

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

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MARCH 2, 2023



Army Col. Paris Davis (ret) holds a photo of himself during his service in Vietnam. The Alexandria resident will receive the Medal of Honor from President Joe Biden March 3 at the White House, 58 years after saving his men in a fierce 1965 battle in Vietnam.



Then Capt. Paris Davis, left, congratulates trainees on completion of training in South Vietnam.

PHOTOS/THE PARIS DAVIS INTERACTIVE MOH STORY

Paris Davis to Receive Medal of Honor

Local veteran
cited for heroics
in Vietnam.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Paris Davis, an Alexandria resident and one of the first African American officers to lead a Special Forces team in combat, will receive the Medal of Honor from President Joe Biden in a ceremony March 3 at the White House.

A highly decorated veteran who served 23 years in the U.S. Army, Davis will receive the nation's highest award for bravery on the battlefield more than half a century after his heroics during the Vietnam War.

On June 18, 1965, a wounded and bloodied Davis, then a Special Forces captain, twice refused orders to quit the battlefield of Bong Son until he had saved multiple wounded teammates in a brutal 19-hour hand to hand battle with a Viet Cong battalion.

According to the Army Times, Davis repeatedly sprinted into an open rice paddy to rescue each member of his team using his pinkie finger to fire his rifle after an enemy grenade shattered his hand. Due to his heroics, Davis's entire team survived the battle.

At the end of the battle, Davis was recommended for the Medal of Honor by one of the men he had rescued that day. That 1965 nomination package was lost by the Army, as was a subsequent nomination made in 1969.

Davis was eventually awarded a Silver Star, the third-highest military combat med-



Paris Davis is presented with the Silver Star for his heroics in Vietnam.

al, but members of his team, many who have suggested that race was a factor in the handling of his nomination, persisted in their push to have Davis recognized for his bravery with the Medal of Honor.

"There were not many African Americans in Special Forces," said Davis in an interview for a Special Operations Command profile. "I had a lot of people say to me 'Are you sure you want to go into Special Forces? I don't see a lot of people who look like you there.' But I was inspired by President Kennedy, who created the Special Forces, and wanted to be a part of it. I knew what I was getting into."

Davis joined the Army in 1962 and was first deployed to Vietnam in 1963. His commands included the 1st Special Forces Com-



Capt. Paris Davis, center, gives a tour of his camp in South Vietnam to Gen. William Westmoreland, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, left, and Maj. Billy Cole.

"There were not many African Americans in Special Forces. I knew what I was getting into."

— Army Col. Paris Davis (ret)

mand, 5th Special Forces Group and 10th Special Forces Group.

Now 83 years old, Davis retired from the Army as a colonel in 1985. For 30 years, he published the Metro Herald, an African American newspaper that was headquartered on North Washington Street.

Still, the Medal of Honor nomination lan-

guished until January of 2021, when then Acting Secretary of Defense Christopher Miller ordered an expedited review of the lost nomination.

In a widely published editorial written in June of 2021, Miller said that the military bureaucracy was continuing to stall the review and urged President Biden to award Davis the Medal of Honor.

The announcement finally came in November of 2022 that General Mark Milley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had approved the nomination followed by approval by Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin.

Davis will formally receive the Medal of Honor during a White House ceremony March 3 followed by a March 6 ceremony at the Pentagon.



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BOXING



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the Alexandria Boxing Club pose for a photo prior to a special screening of Creed III Feb. 28 at the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in Crystal City.

A Knockout Night

Local boxers attend special screening of Creed III.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Members of the Alexandria Boxing Club were the special guests at an advance screening of Creed III Feb. 28 at the Alamo Drafthouse Crystal City.

“We are very excited to be here,” said club representative Alice Williams. “We were invited to be the special guests as part of a charity night for Fight for Children and Variety DC. We are getting prepared for the National championships regionals next month so I’m glad they have the opportunity to relax and see this movie before they head on to the qualifiers in Detroit.”

Alexandria Boxing head coach Jeffrey Johnson said the evening was a special opportunity for the kids.

“This was a great movie and gave the kids a chance to see what they already go through in their own training,” Johnson said. “But they also get to see the will, not just the skill, that it takes to be a champion. It’s the will that they need to understand. They have the skill but they don’t understand the will so much.”

Terriel Cooke Sr. attended the screening with his son, Terriel Jr., a boxing club member and student at Francis C. Hammond Middle School.

“The Alexandria Boxing Club has done a lot for my

son,” said Cooke Sr. “It provides camaraderie and teaches a lot of discipline.”

Founded in 1980, the Alexandria Boxing Club is a structured after-school program for kids focusing on development, self-respect and assurance to support their “fight” for a better life.

“I started with Alexandria Boxing over 40 years ago,” said local boxer Anthony Suggs, a five time Golden-Gloves Champion, National Golden Glove Finalist, Golden Gloves Outstanding Boxer of the year and Olympic Festival Gold Medalist. “Boxing has helped me out tremendously in life. It has helped me make better decisions and better choices in life”

Current club member Marcus Luther said the movie helped fuel his inspiration leading up to the upcoming competition.

“I like how tonight incorporated the real boxing community with the movie,” said the 16-year-old who has been boxing since he was 6. “I got to connect on a personal level and it inspired me as I prepare for the Eastern qualifier for Nationals in Detroit.”

In the last 40 years, Alexandria Boxing has been home to thousands of aspiring youth—some of whom have gone on to become National Champions, World Champions and Olympians, including Troy Isley. Life skills are a key component of the teachings of the club.

“I try to go through life with a don’t quit, never give up attitude that I developed through boxing,” added Suggs. “Like Rocky, he gets beat up in the beginning but then he keeps on fighting. He doesn’t stop, he never gives up and always comes out a winner.”

www.alxboxingclub.org

“[The movie] inspired me as I prepare for the Eastern qualifier for Nationals in Detroit.”

— Alexandria Boxing Club member Marcus Luther.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Champion boxer Anthony Suggs obliges a fan for a photo at a special screening of Creed III Feb. 28 at the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in Crystal City.



PHOTO BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Monica Clark attends the screening of Creed III Feb. 28 at Alamo Drafthouse in Crystal City.

The Virginia Way

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

After an incredibly busy couple of months, the 2023 General Assembly session gaveled out on Saturday, Feb. 25. In total, my colleagues and I in the House and Senate introduced an astounding 2,200 bills, of which 867 are on their way to the Governor's desk for consideration. As this session was a shorter session of just 46 days, House members were limited to 15 or fewer bills. I am pleased to announce that eight of my legislative measures are included in that successful number. The most popular topic for introduced bills this year were matters related to criminal and civil justice, closely followed by education and health-care.

The least popular topic of the session was legislation related to communications and technology, of which no bills passed both chambers. As of today, there is still work to do on the final budget amendments package. The budget conferees are still in negotiation, which will require us to return to the Capitol for a final vote. However, before session ended, we all agreed to plug a \$200

million funding error from the Department of Education with a stop-gap funding measure to make sure our local public schools receive the state funding they expected.

This funding package also makes a deposit into the state "rainy day fund" and provides some funding for existing construction projects. Yet, despite this bipartisan and bicameral funding success, the House and Senate are very far apart in taxes and spending priorities. The biggest issue is whether to provide corporate tax relief that the Governor wants or increased state funding for public education that the Democrats like me support.

The Virginia legislature stands at the precipice of extraordinary and unprecedented turnover in the upcoming November election. Perhaps 25-35% of the body will change in the next cycle. In fact, the last time this level of turnover occurred in modern history was during the Reconstruction era. Following the enactment of the Virginia Constitution of 1869 and until 1890, about 100 African



Krizek

American men served in the General Assembly of Virginia. Unfortunately, from 1890 to 1968, Blacks were not represented at all in the Virginia General Assembly until 1967 when William Ferguson Reid, a Richmond doctor and community leader, became the first African American in the 20th Century elected to the Virginia House of Delegates.

Indeed, many of my colleagues have announced their impending retirements, including our senior-most delegate, my friend Ken Plum of Reston, who has served Virginia as delegate consecutively since 1982. Also retiring: Del. Rob Bell, Del. Roxann Robinson, and Delegates Jeff Bourne and Kathleen Murphy, my wonderful seatmates on the House floor. Still, others are leaving the House to run for seats in the Virginia Senate.

In the Senate, we are losing Majority Leader Dick Saslaw, Sen. Tommy Norment, Sen. Janet Howell, and Sen. John Edwards. A special election will be held on March 28 for the seat vacated by Jennifer McClellan who was elected to Congress last week.

In total, 16 legislators have already formally announced their retirements to pursue other opportunities and spend more time with their families, and I expect several more will announce in the coming months as we finish our work on the budget and return to Richmond for the Reconvene session in April. I thank them all for their many years of service to the people of the Commonwealth, and I will miss them in the General Assembly.

As we gain so many new members from all walks of life in the next session, the seniority and experience that remains among me and my colleagues will become all the more important to guide these new legislators in service to their constituents. Many who are leaving us hold positions of leadership, including committee chairmanships. While we can welcome the change to come, it will be up to us to ensure that the decades of institutional knowledge is not lost and that the legislature can continue to serve in the best interests of the citizens of the Commonwealth without allowing special interests to gain too much influence over the process.

\$100 Million for Undergrounding U.S. 1 Utilities; General Assembly Session Ends

BY SEN. SCOTT SUROVELL

We have completed the 2023 Session of the General Assembly, but our work is not done. Legislating has ended for now, but we did not finalize the state budget and will likely return for a special session to complete that work.

Of my 31 bills, 19 are with the Governor and one additional bill could be considered in a special session. All of my bills passed with bipartisan support and I am hopeful that the Governor will sign them.

Most importantly, we made significant progress in obtaining funding for undergrounding utilities on U.S. 1. Del. Paul Krizek, Sen. Adam Ebbin and I amended a bill addressing a new Fauquier County transmission line to add a first-ever pilot program for an underground electric distribution line on the U.S. 1 corridor if Fairfax County requests the funding as

part of the U.S 1 widening and bus rapid transit project. The bill is now on the Governor's desk.

Dominion Power would fund and build the infrastructure and the cost would be recovered over time from all Dominion ratepayers through rates subject to Dominion's standard ratemaking process. This would cost ratepayers about \$0.20 per month for every \$100 million expended. Del. Krizek and I previously secured a commitment from Verizon to fund the installation of buried Verizon fiber optic cables provided that the duct bank was expanded to include conduit for Verizon's lines. Coupled with the standard contribution from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), this should fund the lion's share of cost for burying all lines.

We will now work with Fairfax



Surovell

County and VDOT to make this happens assuming the Governor signs the bill. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) confirmed to Krizek and me that a project delay relating to adding underground utilities would not jeopardize its \$460 million FTA grant to construct bus rapid transit. Adding underground utilities to this project would require updated environmental assessments, engineering and a longer construction period which could drive project costs up and require additional funding. Since the Dulles Corridor has seen \$6.8 billion of investment in the Metro Silver Line project, \$1.4 billion for the I-495 HOT Lanes, \$3.7 billion for the I-66 HOT Lanes, we hope that some increases to this \$900 million project can be accommodated.

Both chambers passed my legislation to revitalize our Commis-

sion on Utility Regulation (CUR) to help oversee our transition to clean energy. My bill requires the CUR to have regular meetings, receive updates regarding implementation of legislation and hire at least four full-time, nonpartisan policy staffers to advise us on utility policy. This will make future legislation less reliant on industry lobbyists and interest groups, which can only mean better results for Virginians.

Fairness for Local Dealers

My bill to rebalance the relationship between Virginia's locally-owned vehicle dealerships and vehicle manufacturers passed unanimously. Manufacturers have sought to exert increased control over vehicle sale processes like mandating significant investments to gain access to electric vehicle inventories. Ensuring dealers' independence means more variety in selection, lower prices through

SEE \$100 MILLION, PAGE 5

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher

Mary Kimm
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Jeanne Theismann

jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

Janet Barnett, John Bordner,
Mark Mogle

Contributing Photographers
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Shirley Ruhe

Contributing Photographer and Writer
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Eden Brown, Bridgette Adu-Wadier,
Glenda Booth

Contributing Writers
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Hope Nelson

Food Writer
hope@kitchenrecessionista.com
@kitchenrecess

Michael Pope

Senior Reporter
michaelleepope@gmail.com
@michaelleepope

ADVERTISING:

For advertising information
sales@connectionnewspapers.com
703-778-9431

Debbie Funk

Disply Advertising/National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

David Griffin

Marketing Assistant
703-778-9431
dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com

Classified & Employment
Advertising
703-778-9431

Publisher

Jerry Vernon
703-549-0004
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Art/Design:

Laurence Foong
Production Manager:
Geovani Flores

Editor Emeritus:

Mary Anne Weber

CIRCULATION

Circulation Manager:

Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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OPINION

New Route A Success

Congratulations to all the folks who worked to make the 2023 GW Parade a fantastic success.

For my family, the new (improved) route was terrific. The new route touched different neighborhoods and merchants. Studio Barr's owner, Michaela, graciously welcomed participants to use the bathroom facilities. The proprietors of K. Aubrey Flowers and Vintage at the corner of King and West St. offered beverage and cake to parade goers.

They seemed thrilled to have the parade travel past their establishment. Prior to the arrival of the first parade group people stood in the middle of King St. taking pictures with the George Washington Masonic Memorial in the background.

People were comfortably spread along the route. People viewed the parade from second story open

windows. It was exciting to see the various groups approaching from the distance flow straight down King St. towards the Masonic Memorial.

The Masonic Memorial seems to be a symbol for our city so featuring it was a sensible plan. The GW Memorial symbol is used as a logo on shirts, mugs, notecards, calendars and the like. It was a good idea to feature it for the GW Parade.

'Change is good,' as we often hear and this change was a positive. Tweaks may be needed to accommodate those traveling to the Metro and train stations. For a very few hours on one day a year it seems those challenges can be worked out.

For my family the new route made it seem like a 'real' parade.

Carolyn Griglione
Alexandria

\$100 Million for Undergrounding U.S. 1 Utilities

FROM PAGE 4

competition and the survival of thriving community businesses. I was proud to work with them to craft nation-leading legislation.

I also passed legislation that will authorize Virginians to recover damages against local governments that bring enforcement actions that violate state laws or local ordinances and recover their attorney's fees. It is often currently impractical for Virginians to challenge enforcement actions that localities bring in violation of state laws or local ordinances. My bill passed the House of Delegates unanimously and the Senate 39-1.

Unlike other states, Virginia does not have recall elections, but instead authorizes legal actions to remove local elected officials

under a voter petition process. State elected officials can only be removed by impeachment or the legislative body in which they serve. Recently, many local elected officials have been subjected to frivolous removal actions under this old Virginia law. Nearly all actions have been dismissed without an evidentiary hearing. I carried legislation drafted by the Boyd-Graves Commission, a group that recommended changes to reflect five state Supreme Court opinions back through the 1920s that clarify the law's meaning. My bill will reduce confusion. It passed unanimously.

Next week, I will write about more bills I authored, other bills we passed and the status of the state budget. Please share your views with me at scott@scottsuovell.org.

Let Us Know Your View

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

Letters are routinely edited for length, libel, grammar, good taste, civility and factual errors.

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Curious about AlexRenew's Tunnel Project? Let's dig in.

RiverRenew Community
Listening Sessions
6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

March 6
Pendleton Street

March 7
Hooffs Run

March 9
Royal Street



Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/2023-CLS for event details and meeting locations!



Dr. Whyte's New Book

Released February 14, 2023

**TAKE CONTROL
OF YOUR
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DISEASE
RISK**

JOHN WHYTE, MD

Chief Medical Officer of WebMD



Heart disease is the leading cause of death among Americans. You have the power to reduce your risk, and WebMD's Dr. John Whyte, MD will show you just how easy it is to do it.

You Have Heart Disease

Are words no one ever wants to hear. But, what if there was a way for fewer people, including yourself, to hear those words?

So now what?

Take Control of Your Heart Disease Risk, Dr. Whyte shares straightforward information to help you on your health journey, including:

- A risk calculator to assess your personal risk level
- A four-week meal plan with tasty recipes
- An exercise guide to help you move your body without needing to purchase fancy equipment
- Discussion of various digital tools and apps and whether they're worth the money

Despite advances in diagnosis and treatment, heart disease remains a major cause of illness and death. However, by proactively living a heart-friendly lifestyle, you can mitigate your risk for years to come.

...and this book will show you just how easy it is.

Order this and Dr. Whyte's other books on Amazon.com



CALENDAR

NOW THRU MARCH 15

“Mount Vernon” At Nepenthe Gallery. Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Nepenthe Gallery, in partnership with Mount Vernon estate and Woodlawn mansion, presents a special “Mount Vernon” exhibit from Feb. 1 through March 15. This exhibit has been organized in conjunction with Mount Vernon’s national birthday celebration of George Washington and Woodlawn’s 60th Annual Needlepoint Show. Woodlawn was once part of George Washington’s original extensive Mount Vernon estate.

This “Mount Vernon” exhibit will showcase an important work by Thomas Sully – his 19th century “Athenaeum Portrait of George Washington.” Other original works by Pamela Patrick White, Bryant White, Gwen Bragg, Debbie Dartez and Renée C. Gage will be included and for sale, as well as several original works by Pamela and Bryant White that will be on loan by local collectors for display in the exhibit. There will also be giclée prints available for sale of important works from the Mount Vernon estate collection.

Nepenthe will host the following Thursday night “ART+WINE+CHEESE” events related to this exhibit:

March 2nd: Scenes from Mount Vernon. Alexandria based watercolorist and juried artist, Gwendolyn (“Gwen”) Bragg, is an art instructor at both the Art League School in Alexandria and the Workhouse Art Center in Lorton. Gwen will display and discuss many of her watercolor paintings from Mount Vernon.

March 9th: Nelly’s Needlers Needlework Group. Established in 1975 to help preserve Woodlawn, the group was named after Martha Washington’s granddaughter, Eleanor (“Nelly”) Parke Custis, who was raised at Mount Vernon, later lived at Woodlawn, and learned her needlework skills from her cherished grandmother. Nelly’s Needlers will be at Nepenthe Gallery to display works from their 60th Annual Needlepoint Show and discuss their organization and needlepointing as an art form.

NOW THRU MARCH 19

Nicole Santiago Exhibition. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Poetry Workshop on Feb. 25 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Nicole Santiago’s work consists of semi-autobiographical narrative paintings and drawings that depict scenes of love, loss, and duty, thinly veiled in the mundane debris of everyday life. While the impetus for Nicole’s work is highly personal, she intends to construct something more universal that stretches beyond the limits of her own experiences, expanding into broader familiar theme.

NOW THRU APRIL 3

NOVA Plein Air Art Exhibit. At River Farm, 7931 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. Nova Plein Air Artists (NPPA) will be presenting “Celebrations of the Land, Inspired by River Farm,” an art exhibit of over 50 paintings inspired by nature. Reception will be held from 1 – 3 p.m. on March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Reception free and open to the public.



The Thirteen will appear at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria on Friday, March 3, 2023.



Don Francisco’s live music added to the atmosphere at Nepenthe for the opening of the new exhibit on Mount Vernon. The exhibit will run through March 15 at Nepenthe, Hollin Hall Shopping Center, 7918 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria.

THURSDAY/MARCH 2

Yacht Haven Garden Club Meeting. 10 a.m. At Mount Vernon Yacht Club, 4817 Tarpoon Lane, Mount Vernon. Yacht Haven Garden Club will meet. The program is Landscape Design. Visitors are welcome. Contact pmuchello@aol.com.

FRIDAY/MARCH 3

The Thirteen. 7:30 p.m. At Virginia Theological Seminary, 3651 Deanery Drive, Alexandria. Gift your loved ones tickets to an upcoming performance of Rachmaninoff’s All-Night Vigil. Tickets are available at www.TheThirteenChoir.org

MARCH 3 TO APRIL 1

The “Fun With One” exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans features monochromatic artwork by members. Come see the variety that can be accomplished using just one color. The artist awards are juried by Robin Croft. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Opening Reception: Friday, March 3 from 7-9pm. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. (closed on April 2). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SATURDAY/MARCH 4

Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of

over 20,000 gently used children’s books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

SATURDAY/MARCH 4

<cal2>Virtual EcoSavvy Symposium: Feel-Good EcoSavvy Gardening. 10 a.m.-12 p.m. (Adults) Join us virtually for the 19th annual EcoSavvy Symposium, presented by VCE Green Spring Master Gardeners. Understand how gardening affects your physical, mental and spiritual health and learn sustainable gardening techniques using green plants to reclaim contaminated soil and groundwater. A Zoom link will be emailed prior to the start of event. \$24 per person. Register online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/parktakes> or call Green Spring Gardens at 703-642-5173. Code GRFK8L9

SUNDAY/MARCH 5

Alexandria Wedding Showcase. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Above ALX Community, 277 S. Washington Street, Alexandria. For brides and grooms, parents and friends — anyone planning or helping plan a wedding —



NOVA Plein Air Art Exhibit. At River Farm, 7931 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. Nova Plein Air Artists (NPPA) will be presenting “Celebrations of the Land, Inspired by River Farm,” an art exhibit of over 50 paintings inspired by nature. Reception will be held from 1 – 3 p.m. on March 12. Many of the paintings were created onsite at River Farm, and all are available to purchase. Reception free and open to the public.

are welcome to attend the event. 10 a.m. - VIP Brunch with wedding celebrity Monte Durham of ‘Say Yes to the Dress.’

11 a.m. - 3 p.m. - Alexandria Wedding Showcase: 35+ exhibitors, two cash bars for charity, a sports lounge, Mission BBQ and lots of prizes from photography to flowers! 2:45 p.m. - One lucky couple will win \$2,000 to use toward their wedding from TING Internet.

Tickets are available through AlexandriaWeddingShowcase.com.

TUESDAY/MARCH 7

Our Girls Over There: The Hello Girls of WWI. 7 p.m. Virtual. In commemoration of Women’s History Month, the National Museum of the United States Army in Alexandria will host events in tribute to the women who have served in the United States Army since the Revolutionary War. In 1918, a special Army unit comprised of female telephone operators made history as the first women to actively support combat operations on a regular basis. In doing so, they paved the way for expanded roles for women both in the U.S. Army and at home. Free and open to the public. Advance registration is required through the Museum’s online events calendar at theNMSA.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 10

Music by Bach and Handel. 7:30 p.m. At St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 228 S. Pitt Street, Alexandria. Members of the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra, led by Music Director James Ross, present music by Bach and Handel in the intimate setting of St. Paul’s Episcopal Church on Friday night and an additional performance at Westminster Presbyterian Church on Sunday afternoon, March 12 at 3 p.m. The program also features a world premiere by Alexandria-based composer Jonathan Kolm, commissioned by the ASO.

SATURDAY/MARCH 11

“Live Fully.” 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At First Baptist Church of Alexandria. NorthStar Women’s Network is hosting speaker Jada Edwards, along with special guest Whitney

Capps and worship leader Kimberly Williams for a special women’s event celebrating 20 years of connecting women in the Northern Virginia area. The event is called “Live Fully” and is open to all local women. It will focus on encouraging women because “changed women change lives.” Tickets can be purchased at <https://www.nswomensnet.org/2023>.

THURSDAY, MARCH 16

Nepenthe Gallery’s One Year Anniversary: On March 16 at Nepenthe Gallery’s Thursday ART+WINE+CHEESE event, Nepenthe Gallery is celebrating it’s ONE YEAR Anniversary with happy cheer and love, along with a collection of original works by the world-renowned Brazilian artist, Romero Britto. The exhibit that evening will also feature works from several artists who have partnered with us this inaugural year. Thursday, March 16 from 6 to 7:30 p.m, to raise a toast to artists, customers, and community who have helped make this past year such a success.

THE BIRCHMERE

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

MARCH

Wed. 1: The Hot Sardines \$45.00
Thu. 2: Vanessa Carlton – Future Pain Tour \$29.50
Fri. 3: Keller Williams & Steve Poltz ‘Shut The Folk Up & Listen Tour’ \$39.50
Sun. 5: Kevin Ross \$55.00
Wed. 8: Lyle Lovett and his Acoustic Group \$125.00 SOLD OUT!
Thu. 9: Lyle Lovett and his Acoustic Group \$125.00 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 10: Stephanie Mills \$89.50 SOLD OUT!
Sat. 11: Stephanie Mills \$89.50 SOLD OUT!
Wed. 15: Aoife O’Donovan Plays Nebraska, w/ Hawktail \$39.50
Thu. 16: Al Stewart with The Empty Pockets \$49.50
Fri. 17: The Smithereens with Marshall Crenshaw \$39.50

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 7

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

ENTERTAINMENT

3 Dates to Circle in March

BY HOPE NELSON
GAZETTE PACKET

From music-filled afternoons at the brewery to celebrating springtime with cherry blossom drinks and freshly decorated sugar cookies, March always brings the fun. (And we're not even getting into the festivities around St. Patrick's Day!) Here are some of the month's best bets.

The Almost Spring Fling at Port City Brewing, March 11

Come listen to local music, sip a brew or two and support the Alexandria Music Makers Scholarship Fund all in one spot. Port City Brewing will play host to the Almost Spring Fling on this mid-March Saturday afternoon, welcoming artists such as 38-2-Base, The Hip Replacements and Lindsay Collette for a day of tunes and good times. The event is free, but bring some cash for donation purposes if you'd like to support the scholarship. 3950 Wheeler Ave. 2-6 p.m.

Purry Blossom Weekend at Mount Purrnon, March 25-26

Think the cherry blossoms will make it to the Cher-

ry Blossom Festival this year, or will they bloom early? No matter either way – the adoptable cats at Mount Purrnon Cat Café and Wine Bar will be happy to see you regardless.

APPETITE

And we've got it on good authority that despite the trees' bloom schedule, the good folks at Mount Purrnon will have plenty of cherry blossom-themed food and drink specials to make the weekend even more festive. Reservations recommended. 109 S. Alfred St.

Spring Cookie Decorating Class at Lost Boy Cider, March 28

Get into the spring spirit with some fun cookies – and learn a thing or two along the way. The experts from Sugarcoated Bakery will lead a 90-minute step-by-step class so you can learn everything you need to know about how to up your cookie-decorating game. Need a little boost to your inspiration? Your ticket also covers a sampling of Lost Boy's Cider. 317 Hooffs Run Drive. 6:30-8 p.m. \$65.

Hope Nelson is the author of "Classic Restaurants of Alexandria" and owns the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 6

Sat. 18: Tom Rush & Jonathan Edwards \$55.00
Sun. 19: WATCH Awards Ceremony -7pm- \$20.00 SOLD OUT!
Mon. 20: The English Beat \$45.00 SOLD OUT!

Thu. 23: Gerald Albright \$49.50
Fri. 24: The High Kings \$55.00
Sat. 25: The High Kings \$55.00 SOLD OUT!
Sun. 26: Larry Carlton "Farewell Tour - Through The Decades" \$65.00
Wed. 29: Stanley Clarke N 4Ever

\$59.50
Thu. 30: An Evening with Drew & Ellie Holcomb "The Residency Tour" \$49.50
Fri. 31: An Evening with Drew & Ellie Holcomb "The Residency Tour" \$49.50



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THEATRE



PHOTO BY MATT LIPTAK

Curtain Up

Lettice and Lovage, a comical and satirical play by Peter Shaffer, is playing now through March 18 at the Little Theatre of Alexandria. Written for Dame Maggie Smith, who originated the title role of Lettice Douffet, the play centers on a flamboyant tour guide who loves to embellish the history behind an English country house and who butts heads with a fact-conscious official at the house. Pictured are Colin Davies as Mr. Bardolph and Pat Nicklin as Lettice Douffet. For tickets or more information, visit www.thelittletheatre.com

BULLETIN BOARD

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

FOSTER PARENTS NEEDED

Interested in becoming a foster parent? There is always a need for caring foster parents looking to open their homes to foster youth. Get in touch to learn more. Visit fcsvanow@gmail.com or www.FCSVA.org. Or call 703-817-9890.

LOOKING FOR SOFTBALL PLAYERS

The Golden Girls of Northern Virginia, a senior women's softball league, is looking for players. Any woman over the age of 40 is encouraged to join. All skill levels are welcome. They play most Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings in Vienna from May-July and September-October. For more information, visit the web site www.goldengirls.org.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

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.volunteerallexandria.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.volunteerallexandria.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, or visit 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 Alex-

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 11

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WORLD PREMIERE



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY KATIE WHEELER

Jonathan Kolm, composer of "The Waves of Water," stands by the Potomac Rive in Alexandria.

Close Your Eyes and Hear the Raindrops

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Close your eyes and you can hear the piccolotto as the gentle rain begins to fall in the first movement of Jonathan Kolm's "The Waves of Water," a world premiere to be performed by the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra on March 10 and 12.

The plucking of the violin bow at the beginning and end of the first movement represents the rain beginning and then subsiding with the long sound of the violin in the middle for the softening here and there of the gentle pleasing raindrops.

The second movement entitled "Solvent Flash Solutions," represents the idea that water can absorb almost anything for good or bad with trash floating on the top of the water or dissolved in water — a double edged sword." Kolm used string harmonies with high notes to represent objects suspended and floating on top.

By the time you get to the third movement, "Force of Nature," the rhythm has become more jagged with strings joining oboe, bassoon and horns to represent water unleashed in a storm. "Too much water can become a bad thing and can be very destructive; you're at its mercy with water running wild."

The fourth movement, "Refresh and Renewal," is cathartic, "a reflection on how water nourishes us as a community, how important it is. He explains this is the calm after the storm with more traditional music with nice harmonies to support the sense of renewal and recovery after the storm.

"Flowing Medita" concludes with an individual spiritual invitation to investigate our personhood. "It's aleatoric, a fancy music word, that means an element left to chance. I give the oboes a group of four notes to play in any order. It still makes up a chord but within a structure." He says the notes get speeded up or slowed down and in a different order. "You don't know how they will align."

Kolm says "The Waves of Water" took about three months to compose. When his piece got commissioned he says the first big decision he had to make was whether to make this a single longer movement or individual movements. He settled on five movements of 3-4 minutes each. Then Kolm explains the creative narrative flows on what he wants each movement to be. "When I get into the nitty gritty of the individual notes or chord level, I may change my mind on the big picture."

He started playing the piano when he was about four-years-old. Then it wasn't until he was in high school that he did a little bit of dabbling with composing and then more when he got to college. "I think

we usually start by imitating what we know." For him this was the classical sound, for instance of Chopin and Beethoven.

Today he says his compositions have evolved. "I'm a different composer than five years ago, than 10 years ago because I've grown as a person. My sound has developed quite a bit." He says a lot of what he does is like this piece focusing on ecology, the environment or some part of the natural world — "giving voice to the inner self."

Kolm seeks to create a sound architecture for people to come into and have their own experience. "I have no idea how they will respond but I want them to have their own experience."

Kolm has a busy spring beginning with a piece he has composed for a Boston-based violinist who will perform on March 31. "It is a group of short pieces for the violin and loop pedal." He explains this is an unusual composition which involves eight bars at different places during the piece which are recorded and with a hit of the pedal are played back with another layer. "It can be an infinite number of times." I have written the directions on when it is solo violin and when to turn on the loop back on. It has been a lot of fun."

Kolm's composition "The Waves of Water," will be performed as part of the ASO's upcoming Brandenburg and Blue concert which will include Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No 1, BWV 1046 F major and Handel's excerpts from Water Music Suite No. 1. The concerto features haunting horns and several period instruments including a harpsichord. They are considered some of Bach's finest work and are still regarded as some of the foremost orchestral compositions from the Baroque era.

Handel's Water Music Suite was written for King George who requested a series of pieces that could be performed on the river. The orchestra and attendees boarded barges, listening to the concert while floating downstream.

Maestro James Ross says, "Water has been the literal lifeblood of Alexandria and its commerce since at least the 1700s, so a piece that was played on a barge in the Thames on a warm summer night in 1717 mixes compellingly with a new music that traces the path of today's water through our city from rain, through clogs and solvency, purification and finally renewal."

Kolm's World Premiere commission is a musical reflection and meditation and uses the water theme in different ways. It was sponsored by Virginia American Water. The performances will be directed by ASO Music Director James Ross and will be held on March 10 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church at 7:30 p.m. and on March 12 at Westminster Presbyterian Church at 3 p.m.

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Obituary

Obituary



Nina Teresi Carroll died peacefully on Wednesday, February 22, 2023 in Alexandria, Virginia. She is survived by her son, James W. Carroll, Jr., and his wife, Mary D. Carroll, and daughter, Theresa Carroll Buchanan, and her husband, Thomas M. Buchanan. She is also survived by her grandchildren: Thomas M. Buchanan Jr. and his wife, Victoria; Margaret Carroll Jentsch, and her husband, Max; James W. Buchanan, and his wife, Lauren; James W. Carroll, III, and his wife, Victoria; and Ian J. Carroll; as well as two great-grandchildren: Mia Carroll and Esther Jentsch. Mrs. Carroll was predeceased by all three of her husbands: James W. Carroll, a former Alexandria City Councilmember, John (Jack) Bogle, an Alexandria businessman; and Dr. Bruce L. Gilmore, an Alexandria physician.

Mrs. Carroll was born in Alexandria to Joseph and Mary Teresi, and graduated from George Washington High School, and from Virginia Intermont College. After college, she joined her parents in the family business, Alexandria Floral Co., Inc. She and her first husband, Jim Carroll, took over the business from her parents and operated it together until his death in 1984. She continued to successfully run the business on her own for more than 25 years until her retirement.

Nina Carroll was an accomplished businesswoman. Alexandria Floral Co. was repeatedly recognized by Florists Transworld Delivery (FTD) as one of the top 100 florists in the country. Mrs. Carroll also was involved in many business organizations, serving as President of the Alexandria Soroptimists, on the board of the Virginia District of FTD, and on committees with the Society of American Florists, the Northern Virginia Florists Association, and the Alexandria Business and Professional Women's Club. Mrs. Carroll was also a member of the Alexandria Rotary Club. The Alexandria City Council appointed her to serve on the Alexandria Sister City Committee and the Alexandria Beautification Commission.

Mrs. Carroll was loved by her employees, some of whom worked for her for most of their careers. She also employed dozens of local high school students; many successful Alexandria business people and professionals had their first job with Alexandria Floral Co. Her customers also loved her, with many purchasing flowers from her for over 50 years. She provided the flowers for thousands of weddings and Mrs. Carroll was always present to ensure that every order was perfectly executed. She greeted every customer with a bright smile and friendly hello. Her exacting eye and high standards ensured that only the most beautiful floral arrangements were her trademark.

Nina Carroll had numerous life-long friends, a tribute to her kind and generous heart. After having provided flowers to Alexandrians for her entire working life, many residents of Goodwin House, where she spent the last years of her life, knew her even before she arrived, and loved being in her presence. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

Her life will be celebrated at a funeral mass on Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 10:30a.m. at the Basilica of St. Mary, 310 S. Royal Street, Alexandria, Virginia, followed by interment at St. Mary's Cemetery. Her family will also be receiving visitors on Wednesday, March 1, 2023 from 5:00pm to 7:00 pm. at Everly-Wheatley Funeral Home, 1500 W. Braddock Rd., Alexandria, VA.

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Obituary

Shirley Congdon Beattie (Age 97) - Beloved wife and mother died peacefully on February 2, 2023. She is survived by her three children Cecelia Wade of Baltimore, MD, Michelle Beattie of Kensington MD, and Ben Beattie of Richmond VA; two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

A private memorial service will be held at Emmanuel Episcopal Church 1608 Russell Rd. Alexandria, VA 22301 on March 3, 2023.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that memorial gifts be made to: Emmanuel Episcopal Church, designated for the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

Be a part of our:

Wellbeing pages, the first week of every month.

Delight in our **HomeLifeStyle** sections, the second week of every month. Peek at the top real estate sales, glimpse over-the-top remodeling projects, get practical suggestions for your home.

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Let us know about an upcoming event
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BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 8

andria's top mental health charities. Friends has no paid staff, so Board members, working on average 10 hours per month, share the day-to-day work needed to accomplish its goals. Interested candidates should email FriendsOfAMHC@gmail.com.

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

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 or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

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

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

Mentors Wanted. Two creative programs that help transform the lives of Alexandria's pre-teens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own," serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making healthy choices and succeeding in school and in life. Visit www.spaceofherown.org and www.spaceofhisown.org. For more information on how to become a SOHO mentor, contact Sarah Maroney at sarah.maroney@alexandriava.gov or phone at 703-746-4687.

Farmer's Market Volunteers Needed. To volunteer for the Farmer's Markets, email Brian Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

Arts and Crafts Festival. Volunteers are needed on June 10 to help with the event including: greet and check-in vendors, children's area, clean up and tear down and beer tent. Shifts are available between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Visit www.volunteeralexandria.org/ for more.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Postpartum Support Virginia sponsors a free, bi-monthly support group for women suffering depression and/or anxiety during pregnancy or in the first year following childbirth. Meets on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each month at Inova Alexandria Hospital, Health Education Center, rooms 1-2, 4320 Seminary Road. Contact co-moderator Susan Doyle at suzjdoyle@gmail.com or 571-403-0673.

The Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria meets the 1st Wednesday of each month at 2 p.m. At the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 109, 1500 Shenandoah Road. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family

member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiving. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov.

FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

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

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

Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

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

ONGOING

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

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

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

Senior and Job Programs. 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Queen of Apostles Church, 4650 Taney Avenue, Alexandria. St. Martin de Porres Center offers senior and job placement programming Monday through Friday at the parish. Email Kathryn Toohey, ktoohey@ccda.net.

Be Heard at the City's Monthly Public Hearings. A schedule of the meetings can be found at www.alexandriava.gov. Voice opinions, speak about something on the docket or just speak about something you are concerned about. Sign up in advance to speak through the city's website. Anyone is welcome at any of the public hearings.

Public Space Recycling. Alexandria has placed more than 80 bright blue recycling containers next to public trash cans in the commercial districts along Mount Vernon Avenue and King Street, as well as other public spaces, including parks, recreation fields, and other high-traffic pedestrian areas. Visit alexandriava.gov/Recycling.

Composting and Food Waste. Alexandria now has Resource Recovery Stations, located at the City's Farmers' Markets (Old Town, Del Ray) to collect food waste. More than 270 people have participated in the food waste program over the last several months. Participants drop off items weekly, over eight tons of waste has been collected, to be composted to make a natural fertilizer. To learn more about composting visit alexandriava.gov/YardWaste.

English as a Second Language Class. Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St. Tuesdays and Thursdays, all levels 10 a.m.-12 p.m., intermediate workshop 3-5 p.m. All classes free. Call the information desk, 703-746-1702.

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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 been a bear, financially and otherwise. Revenue plummeted at the beginning in 2020. Some beloved advertisers have stayed the course supporting us throughout, and many more have done what they can. In the fall of 2021 we saw the result of some advertising for events and Grand Openings, but now omicron clouds the horizon in so many ways. Revenue still remains short of expenses despite our greatly curtailed costs.

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.

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"Burton" For Certain



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

"Burton" is the name we gave the new golden retriever puppy that my wife, Dina surprised me with, on Sat. Oct 8, 2022. And 'certain' is the fact that had I not had a puppy to monitor – and take out, constantly, I likely would have wallowed to an unfamiliar depth after my brother died on Dec. 3. If puppies need anything, especially when they're not yet house-broken, it is constant supervision. If you allow them an inch, they will create a mile of misbehaving damage. And remember, dogs, puppies, particularly golden retrievers because they're smart, need guidance and lots of positive reinforcement – and most of all: consistency. Had Burton arrived during the 10 weeks or so when I was visiting my brother daily in the hospital and/or rehab center, he wouldn't have received the hands-on (literally) training he has from me and my wife, Dina. But because of the timing of his arrival, a few weeks after my brother was discharged from the rehab center, he did. It gave the three of us (Burton, Dina, and me) ample opportunity to live and learn – and love together. And the love you give a dog is returned 100-fold.

Having established the context of Burton's arrival; the addition and minute-by-minute awareness of a puppy in the house, and that same puppy outside the house without a fenced-in yard focusing your attention and energy 100% of the time, leaves very little time for non-puppy considerations. And so, unintentionally, but most fortuitously, having Burton in my life has enabled me to reduce/manage (not minimize though) the emotional loss that my brother's passing has caused me to carry. Looking into Burton's dog eyes and then having him shake on command – with both paws, doesn't exactly make me forget the tremendous loss I've suffered (It's not just me. It's worse for Vanessa, Richard's wife/now widow.) But Burton does force me to get up and at'em and out of the house every morning. Otherwise, I might simply remain in bed flipping the cable searching for something, anything, that might motivate me to want to live long and hopefully prosper. Richard may not exactly have been the reason for my living, but he sure was the reason for a lot of other things I need in my life. Moreover, he sort of represented a kind of order/predictability in my life that has now disappeared. I didn't exactly take it for granted that I would outlive him, but I figured once I was diagnosed with a terminal form of lung cancer in Feb. 2009 (non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV), all bets were off, especially for anyone who took the over. And yet, here I am.

Though Burton's addition to the family (Richard referred to Burton as his nephew; they met once on Oct. 28, Richard's 73rd birthday) wasn't intended for emotional support (he was secretly purchased by Dina in mid-June 2022, way before my brother's July 16th admission to the hospital), he has been all that and more, especially from Dec. 3rd on, the day of my brother's death. It's no accident that golden retrievers are often selected and trained for this very situation: emotional support. You often see them advertised on television as "support" dogs; as an example, for veterans suffering from P.T.S.D., "battle buddies" as one veteran describes his companion. And you'll see programs where the golden retrievers are visiting patients in hospitals and residents in nursing homes, and they're even used by ski patrol for avalanche rescue. There's nothing quite like a cold nose and a friendly paw to lift you up when you're down. And I sure was. Now being the sole survivor in my immediate family is a role, oddly enough, that I never envisioned for myself.

I wouldn't say Burton has saved my life, or made everything OKAY, but I would say, he did just about everything else. He gave me renewed purpose and responsibility for another life when I was at one of the lowest points in mine.

It's impossible not to smile when greeted by your dog. Their exuberance and excitement at seeing you, after any kind of separation, along with the affection they exhibit almost makes everything all right. Well, for a few minutes it does. Still, my life will never be the same without my brother in it. He was my 'battle buddy.' I imagine now he's looking out for me from a different, more permanent place. I guess there's some solace in that. And let's not forget the healing power of dog saliva.

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

McEneaney Associates has always had one motto in mind... not to be the biggest, but the best. For more than 40 years, our Associates have lived in and supported Alexandria, helping to build our town into the thriving community it is today. To learn more about our Associates and our firm, visit www.WeAreAlexandria.com

#WeAreAlexandria



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