

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

NOVEMBER 24, 2022



Guests at Gum Springs Gala at Ford Orientation Center at Mount Vernon Estate.

Saxophonist Keith Wilson played throughout the evening.

Honoring the Historic Gum Springs Community



Ronald Chase, President of Gum Springs Historical Society prepares to open the evening's presentations.



Keynote Speaker Gary Flowers of Richmond outlined steps toward racial equality.



Vincent Carter asks a question of the speaker.

The head table: Clockwise from front included Rev. Clyde Nelson, who gave the opening and closing prayers; Denise Williams; Speaker Gary Flowers; Mount Vernon School Board member Karen Corbett Sanders; Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck; Del. Paul Krizek; Sheila Coats and her niece, Journey; and Franconia Supervisor Rodney Lusk.

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

On Nov. 19, over 130 supporters of the Gum Springs Historical Society gathered at Mount Vernon's Ford Orientation Center for the society's gala honoring the founding of the Gum Springs community 189 years ago.

Ronald L. Chase, the society's president and founding director of the Gum Springs Museum, opened the program, weaving together the themes of hope, love and giving and calling Gum Springs a national treasure.

Reverend Clyde Nelson urged

attendees to share the history of the community in his invocation.

The keynote speaker, Richmonder Gary Flowers, quickly captured the audience's attention, saying "We need a new frame and not look at what was." Flowers has long been active in public policy, especially civil rights, and hosts a weekday radio show on Richmond station WREJ 101, online at <https://rejoicerichmond.com/shows/>.

Flowers described efforts to preserve Jackson Ward, a historic African-American community in Richmond which in the late 19th century had many thriving Black-owned businesses, and in

the early 1900s, became known as Black Wall Street, Flowers told the crowd. Locals have raised funds to build a replica of Abraham Skipwith's cottage there. Skipwith was a freedman who in 1793 became the first known Black property owner in what eventually became Jackson Ward.

Flowers also spotlighted Virginians Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan, whose stories were told in the 2016 film "Hidden Figures." The two women who were largely unknown prior to the movie, but in over 25 years in the U.S. space program "charted man to the

SEE HONORING THE, PAGE 4

PHOTOS BY KATHERINE FOGDEN FOR THE GUM SPRINGS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Sharon Clark



Sharon Clark plays at Laporta's Restaurant frequently when she's not on the road.

Local Jazz Artist Wows Crowds

Sharon Clark's "Straight Ahead" jazz style is just the ticket.

BY MIKE SALMON
THE GAZETTE

A fire burned Fort Hunt High School in late 1978, so local jazz singer Sharon Clark had to finish out her degree at Mount Vernon High School. This move didn't douse the fire inside, igniting her singing career and leading her to performances around the world.

Clark travels for about six months out of the year, performing in places as far away as Italy, but she always comes back to her hometown in Alexandria where she stuns audiences at Laporta's Restaurant on Duke Street. "She's well known in the community," said restaurant owner Phil Laporta, "I get at least three calls a week asking if she's



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

The low lights on stage set the mood for Sharon Clark's "Straight Ahead" jazz style.

playing that week," he said.

At Laporta's, Clark sings in a "Straight Ahead," jazz style, which works at this local restaurant. "Straight Ahead," is a type of jazz music that was developed in the 1960s and relies on acoustic instruments, piano, walking bass patterns, and swing or bop drums. It does not include rock music or free jazz sounds. Clark's vocals compliment this style.

"She's kind of an Ella Fitzgerald style singer," said Laporta.

"I started singing in church. Woodlawn United Methodist on Fordson Road in Gum Springs right off of Rt. 1 in Hybla Valley," she said.

During high school she was a part of the award-winning Fort Hunt Madrigals under the leadership of Jack Murray, as well as a singing group she formed called Eve.

"We sang three-part harmony in the style of the Andrews Sisters," Clark said. "Later in high school, I joined the Bottle Caps, a promotional music band for Coca-Cola."

After attending Berklee College of Music in Boston. Clark started to work every job available, slowly building a local reputation. She began singing at Laporta's Restau-

If you go...

Sharon Clark Quintet - A Wintry Mix
7 p.m., \$25
Saturday, Dec. 10
Carlyle Room
1350 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

rant on Duke Street in Alexandria in 1998 and has been there ever since on Saturday nights.

She's received accolades on many different levels. She's performed as a featured soloist with the Duke Ellington Orchestra, Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, the Richmond Symphony, and the Baltimore Symphony. Clark won the top prize at the Savannah Music Festival's American Traditions Competition and was awarded first place in the Billie Holiday Vocal Competition, along with a featured appearance with the Baltimore Symphony, as reported on "Instant Seats" ticket service. On the international scene, she was even reviewed in the Moscow Times.

Be Part of 2022 Children's and Teens' Gazette

One week of December for many years, this newspaper has devoted its pages to the creativity of local students, teens 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 Gazette, the Children's Connection and Children's Almanac, comprise a long-time tradition.

You can see last year's editions by visiting <http://connectionarchives.com/PDF/2021/121521/Alexandria.pdf>

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, www.connectionnewspapers.com

essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of sculpture, gardens and any other creative efforts.

We ask that all submissions be digital so they can be sent through email. Writing should be submitted in text format: docx or google docs, or pasted in the body of an email. Artwork should be photographed or scanned and provided in jpeg format. These can be submitted via google drive as well. Please share all google drive files with kimm.mary@gmail.com

Some suggestions, but different ideas are welcome:

Drawings or paintings or photographs of your family, friends, pets or some favorite

activity. These should be photographed or scanned and submitted in jpeg format. Photos of sculpture or larger art projects are also welcome.

Short answers: What is one thing that you would change about school? What do you want to be when you grow up? What is your favorite animal? What is your favorite possession? What makes a good friend? What is the best gift you've ever received?

Your opinion (100 words) about movies, food, music, sports, restaurants, video games, toys, trends, politics, etc.

Poetry, short story or other creative writing. News stories or photos from school newspapers.

We must be able to print the full first and last name of the student artist/writer with the submission, along with student's age, grade and school or town name.

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.

Please send all submissions by Monday, Dec. 5, 2022. The Children's Gazette will publish the middle of December, the edition with publication date Dec. 14, 2022.

Email submissions for the Children's Gazette to kimm.mary@gmail.com

Honoring the Historic Gum Springs Community

FROM PAGE 1
heavens with pencil and paper," Flowers said.

Flowers used these as examples of the country's often untold history, what he called "the willful suppression of history," emphasizing that "the good, bad and ugly of the American empire was forged in Virginia."

He cited as inspirations the 1960s civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr., Ella Baker and Diane Nash, and urged that we "re-frame and gaze deeply into what should be. What kind of America do we want?" he posited.

Flowers decried developers and others who too often see communities like Jackson Ward and Gum Springs as obstacles and ignore their significance and value. "Virginia Commonwealth University owns much of Jackson Ward because Black people got in the way," he opined, characterizing the attitudes of some that have undermined many minority communities. "Is Gum Springs in the way of development?" he asked. "We must look at all of us as valuable,"



Logo of the Gum Springs Historical Society Museum and Cultural Center, sponsor of the gala event.

PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH



Mount Vernon Planning Commissioner Walter Clarke and his wife Kelly.

A Historic Community

Gum Springs, located near U.S. 1 in the Mount Vernon District, today has 2,500 residents, and "as many as 500 are descendants of the original families," said the event's written program. According to the Fairfax County African American History Inventory, in 1833, West Ford, a man formerly enslaved by Washington's family, purchased a 214-acre farm there after he was freed by Hannah Bushrod Washington, wife of the first president's brother, John Augustine. "Located close to the Mount Vernon Estate, the community was a sanctuary for freedmen and runaways. Samuel Taylor, a runaway slave established the first institution in Gum Springs, the Bethlehem Baptist Church. Assisted by Quakers, the first school was established at Bethlehem," the inventory notes.

The Gum Springs Historical Society Museum and Cultural Center is at 8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria; telephone, 703-699-1198. Call ahead for hours.

he advised.

He encouraged everyone to put a higher priority on a high quality education for every person, health care for everyone, a living wage and voting rights for all. "It's not about white and black. It's about wrong and right," he said in closing.

In his follow-up, Chase commended the speaker and challenged, "We must transcend to a higher level."

The networking, dinner, speeches and silent auction took place amid Mount Vernon Estate's festive

holiday decorations, including 12-foot trees decorated with some of the estate's gift shop products like cornmeal and grits in cloth bags from George Washington's still-operating grist mill.

Throughout the evening, Keith Wilson provided a saxophone soundtrack, from jazzy mellow to upbeat tunes.

Among other notables, these officials attended: Virginia Sen. Scott

Surovell, Del. Paul Krizek, Mount Vernon Supervisor Dan Storck, Franconia Supervisor Rodney Lusk and Mount Vernon School Board Member Karen Corbett-Sanders; Mount Vernon Planning Commissioner Walter Clarke.

The oldest Gum Springs resident, Ada Singletary, age 102, could not attend, but the second oldest, Kenneth King, age 91, livened up his table.

PHOTOS BY KATHERINE FOGDEN FOR THE GUM SPRINGS HISTORICAL SOCIETY



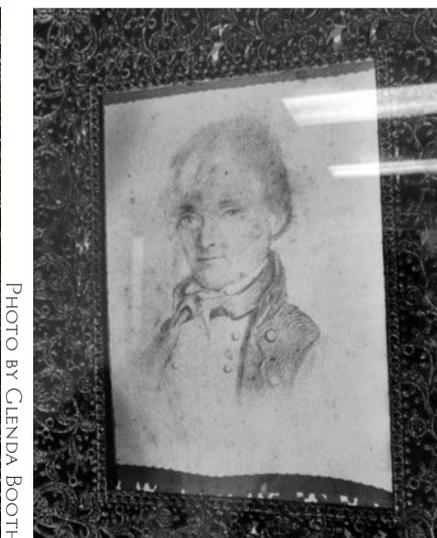
Guests bid on silent auction items.



President Ronald Chase discusses a framed Gum Springs history poster purchased by Richard Digs at the silent auction.



Springs community.



West Ford, founder of Gum Springs.



Bethlehem Baptist Church today.

NPS Seeks Public Input

Proposed plan to improve south section of George Washington Memorial Parkway and Mount Vernon Trail.

National Park Service (NPS) is seeking public comment on a proposed plan and environmental assessment to improve the southern portion of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and the Mount Vernon Trail. The project would improve safety and address maintenance needs along the parkway and the trail. Comments will be accepted through Jan. 4, 2023.

The park service says that road and trail improvements being considered would enhance the visitor experience for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists. Potential improvements to the road include the implementation of a new road diet, reducing lanes through pavement striping to improve safety, in some areas, plus new crosswalks and intersection changes.

Potential safety enhancements for the trail could include trail widening and intersection improvements.

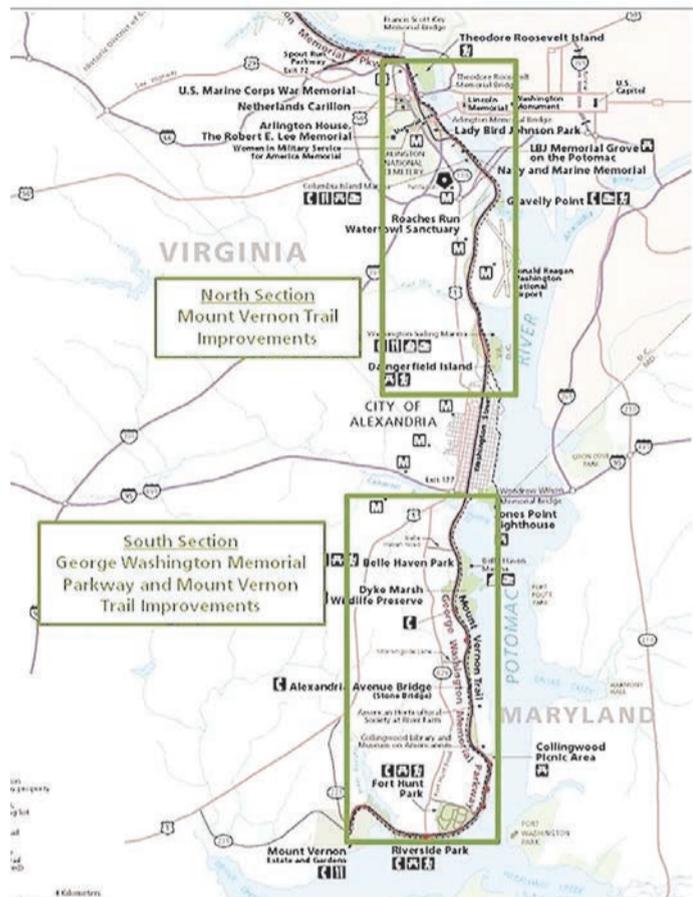
The project area includes the southern portion of the 15.2-mile parkway from Arlington Memorial Bridge to Mount Vernon. The project area also includes the majority of the 18-mile Mount Vernon Trail, which extends from Theodore Roosevelt Island and the intersection with the Custis Trail in Arlington to Mount Vernon.

The portion of the parkway and trail within the City of Alexandria would not be part of this project.

How To Get Involved

Engaging with the public helps define the preliminary engineering and planning process. Feedback will be used to refine project designs and to support future analysis of environmental impacts.

❖ Virtual public meeting: The NPS will host a virtual public meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m., using GoTo Webinar. The meeting will last approximately 1.5-hours and there will be an opportunity to submit questions. You do not need to pre-register



Improvements include possible road diet, widening of trails, new crosswalks and changes in intersections.

for the meeting.

❖ At the time of the meeting, click here to join <https://www.goto.com/webinar/join> on your computer or mobile device and enter the Webinar ID (Webinar ID: 314-024-315) and your email.

If you do not have GoTo Webinar you will be prompted to install a small file to your computer or download the app on your mobile device.

❖ You can call into the meeting (no video) using the toll-free phone number and conference ID: Call in number: (877) 309-2074, Phone Conference ID: 278-447-448

❖ Online: You can submit comments online or view additional information at https://parkplanning.nps.gov/GWMP_South. Comments are requested by Jan. 4, 2023. The public meeting recording will be posted at this site for you to review if you are not able to attend the live session.

❖ Mail: Mail your written comments post-marked by January 4, 2023, to:

Superintendent, Attn: GWMP South and MVT Plan/EA, 700 George Washington Memorial Parkway, McLean, VA 22101

NOTICE OF WATER RATE AND BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING December 15, 2022, at 6:30 p.m.

At 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 15, 2022, Fairfax Water will conduct a public hearing on its Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges. The hearing will be held in Fairfax Water's offices at 8570 Executive Park Avenue, Fairfax, VA.

The proposed changes, to be effective April 1, 2023, include the following:

- An increase in the Availability Charge from \$4,510 to \$4,640.*
- An increase in the Local Facilities Charge from \$19,400 to \$22,090.
- An increase in the Service Connection Charge from \$1,480 to \$1,790.*
- An increase in the Account Charge from \$41 to \$44.
- An increase in the Quarterly Billing Service Charge for meters larger than the standard 5/8" residential meter. See the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges for details.
- An increase in the base Commodity Charge from \$3.46 to \$3.65 per 1,000 gallons of water.
- An increase in the Peak Use Charge from \$3.85 to \$4.00.
- An increase in the Turn Off / Turn On Charge from \$50 to \$53.
- An increase in the Fees for Use of Fairfax Water Fire Hydrants to include the increase in the Commodity Charge and Peak Use Charge.
- A decrease in the Overhead Charges for Labor from 103% to 102%.
- An increase in the Installation of Sewer Use Meter Charge Inspection Fee from \$40 to \$42.
- An increase in the Returned Payment Charge from \$20 to \$25.

*Charges reflect fees associated with a standard 5/8" residential meter. Changes in charges for larger residential and commercial meters are reflected in the Proposed Schedule of Rates, Fees, and Charges.

Fairfax Water is also proposing a \$228 million budget for calendar year 2023¹. Water sales are expected to provide \$202 million and the remaining \$26 million is expected from connection charges, investment income and other sources.

The major areas of operation and maintenance expense are:

Category	-- \$1,000s --	
	2022	2023
Personal Services & Employee Benefits	\$ 59,399	\$ 66,276
Power and Utilities	11,804	14,120
Chemicals	9,905	11,956
Purchased Water	7,312	7,513
Supplies and Materials	5,358	5,462
Insurance	1,146	1,370
Fuel	963	1,015
Postage	584	618
Contractual Services	11,831	12,912
Professional Services	1,320	1,365
Other	2,322	2,613
Sub-Total	111,944	125,220
Transfer to Improvement Fund	(10,949)	(11,141)
Total	\$ 100,995	\$ 114,079

Net revenues are expected to be appropriated as follows:

Debt Payment	\$46,327,337
Improvement Fund	\$11,000,000
General Fund	\$55,563,000

¹ Fairfax Water's Board will continue to monitor economic factors and review revenues and expenditures at mid-year to determine if additional action is needed.

Visit fairfaxwater.org/rates to view a copy of the proposed changes.

Those wishing to speak at this hearing or desiring a copy of the proposed changes should call Ms. Tonya Clement at 703-289-6029. Interested parties may submit written comments to PublicHearingComments@fairfaxwater.org or mail written comments to:

Fairfax Water
Public Hearing Comments
8570 Executive Park Avenue
Fairfax, VA 22031

All written comments must be received by close of business on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 to be included in the record of the public hearing.

Casinos Coming to Bristol, Portsmouth, Danville, Norfolk

Casino update in two parts

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

Part one of two.

Like many Virginians who remember the big announcement a couple of years ago that Virginia would soon have its very own casinos where you could stay at a five star hotel, enjoy a musical performance or laugh with comedians, eat and drink all night at exciting new restaurants, and also visit the local sites in different and interesting parts of the state, you may be wondering just what is happening with those casinos that were coming to Virginia? Well, funny you should ask, because just last week the Virginia Lottery Board, which oversees the regulatory framework governing the establishment and operation of the lottery and privately-operated sports betting and casino gaming programs, unanimously approved

the casino facility operator's license for the Rivers Casino in Portsmouth. It is now the second casino operator's license issued in Virginia. The first was awarded in April to Bristol's Hard Rock Hotel and Casino, which opened a temporary casino facility in July. There are two more proposed casinos working through this arduous process: Caesars, with an ownership interest from the Eastern Band of Cherokees, in Danville, and the Pamunkey Indians' Headwaters Casino in Norfolk. There is so much to write about that I am publishing this casino update in two parts, this week and next.

In 2020, the General Assembly passed legislation to legalize gaming in Virginia. As a member of the House General Laws Committee and Chair of the ABC & Gaming Subcommittee, I had the opportunity to play a role in working with my colleagues, and especially the patron of the bill, Chairman of Appropriations, Del-



Krizek

egate Barry Knight, to adopt this landmark legislation. The bill authorized casinos in five Virginia cities – Bristol, Portsmouth, Danville, Norfolk, and Richmond – pending approval by residents in a local voter referendum in each locality. Richmond's

referendum failed, but the voters overwhelmingly supported the casinos in the other four cities. Also, the legislation allows each project to open a 'temporary casino' while the permanent location is being constructed.

I am pleased to share that Virginia's first casino – a temporary facility in Bristol - opened in July, following a festive Grand Opening ceremony which I had the pleasure to attend, along with other state leaders. 'Bristol Casino – Future Home of Hard Rock' (<https://www.hardrockhotelcasinobristol.com/>) is the first casino to be licensed and opened in Virginia, which is a historic milestone for the Commonwealth. The Bristol casino

was the first to open because it had secured an existing location for the project, the former Bristol Mall. This temporary facility is operating until the permanent location opens in late 2024, which also will be located on that same site.

Each of these casino projects will bring significant tax revenue to the state, along with critical economic development opportunities – in terms of jobs and revenue – to their host city, and the surrounding region. I am particularly proud of the positive impact the Bristol project will have on all of the communities in Southwest Virginia. The General Assembly included in the legislation a provision that revenue proceeds from the Bristol casino would be shared with the 12 counties and two cities in what has historically been an economically depressed region. Quarterly payments to those local governments are being used to fund a host of critical education, transportation, and public safety projects benefiting local residents. In just the first

SEE CASINOS COMING, PAGE 14

Stop Wildlife Killing Contests

It is hard to imagine anything so callous and unsporting as organized games to kill wildlife in large numbers solely for cash and prizes. As a growing number of states, including Maryland, take responsible steps to crack down on this extreme activity, why does the

Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) allow wildlife

killing contests to continue?

During these events, participants compete to kill the most, the largest or the smallest foxes, coyotes and bobcats for cash and prizes over a period of one to two days.

After the killing is over, contestants gather to weigh and count the bodies and pose for photos

next to the bloody animals. The animals are then typically tossed away like trash.

In 2021, the DWR expressed strong support for a ban on killing contests.

It found "no scientific evidence to support claims" that the events serve any wildlife management purpose and worried that the events were reflecting poorly on the hunting community. It came as great surprise, then, when just five months later the DWR inexplicably did an about-face and testified in opposition to a bill that would pro-

hibit the blood sport.

Killing animals in competitions for prizes is an anathema to traditional subsistence hunting and robs our communities of wildlife we all share and respect. DWR is currently taking comments from Virginians about the regulations it should consider for 2023-24. Ask the DWR to restore some sensible balance here and stop sordid wildlife killing contests from taking place.

Eileen Hanrahan
Lorton



Let Us Know Your View

Connection Newspapers welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers; we will only print your name and town name.

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A Connection Newspaper



NEWS

Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale at St. Aidan's Church

One of the highlights of the holiday season in the Mount Vernon area is the annual Christmas Tree and Wreath Sale at St. Aidan's Church at 8531 Riverside Road in Alexandria. This festive annual sell-out event offering beautiful freshly cut Spruce and Balsam trees and hand-decorated wreaths at fantastic prices draws buyers from the entire Alexandria area.

The event begins the day after Thanksgiving from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and continues through the weekend and again the next weekend or until the trees are all gone.



CALENDAR

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Let us know about an upcoming event

connectionnewspapers.com/Calendar



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acds ALEXANDRIA COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL
www.acdsnet.org

GRADES K-8

Join us for an OPEN HOUSE on January 5



TO AVOID COVID-19, YOU'VE GOT OPTIONS.

To increase your protection from COVID-19, ask your doctor or pharmacist if the latest bivalent booster shot is right for you. If you haven't received your flu shot, remember to ask about that too.

To find a free vaccine near you, go to vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus or call 877-VAX-IN-VA.

VDH VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

You've Got Options, Virginia.

THANKSGIVING

Giving Thanks

Family and favorite meals on the menu.

As Thanksgiving approaches, feelings of gratitude abound along with anticipation of gatherings filled with special memories and meals.

Following two years of scaled back and even virtual celebrations, family and friends are enthusiastically looking forward to the return of large family gatherings and the preparation of traditional family recipes.

“My memories of Thanksgiving are of my mother’s yeast rolls and her pineapple upside down cake,” said Terance Sears, husband to Virginia Lieutenant Governor Winsome Sears. “She passed in 2018 but my sister still makes the rolls. But since

Winsome became Lieutenant Governor, our lives have definitely changed. Our schedule is on a day-to-day basis so I am not sure when we will be able to gather with family and I will have the chance to taste those rolls again.”

The opportunity to bring together generations of family members is at the top of the list for 91-year-old Charles Nelson,

“Anytime you can have your family with you for the holidays, that’s a blessing within itself,” said the Air Force veteran.

Gilberto Barrientos has another reason to be thankful.

“I am thankful that my son finished college at George Mason,” Barrientos said. “He is the first in the family to finish college and is working and doing really good. I could not ask for anything more.”

— JEANNE THEISMANN

“Anytime you can have your family with you for the holidays, that’s a blessing within itself.”

— Nonagenarian Charles Nelson

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



SOFIA MELENDEZ CONTRAS AND ERIC TWYMAN - I am very thankful for my family and my marriage. I love my husband and am thankful for the time we get to spend together while my husband Eric is thankful for golf.



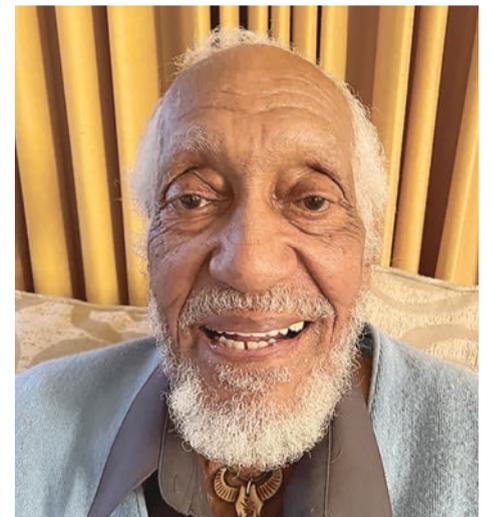
NADIR ELLHIJJI – For Thanksgiving at Del Ray Cafe I will fuse together Moroccan and American traditions. I will invite some American friends to see that turkey can be cooked in different ways and not always what you expect. This year I will make turkey with lemon and olives stuffed with vermicelli and with mushrooms. Plus, I will be cooking some lamb shoulders and some vegetarian options.



TERANCE SEARS – My memories of Thanksgiving are of my mother’s yeast rolls and her pineapple upside down cake. She passed in 2018 but my sister still makes the rolls. But since Winsome became Lieutenant Governor, our lives have definitely changed. Our schedule is on a day-to-day basis so I am not sure when we will be able to gather with family and I will have the chance to taste those rolls again.



LEO PANELLA - I am thankful for the Marines and everyone who protects our country.



CHARLES NELSON – At 91 years old, I have so many things to be thankful for. I am especially thankful for my family – my children, grandchildren, great grandchildren. So many people do not live to be 90 years of age. Anytime you can have your family with you for the holidays, that’s a blessing within itself.



CLAUDIA JOHNSON – I am thankful for my growing family! My husband Dillion and I can’t wait to welcome our first little boy in January. He is already so loved by family and friends and we are so excited to meet him.



GILBERTO BARRIENTOS – I am thankful that my son finished college at George Mason. He is the first in the family to finish college and is working and doing really good. I could not ask for anything more.



JERRY FILE – I am very thankful for the wonderful family that I have and the opportunity to spend time with them at Thanksgiving.



BOB MARTINI – For Thanksgiving I am going to have some traditional cranberry orange relish. We are going out to dinner so I am not making it but will order it. I have had it since I was young even though my mother probably bought it and didn’t make it either.

CAPPIES REVIEW



PHOTO BY JESSICA SHAW

From left: JJ Dunn, Roni Baird

'She Kills Monsters' at Mount Vernon High School

BY PENELOPE WAGNER
WAKEFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

“What would a D&D adventure be if you didn't have to fight a dragon?” Dialogue like this in Mount Vernon High School's production of “She Kills Monsters” represented how funny yet sweet this show – brimming with compelling characters, fantastical creatures, and plenty of fight sequences – truly was. The show was hilarious, enlivening, and bitter-sweet, and kept the audience actively entertained the entire time.

A heartwarming story set in the 90s about a girl coming to terms with her sister's death by playing Dungeons & Dragons, “She Kills Monsters” premiered off-Broadway at The Flea Theater in 2011. It was later performed by the Steppenwolf Theatre Company in Chicago in 2013. The “Young Adventurers Edition,” performed by Mount Vernon High School, ages the characters down and tones down the adult language.

There are many dynamic characters in the show, five of which form Tilly's Party. The actors in the Party, which exists only in the D&D world, played off each other well, creating amusing scenes with interesting interactions throughout the show. The small ensemble proved to be both the heart and (part of) the comedic relief of the show.

While “She Kills Monsters” is a show that requires a good ensemble of characters, there were a few standout performances. JJ Dunn had the difficult job of playing Tilly, www.connectionnewspapers.com

the late sister who adored D&D. However, Dunn had no trouble performing both the comedic and tragic moments beautifully. Another actor who made herself known on the stage was Roni Baird as Agnes. Baird brought an interesting and full-hearted portrayal of this character, as Agnes attempted to cope with the death of her sister.

The show deals with a very tragic story; however, it had its comedic moments, many of which were provided by Kimani Moore as Vera, whose comedic timing and character choices were impeccable. Also notable was Micheal Hodges's fantastic performance as Orcus/Ronnie. Hodges expertly created a lighthearted and comical character who gave the audience many humorous moments throughout the show.

“She Kills Monsters” wouldn't be as good a production if it were not for the genius set made by Samantha Dresch, Levondre Jenkins, and the crew. The set, designed to look like a D&D Dungeon Master's screen, immersed the audience in the show and enlivened the D&D world. Also contributing greatly was the lighting crew (Elizabeth Snyder, Jack Dova, and crew), which used a variety of lighting techniques and helped in differentiating between the real and D&D world.

Taking the audience on an amazing adventure, Mount Vernon High School's remarkable production of “She Kills Monsters” was hysterical, captivating, and left audiences with a story they'll never forget. After all, as said in the show, “Isn't that all life truly is, a collection of stories?”

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ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU NOV. 27

Alexandria Film Festival. The 16th annual Alexandria Film Festival will take place November 10-27, 2022. This year, the festival will be a hybrid format, with in person and online screenings. Accessing the films online is simple. Viewers can watch the films any-time within the two-week period beginning November 13, through midnight on Black Friday. Showcase tickets are \$12 while an all-festival pass is \$75. Showcases—blocks of films organized around a theme—include numerous Q&A sessions with film directors, producers, actors, and composers. Purchase in person, online tickets and All Fest Passes at [AlexFilmFest.com](https://alexfilmfest.com). Festival patrons can again look forward to the popular Burke & Herbert Bank Family Showcase, which features films by and about young people. The “Salute to Service Members” Showcase will be offered free of charge to active and retired service members to celebrate the Veteran’s Day Weekend falling on the same dates as the festival. All-festival passes and showcase tickets are on sale at <https://alexfilmfest.eventive.org/> welcome.

NOW THRU DECEMBER

Nightly Spirits. Thursdays through Sundays from 7:30 to 10 p.m.; 8:30 to 11 p.m. Admission: 21 and over at \$25 plus tax. Tours meet at The Alexandrian, 480 King Street, Alexandria. Sip a local beverage and listen to the secret and spooky lore of Alexandria’s haunted past. Hear tales of the ghosts that wander the streets of Alexandria and haunt local establishments. These tours are for individuals ages 21 and over. Haunted private tours are also available for all ages.

NOV. 4-27

\$100 & Under Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans “\$100 & Under” exhibit showcases members’ artwork all priced at \$100 or less. The art will be sold on an art-to-go basis. The gallery walls are packed with great art at prices all art-lovers can afford. Opening Reception: Friday, November 4, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. Visit DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

NOV. 11 - DEC. 29

An Eye for Nature Exhibition. At Mount Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill Lane, Alexandria. Nina Tisara and Steven Halperson have teamed up for an exhibition of Tisara’s mosaic art and Halperson’s fine art photography. The exhibit may be seen from 10 a.m. to noon, Mondays and Tuesdays and 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursdays except for Thanksgiving. To schedule other hours contact ninat@ninatisara.com.

NOV. 17-JAN. 8, 2023

The Botanical Gourmet. Botanical Arts Society of the National Capital Region. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Reception, Sunday, November 20, 4 — 6 p.m. For eons, animals ranging from massive leaf-eating dinosaurs to minus-



The Holiday Boat Parade of Lights will take place Saturday, Dec. 3, 2022 in Alexandria.

Holiday Boat Parade of Lights

Old Town’s waterfront will shine for the 22nd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon on Saturday, December 3, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. when more than 50 brightly lit boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline. Boat parade dockside festivities will entertain parade-goers from 2 to 8 p.m. The boat parade is part of a weekend of festivities including the 51st annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. Head to Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street, near the official parade start line at the Alexandria City Marina, for festivities from 2 to 8 p.m. including a pop-up beer garden from Alexandria’s award-winning Port City Brewing Company, hot chocolate from Dolci Gelati, gourmet popcorn from America’s Favorite Gourmet Popcorn and holiday music from 97.1 WASH-FM.

cule nectar sipping insects have been attuned to the healthful benefits of a plant-based diet. For their part, plants have enlisted the help of animals by attracting them with visual and other cues for purposes of reproduction. These interactions, while necessary, are purely transactional. They lack the aesthetic spirit. That’s where botanical artists step in. Botanical art is neither scientific illustration nor decorative floral composition, but an engaging combination of the two. Like blue jays or cabbage moths, botanical artists are drawn to shiny red berries and bright yellow flowers, but unlike other creatures, they have the means to depict their attraction. The works in this exhibit focus specifically on plants that have health-giving nutritional properties for people.

SUNDAY/NOV. 27

Sunday Funday. 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. At Ainslie Arts Center, 3900 West Braddock Road, Alexandria. This event will feature a cast of local musical theater talent and singing drag queens, a three-piece band, as well as bottomless signature drinks. Presented by the Monumental Theatre Company. Tickets will be available online at <https://www.monumentaltheatre.org/>.

org. Call 703-956-6590.

DEC. 2-17

The PARC at Tysons Holiday Market. Fridays and Saturdays. Celebrate the holiday season with local makers, crafters, and artisans from the Fairfax County area! Visit the holiday market at The PARC at Tysons on the first three Fridays and Saturdays of December for a pop-up shop of local artisans and small businesses offering

SEE HOLIDAY CALENDAR, PAGE 13

The McLean Holiday Art & Crafts Festival will take place Dec. 2-3, 2022 at the McLean Community Center.

girl from snow. When she mysteriously comes to life, mischief, laughter, and enchantment abound. But what will happen when the ice begins to melt? Told through dazzling movement, dance, and acrobatics, Snow Maiden is a magical tale of hope, friendship and the transformative power of dreams. Based on the beloved folktale Snegurochka, Snow Maiden is a holiday treat for friends and fans of all ages.

DEC. 1-31

Home for the Holidays Art Show. At Arts Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Works by local artists on display the entire month of December. Visit www.artsherndon.com.

FRIDAY/NOV. 25

Reston Holiday Parade. 11 a.m. At Reston Town Center, Reston. Reston Town Center launches the season with the annual Reston Holiday Parade. The one-of-a-kind, one-hour, half-mile parade along Market Street also welcomes the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus in a horse-drawn carriage. Since 1992, rain or shine, the parade has been an annual tradition on the day after Thanksgiving. The Clauses will return for the annual Tree Lighting at 6 p.m.

DEC 1-23

“Snow Maiden.” At Syntetic Theater, 1800 S. Bell St, Arlington. In a frozen forest, a lonely boy builds a

Holiday Events at Lorton Workhouse Art Center

Small Business Saturdays - 20% Off Saturdays, Nov. 26, Dec. 3, Dec 10

Visitors can celebrate Small Business Saturday by supporting artists at the Workhouse Arts Center with a 20% discount on all items in gift shops, galleries, and artist studios! For three consecutive Saturdays—Nov. 26, Dec. 3, and Dec. 10—visitors can get a head start on their holiday shopping while supporting artists and their small businesses.

Thanksgiving Weekend Comedy Showcase

Saturday, Nov. 26, 7 - 8:30 pm

Comedy showcase featuring comedians Patrice DeVeaux, Charlie Ross, Prince Arora, and Eddie Morrison. Tickets are \$20. The show will be held in the McGuireWoods Gallery in building W16.

Holiday Card Making: Family Workshop

Saturday, Dec. 3, 10 am - 12 pm

In this one-day workshop families will design and decorate holiday cards together. From drawing a family of penguins singing holiday songs to a giraffe wishing a happy birthday, this workshop will add joy and cheer to the festive season. Tuition is \$55; materials provided. Location, Room 30, building W3.

Ceramic Gingerbread Houses

Saturday, Dec. 3, 1 - 5 pm

In this one-day workshop participants will create a “gingerbread” house made out of clay. Students will construct the house and decorate it using cut-outs, sprigging, and applied colors. Students are encouraged to bring ideas, photos, and favorite tools if they have them. Post-workshops finishes will also be discussed. Materials provided. Tuition is \$110; materials included. Location, Ceramics building W8.

New Year’s Eve In Lorton with Anthony DeVito

Saturday, Dec. 31 – Showtimes 7 pm and 9:30 pm

New Year’s Eve comedy celebration. Participants will ring in the new year with one of the hottest comics in the country, Anthony DeVito. The show is hosted by Apple Brown Betty, and features comedian Dewayne White. Tickets are \$55 for the 7 pm show. Tickets for the 9:30 show, which includes music until midnight and a champagne toast, are \$65. Both shows will be held in the McGuireWoods Gallery in building W16.

HOLIDAY FUN CALENDAR



TURKEY TROT

Inaugural Turkey Trot

About 25 members of the community, ranging in age from 18 years old to 91, participated in either the 3-mile run or 1 mile walk which wound through the surrounding Hollin Hall neighborhood. Afterwards, participants enjoyed donuts and other refreshments outside the gallery's frame shop, where the group started and finished.

Nepenthe Gallery held its inaugural Turkey Trot last Saturday, November 19 at 8 a.m.



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'Tis the Season Holiday tree lights up Market Square.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Santa Claus made his first official visit to Alexandria to kick off the holiday season at the annual holiday tree lighting Nov. 19 in Market Square.

“By golly, there are some wonderful things happening in this city,” said Santa as he made his way through the crowd.

Santa rode into town on the King Street Trolley and was escorted to the stage by students from Alexandria City High School. He was joined by Mayor Justin Wilson and other local of-

ficials as the crowd helped count down the lighting of the 70-foot tree adorned with 38,150 LED lights.

The Town Crier welcomed the crowd as the Silver Five Brass Quintet provided holiday music entertainment.

“By golly, there are some wonderful things happening in this city.”

— Santa Claus at the holiday tree lighting

“Right now it’s a little chilly in the North Pole but the elves and Mrs. Claus are working very hard,” Santa said. “Mrs. Claus and I split our responsibilities. She is in research, development and production and

I am in charge of deliveries and customer relations and am here to wish everyone Happy Holidays.”



Santa is joined by Mayor Justin Wilson and city officials at the holiday tree lighting Nov. 19 in Market Square.



The Silver Five Brass Quintet performs holiday music at the Nov. 19 tree lighting in Market Square.



Crowds gather in front of City Hall for the annual holiday tree lighting Nov. 19 in Market Square. More than 38,000 LED lights adorn the 70-foot tree.



Volunteers from Alexandria City High School prepare to escort Santa to the Holiday Tree Lighting Nov. 19 in Market Square.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

HOLIDAY FUN

FROM PAGE 10

holiday-inspired goods. The PARC will be transformed into a festive indoors and outdoors winter village, featuring a local holiday market and (free!) snowtastic activities for the whole family to enjoy! Food and beverages can be purchased onsite from local businesses as well.

DEC. 2-18

Holiday Market. At 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Del Ray Artisans 27th Annual Holiday Market offers unique handmade fine arts and crafts from local artists. Choose from wall art, pottery, photography, jewelry, glass, and much more! Plus 2023 wall calendars to support Del Ray Artisans nonprofit. Free admission. Market is the first three weekends in December (Dec 2-4, Dec 9-11, Dec 16-18). Different artists each weekend! Open Fridays 6-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Details: delrayartisans.org/holiday-market

DEC. 2-11

Fairfax City Holiday Market. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. The Fairfax City Downtown Holiday Market will be open the first two weekends of December on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Shop at the market of craft vendors as you enjoy Old Town Square in the heart of Historic Downtown Fairfax covered in holiday lights. The festival will include live holiday music, hot drinks, heated tents and gourmet treats, and more!

DEC. 2-3

Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Weekend. Taste of Scotland: Friday, December 2, 2022; Parade: Saturday, December 3, 2022. Campagna Center is pleased to announce a new presenting partnership for the 51st Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade on Saturday, December 3. The parade will be produced by Visit Alexandria in partnership with Campagna Center and the City of Alexandria, as part of Alexandria's Biggest Holiday Weekend. Learn more about the 2022 parade at ALXscottishwalk.com, or send questions directly to alxscottishwalk@visitalexva.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 3

Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Old Town's waterfront will shine for the 22nd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights sponsored by Amazon on Saturday, December 3, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. when more than 50 brightly lit boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline. Boat parade dockside festivities will entertain parade-goers from 2 to 8 p.m. The boat parade is part of a weekend of festivities including the 51st annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. Head to Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street, near the official parade start line at the Alexandria City Marina, for festivities from 2 to 8 p.m. including a pop-up beer garden from Alexandria's award-winning Port City Brewing Company, hot chocolate from Dolci Gelati, gourmet popcorn from America's Favorite Gourmet Popcorn and holiday music from 97.1 WASH-FM.

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Weight For It, Wait ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

For the first time in almost my entire six-decades plus of eating, I heard something from a doctor (my oncologist) that I had never heard before: "Kenny, you need to gain some weight."

The first reaction I had was to recall (in my mind) Robert Di Niro's famous "You talking to me?" bit from the movie "Taxi Driver." But since I was the only cancer patient sitting in the examining room and the oncologist was speaking directly to me from approximately three feet away, it was me. I just couldn't believe, process even, these never-before-heard words.

These words were directed at me for good reason. I'm not even fitting into my older brother's hand-me-down jeans anymore, almost all of which were too tight. Now, these jeans are all too big. In addition, my belt hangs around my waist as it no longer has enough holes to make for a tight fit anymore. And when I had to wear a suit last week to attend a funeral, it was very nearly tent city. To say I was swimming conjures water. Let me assure you, there was no water where I was swimming. I was on dry land and standing helplessly in front of a mirror reflecting on my appearance. Ultimately, I did find something to wear. However, the problem was; I was the one wearing it, not the Kenny from last year.

This juxtaposition of my normal overweight to this very uncharacteristic underweight was not exactly my intention. It's more a combination of teeth issues and the dry-mouth side effect of my thyroid cancer medication. Though I'm not exactly a shell of my former self, I am nonetheless, svelte, you might say? And why might I be svelte? Because I've never heard the word used to describe me before so I'm not sure it applies. But to quote Popeye, that famous sailor: "I y'am what I y'am." I just hope that my future weight gain doesn't involve eating spinach out of a can. Early suggestions from the peanut gallery suggest otherwise: to include drinking multiple cans of boost per day, eating Ben & Jerry's ice cream at will, without caring which one is will, and eating more than a bagel and cream cheese for breakfast/lunch every day.

This need to eat – for my health, is the complete and total reversal of my lifelong relationship with food. Generally speaking, I am not a "healthy" eater. I'm more a carbohydrate kind of person who prefers cake, cookies, and ice cream. Vegetables, fresh fruit, fish and the like were never much on my dietary radar. If they ever were, I'd try and jam the signal so I wouldn't be embarrassed by my refusal to even try anything different. Eating has always been the bane of my existence. I'm a meat and potatoes chocoholic who doesn't eat well in front of others. A dinner invitation to eat a meal at somebody's home is fraught with anxiety for me. Invariably, there will be food I won't eat. As such, I'll try to sit next to my wife at the far end of the table away from the hosts so I can sneak food I don't eat onto her plate. Since she's a good eater, possibly what I discard onto her plate won't be left in limbo.

This self-assessment comes from a former adolescent who spent countless hours in the Husky Department in Filenes, Jordan Marsh, Kennedy's, and Raleigh's in downtown Boston trying to find "school clothes." As a result, I've stood over so many piles of clothes in dressing rooms which didn't fit and/or had to try on and then walk a kind of shame onto the floor where my mother was anxiously waiting to see if what I had tried on, even fit and if it did, would it meet with her approval. Twice a year, I endured this shopping hell; fall and winter, spring and summer. I remain partially traumatized to this day. Not to mention all the "fat"-type nicknames my brother had for me: "Fatso," "Blimp," "Endicott Chubb," and "Corpulent," to name a few. But since he was my biggest booster, it never really bothered me. Still, I was never ever told I needed to eat. Far from it. I ate plenty, just the wrong stuff. Yet, in 2022, that's what I'm being told. Eat anything I want; whatever it takes to gain weight.

You might as well try to turn an ocean liner around after it's headed out to sea. It hardly turns on a dime, and as far as my eating habits/tendencies, et cetera, neither do I.

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

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Thank you to the hundreds of supporters who helped to keep all your Connection Newspapers alive throughout Alexandria, Fairfax County, Arlington County and Potomac, Md. along with affiliated websites and digital media. Now we need help again in 2022.

Each local newspaper's mission aspires to provide greater community service, and we do know that our communities are better off if we continue to publish. Last year's financial support from readers and supporters like you bridged the shortfall before Federal PPP funding arrived, and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Please, help save these historical papers. All gifts will be used to fund our printed newspapers and websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

The ongoing pandemic continues to crush many newspapers across the country, and our newspapers continue to be at risk. The Northern Virginia area's best read and most trusted source for community news includes the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and all Connection Newspapers in the metropolitan region.

The pandemic has hit small businesses hard, which in turn has reduced advertising revenue that keeps these local newspapers alive to provide hyper local news to residents. It feels like no small miracle to be looking forward into 2022.

The pandemic has been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us and both made our survival possible. We now await a decision for a grant from Rebuild Virginia in early February that we hope will help us in 2022 and beyond. But we need help to survive the first quarter, always a brutal time for cash flow in weekly newspapers. Thank you.

Connection Newspapers has been offering these local newspapers to residents for over 200 years. Countless residents have grown up with these papers covering significant moments in the lives of family and children, news, community events, school activities, and even pictures of your dogs and cats. Internet news and large national newspapers cannot provide the local connection or historical connection that local papers like Connection Newspapers and the Alexandria Gazette Packet provide. If your child, dog, mother, father, neighborhood, school has been featured, you understand the value of local community newspapers.

Visit connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>

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OPINION

Casinos Coming to Bristol, Portsmouth, Danville, Norfolk

FROM PAGE 6

month of operation, the Bristol casino generated over \$2 million to be shared among these localities.

'Bristol Casino – Future Home of Hard Rock' has already become a major tourism destination, befitting any property that is connected with the legendary Hard Rock brand owned by the Seminole Indians. Within weeks of opening, the casino has attracted visitors from every US state, including Hawaii and Alaska, including yours truly who came to witness the grand opening. While the current site is temporary, I can tell you that it very much is a full-service casino, with 30,000 square feet of gaming space, featuring 870 slots, 21 tables and a sportsbook, all open to the public 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, with ample parking. The space includes a main casino floor as well as non-smoking and high-limit gaming areas. Guests are able to enjoy Mr. Lucky's restaurant, Brick'd (a brick oven pizza and grab-and-go food outlet), and Bristol Bar, a sports bar and lounge with live entertainment. For fans of apparel featuring Hard Rock's iconic logo, the casino has a retail shop offering the brand's signature Rock Shop merchandise, and this is just the temporary casino.

I would encourage my constituents and all of us throughout Northern Virginia, to schedule a vacation to check out the new casino in Bristol, which is an easy interstate drive to reach and a great weekend getaway

trip. Bristol, famous as the 'Birthplace of Country Music,' is a friendly and charming community, nestled in the mountain foothills, surrounded by lots of natural beauty and offering plenty of fun entertainment and outdoor adventure for the entire family.

Just this past week, Portsmouth announced that The Rivers Casino will open a temporary site, on January 15th, 2023. When completed it will be a \$300 million-plus facility creating over 1,000 permanent jobs and will be the largest private sector investment in Portsmouth's history. They are keeping to a promise to include meaningful local minority investment, and have surpassed their goal of \$5 million in equity investment from private investors who are minorities or minority-owned businesses, half of which came from Portsmouth. Already, the newly hired employees are active in the community with charitable works including a recent program lending a hand to Portsmouth's Wesley Community Service Center packaging food, and clothing, and sorting books.

Next week I will write about the progress on the casinos in Norfolk and Danville and importantly, what is being done to increase the Commonwealth's commitment to protecting the public from problem gambling now that more people will have easier access to gaming. Also, Virginia has a Problem Gambling Hotline at 1-888-532-3500.

BULLETIN BOARD

Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

FAIRFAX COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE DEPARTMENT PARTICIPATING IN TOYS FOR TOTS CAMPAIGN

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department will be participating in the Annual National Capital Region Fire and EMS Departments' 2022 TOYS FOR TOTS Campaign. The intent of the campaign is to "bring holiday joy and deliver a message of hope to children." Stations will accept donations now through Sunday, December 11, 2022.

Collection boxes will be placed outside the front door of each fire and rescue station every morning. Residents will be able to drop off toys until 8 p.m., each evening.

Please help us to help those less fortunate this holiday season. Thanks to the generosity of those who live and work in Fairfax County, FCFRD was able to provide the Marines with approximately 25,000 toys last year!

Children who are served by this campaign include toddlers and youths through age 17. The campaign will only accept new, unwrapped toys. Toys used as weapons or considered to be weapons (i.e., toy guns or knives of any kind) will not be accepted. Checks or money orders for donations must be made payable to TOYS FOR TOTS.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Stations will accept donations through Sunday, December 11, 2022. Toys will not be accepted after this date.

ADOPT A WARRIOR FAMILY FOR CHRISTMAS

So many of our Military families today find themselves in financial crisis, now more than ever. This will be especially true during this Holiday Season. To give back, Able Forces Foundation

(AFF) is once again sponsoring the Adopt-A-Warrior Family Christmas program. As in years past, Able Forces Foundation will adopt families from each of the five Military Service branches. All adopted families are identified by military Advocates on military bases or military Recovery programs in the Washington, DC Metro area. These families have been vetted and referred to AFF. Based on need, financial support will ensure each family will have:

- A Christmas Tree
- Complete Christmas Dinner (for up to 8)
- Stocking Stuffers
- the ability to provide up to 5 gifts per child

100% of all donations go directly to support this program. There are no administrative or overhead fees taken out of donations. All donations contributed between Oct. 25 and Christmas will go directly to support this program. If you can help, go to: www.ableforces.org/adopt to make a contribution.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

STEM VOLUNTEERS. The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) needs scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and physicians to assist K-12 STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) teachers in the Northern Virginia Area, during the 2016-17 school year. In the 2015-16 school year, the numbers of STEM volunteers in Northern Virginia were: Fairfax County - 40, Arlington - 20, and Alexandria - one. Details of the collaboration are worked out between the teacher and the volunteer, and may involve giving demonstrations, assisting in lab experiments, lecturing on special topics, assisting with homework, etc. The hours are flexible, and volunteers attend a one-day training in September before being assigned to schools. To see how volunteers are assisting their teachers, view the video clips at www.seniorscientist.org. To volunteer, contact donaldrea@aol.com.

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an

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SERVICE & PARTS HOURS: MON-FRI 6A-7P & SAT 7A-5P

<p>BATTERY SPECIAL FREE BATTERY CHECK-UP INCLUDES: CHECK COLD CRANKING AMPS AND VISUAL INSPECTION OF BATTERY CONDITION. INCLUDES BATTERY CONDITION PRINT OUT. <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>	<p>LUBE, OIL & FILTER SPECIAL \$39.95 \$44.95 FOR SYNTHETIC OIL CHANGE INCLUDES: CHANGE OIL (UP TO 5 QTS.), INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA OIL FILTER, INSPECT & ADJUST ALL FLUID LEVELS AND COMPLIMENTARY MULTI-POINT INSPECTION WITH PRINT OUT. <small>NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>	<p>ALIGNMENT SPECIAL \$89.95 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT INCLUDES: 4-WHEEL ALIGNMENT, INSPECT SUSPENSION, BALL JOINTS, STRUTS & SHOCKS, TIRE CONDITION AND SET TIRE PRESSURE. <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>	<p>BRAKE PAD SPECIAL \$99.95 BRAKE PAD REPLACEMENT INCLUDES: INSTALL GENUINE TOYOTA FRONT BRAKE PADS, INSPECT FRONT & REAR ROTORS AND/OR DRUMS, CHECK TIRE CONDITION AND INSPECT ALL HARDWARE. TOYOTA PADS ONLY. MACHINE ROTORS AN ADDITIONAL \$199.95 <small>NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>	<p>TOYOTACARE PLUS \$329.00 SPECIAL MAINTAIN PEACE OF MIND BY EXTENDING YOUR TOYOTACARE COMPLEMENTARY MAINTENANCE PLAN TO 4 YEARS/45,000 MILES! <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>	<p>SERVICE VARIABLE DISCOUNT THE MORE YOU SPEND, THE MORE YOU SAVE! \$10 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$50-\$99 \$15 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$100-\$199 \$20 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$200-\$499 \$50 OFF... WHEN YOU SPEND \$500+ <small>TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. OFFER ENDS 11/30/22.</small></p>
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