graphics favorable to gun control almost twelve column inches, versus one column inch to opponents (the remaining column inches on the legislation's trip through the legislative labyrinth are investigative reporting worthy of a Virginia press award). The one column inch quoted an opponent who drove 12 hours to be at the rally against the bill, but not one of the four dozen legislators who voted against it. They might have pointed out that gun control

advocates can't have it both ways, insisting that the Second Amendment is limited to assuring that the general citizenry has familiarity with firearms so it can be readily mobilized as a militia to fight off an invasion and then turn around and insist on specifically banning "weapons of war" such as assault weapons used in such a mobilization. Gun controllers' "bait-and-switch" may be lost on sophisticated, well-educated liberals, but it isn't lost on the common folk whose trust for government political tactics of this sort undermine.

**Dino Drudi**  
Alexandria

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# Local Park Recognized by National Group as Community Forest

By SHIRLEY RUHE  
GAZETTE PACKET

In April and May Monticello Park in Alexandria is a stop-over for migrating warblers, and the park fills with birders—binoculars pointed upward to the tree canopy. In the summer neighborhood children splash in the small stream running through the park, and all year long recreational dog walkers take their pets along the trail circling the woods. Neighbors view this park as their own and help maintain it. The park has served as an outdoor classroom for Alexandria Country Day School nearby.

But this small urban park is also packed with a wide diversity of wildlife and vegetation with its history dating back to when Piscataway peoples established villages and a sophisticated agriculture system in the 16th century. The north-facing slopes on the east side of the stream are vegetated with old-age chestnut and northern oaks. The west side of the stream is populated with tulip trees, white and northern red oaks and a number of other native hardwoods.

On Wednesday, June 9 the park was recognized by the Old-Growth Forest Network as a Community Forest. Rod Simmons, City of Alexandria Natural Resource Manager said, Monticello Park serves as a refugium for many species that are increasingly rare in the D.C. area and is by far the most diverse forest community remaining in eastern Alexandria. “There is precious little left, and it is a miracle this is still here.”

Simmons explains the designation of this park will not cause changes in stewardship or use of the park, just a pledge to properly manage the park according to sound science and best practices in perpetuity.

Brian Kane, 8th district regional manager for the Old-Growth Forest Network, presented a plaque to Simmons recognizing Monticello Park as a Community Forest. He says this is the 40th Community Forest in the mid-Atlantic region with 165 so far in 23 states in the United States. He says typically a Community Forest is 100-500 acres but this 7-acre urban forest is different. “It is rare to have one in an urban area.” Kane says the mission of the OGFN is to connect people with nature by creating a national network of protected, mature, publicly accessible, native forests.

Kane says a Community Forest is  
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



A small bridge at Monticello Park crosses a stream lined with old-age trees that comprise an Evergreen Oak-Heath Forest, Mesic Mixed Hardwood Forest and Woodland Seep.



An explanatory sign welcomes birders to Monticello Park on Beverly Drive in Alexandria.

typically nominated by a volunteer. He explains it could be an avid hiker or fisherman who wants to make others aware of the old growth forest. In this case the nomination was made by Tate Commission, a freshman at St. Stephen’s & St. Agnes School. Kane says this is the youngest volunteer he’s ever had and the hardest working.

Commission says he started the nomination process back in February and worked on filling out the forms, taking the pictures and doing the research with daily back and forth emails and a good part of each Sunday devoted to creating the portfolio.

Kane says, “Tate’s nomination was one of the most complete and detailed that we have ever received in the mid-Atlantic.” Commission explains it was important to him to save the park for perpetuity. “I felt like it is a human responsibility to not exploit it in the future. Everyone thinks nature is their own, and it should be there forever protected.

“It is important that anyone can go. It’s for the community. It’s a really important place.” Also he says, “I’m happy this has been success. Commission says this is just the beginning for him. He plans to go into some kind of science and to keep this going. “On a larger scale, this could be part of climate change which I’m interested in. Nature is a cool thing; no one owns it. It’s crazy. This has been around longer than humans.”



Brian Kane (left) presents plaque to Rod Simmons on June 9 designating Monticello Park as a Community Forest in the Old Growth Forest Network.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE GAZETTE

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# Freedom House Museum Celebrates Grand Opening



A couple looks at a display in the Freedom House Museum June 20 in Old Town.

FROM PAGE 1

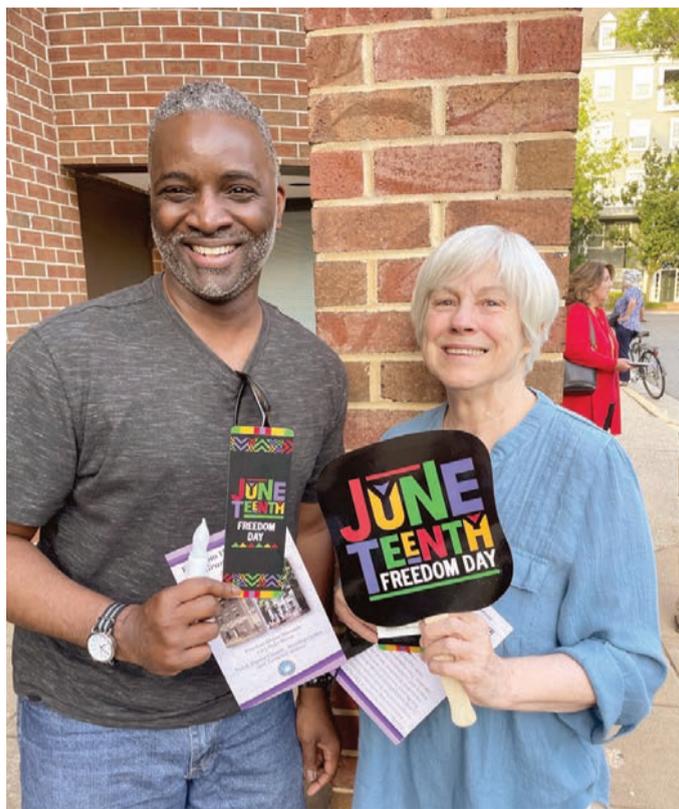
ries of those who were brought from the Chesapeake Bay area, moved through 1315 Duke Street, and sold into slave markets in the deep South, splitting families and taking children from their mothers.

The new first floor exhibition was designed by Washington, D.C. firm Howard+Revis Design, whose former clients include the Smithsonian Institution and the National Civil Rights Museum.

The third floor of the museum includes a reflection space with a bronze model of Alexandria's well known Edmonson Sisters sculpture by artist Erik Blome, a gift to the Office of Historic Alexandria from former City Manager Mark Jinks and his wife, Eileen Jinks.

The ceremony concluded with a recitation of names on the earliest list of men, women and children trafficked through Alexandria as attendees held candles representing each of the enslaved people.

"I think it is important for all of us as citizens to see one another, to exercise cultural humility and intellectual humility and



Jackson Caesar and Mary Frances Jetton celebrate Juneteenth at the grand opening of the Freedom House Museum June 20.

to understand that our conditions and our existential realities may be different," said Rev. Dr. Taft Quincey Heatley of Shiloh Baptist Church. "But if we would truly see one another we could get to a place of agreement even if there is disagreement. Most important thing is to respect one another's humanity so that we can grow together and be stronger in our community."

[www.alexandriava.gov/FreedomHouse](http://www.alexandriava.gov/FreedomHouse)

Attendees look at displays in the Freedom House Museum prior to the grand opening ceremony June 20.



Attendees hold candles representing enslaved people as part of the ceremony marking the formal opening of the Freedom House Museum June 20 at the Shiloh Baptist Church Worship Center.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



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Submit civic/community announcements at [ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar](http://ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar). Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before the event.

### VOLUNTEERS WANTED

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meals while on site at a few ACPS mobile pop-up locations. Click on each location to sign up: Francis C. Hammond Middle School, TC Williams High School, or Jefferson Houston School. [www.volunteeral-alexandria.org](http://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org)  
Alexandria Dept. of Community and Human Services- Volunteer Guardian. Looking for individuals who can assure the well-being of an incapacitated Alexandrian living in an Assisted Living Facility or Nursing Facility. Volunteer Guardians are appointed by the Court to make decisions for older Alexandria residents who have lost the capacity to understand the consequences of their decisions. The volunteer will visit the resident monthly and follow the person's wishes as much as possible. [www.volunteeral-alexandria.org](http://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org)

Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. [www.volunteeral-alexandria.org](http://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org)  
ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership Program will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteeral-alexandria.org/ALIVE>  
Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and

books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email [info@alnv.org](mailto:info@alnv.org), or visit [www.alnv.org](http://www.alnv.org).  
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](mailto: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](http://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 [donaldrea@aol.com](mailto:donaldrea@aol.com).  
Volunteer Adult Mentors Needed. Help assist the Department of SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

# ENTERTAINMENT

## NOW THRU JULY 9

Retrospective Art Deco Exhibition. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. At George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive in Alexandria. The first retrospective on the work of Art Deco designer Edgard Sforzina will open April 30th at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial during the Art Deco Society of Washington's 39th annual Washington Modernism Show. Discount tickets are available at [www.washingtonmodernismshow.com](http://www.washingtonmodernismshow.com).

## NOW THRU AUG. 31

Creative Summer Programs. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery in Colasanto Center, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Learn techniques in drawing, mixed media, mosaic, jewelry, watercolor, and more from local artists. Delve into creative exploration solo or with friends. Sign up for the programs that inspire you and make your own "stay-cation" art experience. Visit the website: <https://DelRayArtisans.org/programs/creative-summer/>

## JUNE 22-25

MVBA Summer Basketball Camp at Walt Whitman MS. Co-Ed. Ages 5-14 Years Old. June 22-25, June 27-July 1, July 5-8. Camp Hours from 9 AM-3 PM. For information, email us at [markvincentbasketballacademy@gmail.com](mailto:markvincentbasketballacademy@gmail.com) or visit our website [markvincentbasketballcamps.com](http://markvincentbasketballcamps.com).

## THURSDAY/JUNE 23

Cuban: A Night in Havana. 5 p.m., 6:30 p.m. At The Rectory on Princess Street, 711 Princess Street, Alexandria. Enjoy a mojito during this exuberant celebration of the golden age of Cuban music in the secret garden to include favorite songs of the Buena Vista Social Club and more. Visit: <https://www.classicalmovements.com/secretgardenconcerts/>

## FRIDAY/JUNE 24

1970s Trivia Night. At Lee-Fendall House & Gardens, Alexandria. Staff members at Carlyle House Historic Park and the Lee-Fendall House Museum combine their knowledge to create bi-weekly trivia nights throughout the summer in the beautiful gardens of the Lee-Fendall House. Test your knowledge on everything from pop culture to history. Registration must be done in advance. Limited capacity so register early!

Tickets are \$8 per person and include snacks and one complimentary drink. Additional drinks can be purchased at our bar. Teams are limited to 6 people, ages 21+ only. Each trivia night will have a different theme (see below). There will be weekly prizes for the winning team as well as a grand prize for the team that wins the most points over the entire summer.

## JUNE 24-25

Independence Fireworks at George Washington's Mount Vernon. At 3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Hwy., Mount Vernon. 6 to 9:30 p.m. Enjoy an evening of family fun and fireworks along with patriotic music to celebrate our nation's founding. Tickets are available with or without Mansion tours. Access to the Mansion is by guided tour only. This event features performances by the National Concert Band and The Fifes & Drums of



Enjoy fireworks at George Washington's Mount Vernon on June 24-25.

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## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

Auxiliary Improv Show. 7:30 p.m. At the Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St., Alexandria. Improv comedy is an unscripted performance. Everything will be completely made up on the spot, so everything performed is totally unique and limited to this night only. Suggested \$10 donation.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

The Old Town Arts & Crafts Fair. 3 to 8 p.m. At Market Square, 300 King St, Alexandria. Volunteer Alexandria is thrilled to implement the popular Old Town Arts and Crafts Fair on Saturday, June 25th at Market Square featuring local and regional artists and crafters who showcase their pieces across various mediums, including pottery, stationery, fabrics, paintings, jewelry, photography and more. Visit [volunteeralexandria.org/arts-and-crafts-festival](http://volunteeralexandria.org/arts-and-crafts-festival)

## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

Native Plants for Pollinators. 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Help Green Spring Gardens celebrate National Pollinator Week! Join Laura Beaty, horticulture chair of the Virginia Native Plant Society, as she discusses the vast variety of local pollinators that evolved with the native flowering plants of Northern Virginia. Plus, explore the many native plants growing at Green Spring Gardens to see our local pollinators at work and learn why we need to protect them. Do your part to help pollinators by starting your own pollinator garden - we will help you with a plant list. Dress for the weather. \$19 per person. Code OUW.IRLB.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

Eco-Gardening Ideas Evening Stroll at Green Spring. 5:30-7 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, Alexandria. (Adults) Take an evening stroll through the gardens at Green Spring with curatorial horticultural

tourist Brenda Skarphol to see eco-friendly and sustainable garden ideas. Learn how to incorporate native plants that will attract more pollinators and wildlife to your garden, and ways to improve your soil for better water retention and to manage runoff. Dress for the weather. \$19 per person. Code NQN.POFD.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 25

Legacy of the Green Cabinetmakers Walking Tour. 10 a.m. At Carlyle House Historic Park, Alexandria. In the early 19th Century, William Green started the Green Furniture factory in Alexandria and by 1823 his son, James, would take over. James expanded his father's factory and established himself as a prominent Alexandrian through building and operating Green's Mansion House Hotel. Join them on a tour to learn about James Green and his family's life here in Alexandria. Call 703-549-2997 or email [carlyle@nvrpa.org](mailto:carlyle@nvrpa.org)

## SUNDAY/JUNE 26

Growing Pride at The Garden. 12 to 5 p.m. At The Garden at Building Momentum, 5380 Eisenhower Ave. Suite C, Alexandria. Growing Pride at The Garden is back for its second year celebrating LGBTQ+ Pride on Saturday, June 26th. This family-friendly event is Alexandria's largest Pride celebration. It will feature 15 local LGBTQ+ makers and allies, local food trucks, live music and crafting at Building Momentum's The Garden ALX.

## TUESDAY/JUNE 28

Summer Concert in the Garden. 5:30 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Bring your lawn chairs or blankets, pack a picnic dinner to enjoy on the lawn and kick back to hear lively music. Bring the children at 5:30 p.m. to learn about frogs, hear frog stories, enjoy art projects and participate in games. Have your picture taken with Ribbit the frog. Call Green Spring at 703-642-5173.

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# Lessons Learned, Shared

## Helping Dad through his illness.

By DEBORAH TOMPKINS JOHNSON  
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE PACKET

In the article published in honor of Father's Day, I wrote about realizing my dad expressed his love through generosity. Today, I am sharing lessons I learned as I assisted Dad after he contracted a rare infection in 2016 and later had escalating symptoms due to several chronic health conditions from 2016 through most of 2019, when my dad died, due to heart failure.

What an experience it is to be the daughter but many days feeling and having to act as the parent, making decisions about where to live, what to eat, finances, health care, etc.

Through it all, I learned some lessons worth sharing.

Lesson One: Listen Intently. Nurses and doctors may make



Deborah Tompkins Johnson with her father, Garland Tompkins, prior to his death in 2019.

statements in a routine manner because they are constantly giving advice and instructions to many patients and caregivers. Every single statement they make to us as caregivers warrants thoughtful consideration. We must also intently listen to our loved one, even though

some statements might seem to be made in passing.

In one instance, I remember a surprise visit to Dad. When I entered his apartment, he said, "Don't surprise me like that. I have a weak heart." I took it as a joke as that was Dad's manner. On the

other hand, I knew he had been diagnosed with congestive heart failure at that point. As I think back, I believe during those months, Dad was in more discomfort that I could see or comprehend. My Dad's stature remained strong until his very last day. Dad was a retired army officer, fought in Vietnam, had solid muscles and always had a deep, hearty voice. To say he was a commanding figure is an understatement. However, I learned the way people look or carry themselves does not always indicate their condition.

Lesson Two: Have meaningful and deep conversations. Dad and I were together a lot, but upon reflection, I realize we had not had enough of the deep meaningful conversations needed given Dad's health challenges. He told me Army stories. We talked about Sunday morning sermons, world matters, American politics, sports, family and friends' birthdays and other special dates. Oh, did I say sports? However, it would have been cathartic had I broached even deeper conversations about my

mother who died at 39. I was 15, my dad was 43. Or about my brother Stephen, two years older than I, who died at 42 years of age. Oh, how we could have reminisced, laughed or cried together. I could have asked him many more times, "What are you thinking? What's on your mind, today? What's on your heart?"

Do ask. Do tell.

Lesson Three: Personal Touch — So Important. I would always greet Dad with a hug and kiss and did the same as I was preparing to leave his apartment, hospital room or rehab center. It is difficult to share the following: My Dad had a portion of his lower right leg amputated two months before he died.

I still greatly grieve the loss of a portion of his leg. But whenever I saw Dad after the amputation surgery, I would always touch and lightly rub his thigh a few inches above the amputation site. Don't forget the personal touch.

Lesson Four: Pull out the family photographs — often. Early on I

SEE HELPING DAD, PAGE 9

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# NEWS

## Helping Dad Through His Illness

FROM PAGE 8

had taken some old family photo albums to Dad's apartment. Additionally, I created photo albums for him of recent events and visits with family and friends, especially the album for his 90th birthday party in 2018. Still, I wish I had pulled the photographs out and looked at them with him more often. I say, reminisce together with photographs and scrapbooks regardless of age or state of health of your loved one. For we know not the day or the hour.

Lesson Five: Provide stationery and greeting cards. For as far back as I can recall, Dad was faithful in sending greeting cards to family and friends for every occasion. Providing your loved one with an ample supply of cards and stationery, allows them to be an instrument of outreach. Sending notes or greeting cards provides the opportunity to be proactive in offering happiness, hope and encouragement to people they know and love, but are unable to socialize with as they once did. Often the recipient of the card will make a call of thanks. When your loved one is in the hospital, in rehab, or assisted living, those phone calls from your loved one's relatives and friends are precious.

Lesson Six: Encourage them to listen to music. We know music can soothe, relax and uplift. On his own I think, Dad found a television channel that played music 24-7. It even made me happy when I would go into his room or apartment and hear music. Yes, do help fill the void of silence by providing some means of having music available to them.

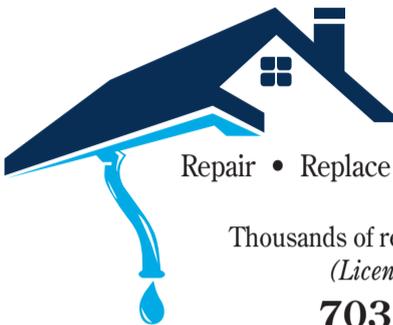
Final Thoughts: I hope you will consider the lessons listed above. Very personally, let me also share that I prayed a lot for my dad. I also learned it was important for me to pray with my dad. Once again, while the lessons learned above can be helpful, most meaningful is to do all we do for our loved one with love and compassion. It is not just the support, but more so the love and caring compassion that our loved one and all of us need. We have heard it before and it is written, Faith, hope and love, but the greatest of these is love.

Deborah Tompkins Johnson is an alumna of Leadership Alexandria and served many years on the Board of Directors of the Alexandria Chamber. She retired from Dominion Energy as Regional Policy Director. Instagram: @debrahtompkinsjohnson

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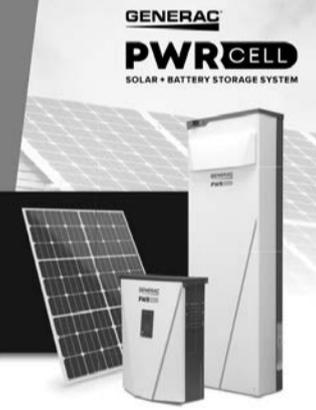


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## Left To My Own Devices – Literally



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I guess I had no real idea about the true seriousness of my condition as a stage IV, papillary thyroid cancer patient until I received an unsolicited phone message from my healthcare provider earlier today. The message was from a staff member at my HMO advising me that due to a grant, I would be eligible to receive – at no cost, to include monitoring for one year, a medical alert device. If I accept their offer and utilize the device, I'll have more than “the clapper” to ask for help. I'll have a real-life medical alert GPS enabled device, whose sole function is to assist me in the event of a mishap or misstep so I will never be left waiting or wanting should I need emergency/immediate assistance and be unable to request it myself/can't get up (press a button for help, I guess). Apparently, in my greatest hours of need, I will now have a resource which could save my life. This wouldn't bother me if it wasn't part of a pattern.

First, I received an email reminder from my internal medicine doctor reminding/encouraging me to get/update my medical directive – which I don't have by the way. A “medical directive,” if you're not familiar with such matters, is basically a set of instructions for whomever (family/health-care team) provided by the patient directing his or her end-of-life decisions. As you might imagine, it eliminates a whole host of potential problems/complications. It's a prudent precaution to have in place so that decisions can be made in accordance with the wishes of the patient. And who among us wouldn't prefer that their wishes – especially at death, be honored and respected.

Then, a few weeks later, earlier today in fact, I receive this message about a medical alert device. Since no one is telling me anything – directly, am I to assume that someone is not telling me something, indirectly? I mean, I am a cancer patient over a certain age. I imagine I'm in a higher risk category, certainly higher than someone under 65 who hasn't been diagnosed with cancer. I get that I'm at a greater risk but is there something else that I'm not being told. I was told I was “terminal” once before when I was initially diagnosed with stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer back in late February 2009. Having been re-diagnosed a few years back as a stage IV papillary thyroid cancer patient, am I once again “terminal?” And if I am, can someone please tell me. I'd like to know without reading between the lines. I'd like to exactly read what's on the line. I don't want to guess. I don't want to wonder. As I've said to my oncologist before: “Give it to me straight, doc. I can take it.” I can tell you – from personal experience, it's the not-knowing which is difficult. Taking one's disease day-by-day and not being too high or too low and trying to roll with all the various punches and not put any carts before any hearses, has enabled me to balance out my life in spite of the ongoing cancer noise.

I don't want to overreact but receiving these two health-related offers kind of remains me of the joke about the man who was clinging to life sitting atop his house as flood waters raged. As help was offered in one manner or another, he kept turning everybody down saying God would provide. Eventually, he drowns and upon seeing God at the pearly gates asks God why he didn't send help while he was stranded on the roof of his house. God said: “I sent the rowboat. I sent the helicopter.” “What were you waiting for?” God asks: “A sign,” said the drowning victim.

I don't think I'm drowning, exactly, but I seem to be getting offers to help someone who might be drowning. I wish I knew the reason for this recent outreach. I hope I'm not neglecting a sign.

*Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.*

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## SENIOR LIVING



The Henderson family continues a family tradition to commemorate Juneteenth.

# Juneteenth Gives Seniors a Chance to Reflect and Teach

## A septuagenarian couple keeps family tradition alive.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE GAZETTE

The smoky, rich aroma of spareribs and chicken sizzling on the grill filled the air in the backyard of Maise and Roosevelt Henderson's Alexandria home. Sounds of laughter and friendly banter could be heard for more than two blocks as family, friends and neighbors trickled-in carrying serving bowls of collard greens and potato salad. Taking center stage at the feast, however, were slices of watermelon as well as crimson-colored sparkling water or lemonade. The barbecue is a long-standing tradition for the Henderson family. They gather to commemorate Juneteenth, the day when — more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation — enslaved people in Texas learned of their freedom.

“The red stands for the blood shed by our ancestors,” said Roosevelt, 77. The Hendersons moved to Alexandria from Houston, Texas 1987 so that they could live near family including three of the couple's children and Roosevelt's brother Charlie. “Our family has celebrated Juneteenth for as long as I can remember. Before my father died, he made my brothers, sisters and I promise to

keep this tradition alive no matter what.”

“We do it to have a good time, but also make sure that the younger generation knows the hard truth about our county's history, said Maise, 75. “People try to white-wash over it because no one wants to talk about things that are embarrassing, but young people are our future, and they need to know about our past.”

While pleased that Juneteenth is now a federal holiday, 82-year-old Ida Dixon, one of Roosevelt's sisters, has mixed emotions about the recognition. “Many African American families have celebrated it for years, but it makes me a little sad that it has become more mainstream,” she said. “It's a good thing that more and more people are learning about it, but I think that businesses will capitalize on it like they do with July 4th and Labor Day sales. Juneteenth marks a serious event in our history that still affects us today. It shouldn't be lumped in with days like Memorial Day when so many young people don't even know what they are celebrating. They see it as a day off from work or school.”

When she worked as a teacher in Alabama, Thelma Washington, 78, says that she tried to make sure that her students were aware of African American history that she felt was often excluded from history books. “I taught 6th grade for 45 years,” she said. “Before forced busing, I made sure that my black students learned the hard truth about our tragic past.”

## BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

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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/volunteer.htm](http://www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm) or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at [volunteers@alive-inc.org](mailto:volunteers@alive-inc.org).

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**Beverley Estates | \$1,175,000**

Spacious 4-bedroom, 3-bath home with an open floor plan of living, dining, and kitchen. French doors to large screened porch and open-air deck for grilling. Lower level rec room with wood-burning fireplace, bedroom, full bath, and a side deck and shed. 3605 Orlando Pl  
**Kate Crawley 703.888.8141**  
[www.KateCrawleyHomes.com](http://www.KateCrawleyHomes.com)



**Fort Hunt | \$1,175,000**

Gorgeous and spacious, almost 4,700 finished SF, with 5 bedrooms and 3.5 baths, built on a lovely corner lot, elegant 2-story entryway with a grand staircase. Fantastic family room with vaulted ceilings and tons of windows. ThePeeleGroup.biz | 1802 Rampart Drive  
**Kim Peele 703.244.5852**  
**Hope Peele 703.244.6115**



**Hollin Hills | \$899,000**

1900+ SF expanded Goodman contemporary has 4 bedrooms including primary with en-suite bath, 2 renovated full baths, updated kitchen, soaring ceilings and flexible living spaces. Fully fenced backyard and additional outdoor space with deck. 2408 Brentwood Pl  
**Jodie Burns 571.228.5790**  
[www.JodieBurns.com](http://www.JodieBurns.com)



**Potomac Trace | \$897,500**

Spacious 3-level townhouse with 4 bedrooms, 3.5 baths and elevator! Large living room, huge deck backs to green space. Gourmet stainless kitchen, bedroom-level laundry, fabulous owner's suite. Walk to the library, farmers market, public transportation. 8104 Zoe Place  
**Robin Stevens Arnold 703.966.5457**  
[www.RobinArnoldSells.com](http://www.RobinArnoldSells.com)



**Belle Haven on the Green | \$829,000**

This 5-bedroom, 3.5-bath and garage townhome is perhaps the largest in the development! This is light-filled and ready to move right in! 2 red lights to Old Town and 12 minutes to Ft. Belvoir's Back Gate - fantastic location too! 1800 Duffield Lane  
**Janet Caterson Price 703.622.5984**  
[www.JanetPriceHomes.com](http://www.JanetPriceHomes.com)



**Old Town | \$450,000**

1-bedroom + den, 1-bath, top-floor, LEED certified energy-efficient condo. Large open living space with hardwood floors. Sleek kitchen with espresso cabinets, granite counters, stainless appliances & huge island. 1 garage space & storage unit. 815 N Patrick St #406  
**Wendy Santantonio 703.625.8802**  
[www.WendySantantonio.com](http://www.WendySantantonio.com)



**Old Town  
 \$1,200,000**

This delightful Victorian townhouse, known as one of the "Four Sisters," is located on an idyllic street in the heart of Old Town. Built in 1900, this charming home has been completely updated, is move-in ready and offers 2 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and a charming garden. 529 S Fairfax Street

**Lauren Bishop 202.361.5079**  
[www.LaurenBishopHomes.com](http://www.LaurenBishopHomes.com)



**Del Ray  
 \$779,900**

Ideally located duplex in the heart of Del Ray featuring 3 bedrooms upstairs, 1.5 baths, and a great sunroom! Hardwood floors throughout, great natural light, and a large backyard. Fully finished basement and off-street parking. 306 E Del Ray Avenue

**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**  
[www.JenWalker.com](http://www.JenWalker.com)



**Warwick Village  
 \$739,900**

Sunny and updated townhome featuring 3 bedrooms and 2 full baths. Fully renovated kitchen opens to a great room. 3 finished levels with a walkout basement, great storage and laundry room. Lovely backyard that backs to a park! 2943 Hickory Street

**Jen Walker 703.675.1566**  
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