

Alexandria Gazette Packet



25 CENTS

SERVING ALEXANDRIA FOR OVER 200 YEARS • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

We the People Students, DAR celebrate Constitution Week at City Hall.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Songs of patriotism filled the air as students from across the city gathered to celebrate the signing of the Constitution. Sept. 19 in the City Council chambers at City Hall.

Mayor Justin Wilson signed the official Proclamation commemorating Constitution Week, Sept. 17

“Our Constitution is one that has stood the test of time – longer than any other in world history.”

— DAR Constitution Week chair Linda Ferrara

– 23, marking the 236th anniversary of the signing of the historic document.

“The U.S. Constitution is our nation’s charter,” said Linda Ferrara, who welcomed the students and provided a background of the drafting and signing of the Constitution.

Ferrara is the Constitution Week chair of the District V Daughters of the Revolution. In 1955, DAR petitioned Congress to set aside Sept. 17-23 annually to be dedicated for the observance of Constitution Week. The resolution was later ad-

opted by the Congress and signed into law on Aug. 2, 1956, by President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

The aims of Constitution Week are to emphasize citizens’ responsibilities to protect the Constitution, to educate people about the role of the U.S. Constitution and encourage the study of historical events leading to the drafting of the U.S. Constitution in September 1787.

Participating in the ceremony were students from Alexandria City High School, Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School, Mount Vernon Community School and Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy.

Dressed in period attire, David Embry played patriotic music while Vicki Embry, also in period attire, spoke about the role of working women in 1787.

Nancy Hill, Virginia DAR District V Director, presented Wilson with a flag that had been flown over DAR National Headquarters in Washington to commemorate Constitution Week.

The U.S. Constitution was signed on Sept. 17, 1787. In addition to establishing Constitution Week, the DAR erected a structure built in tribute to the Constitution of the United States. DAR Constitution Hall, which is a performing arts center, opened in 1929, in Washington, D.C.

“Our Constitution is one that has stood the test of time -- longer than any other in world history,” Ferrara said. “It reflects the thinking of many learned Founding Fathers more than 200 years ago and yet it still applies today.”



Students from Mount Vernon Community School sing “God Bless America” at the Constitution Day Ceremony Sept. 19 at City Hall.



Samuel Tucker Elementary School students perform “You’re a Grand Old Flag” at the Constitution Day ceremony Sept. 19 at City Hall.



Mayor Justin Wilson, center, poses for a photo with student representatives to celebrate Constitution Day Sept. 19 at City Hall.



Students from Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy perform “Singing Freedom’s Song” at the Constitution Day Ceremony Sept. 19 at City Hall.



Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution are joined by school and city representatives in celebrating Constitution Day Sept. 19 at City Hall.



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While it may seem overwhelming, there is a definite process that is time-tested to assist with each step and to reduce the stress.

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Melvin Palmer, left, receives an American flag pin from tutor Mark Raabe at an event celebrating new U.S. citizens Sept. 18 at Goodwin House Alexandria.



New U.S. citizens Nada Boris, center, and Melvin Palmer, second from right, celebrate their citizenship with tutors Judy Hansen, Pat Gottmoller and Mark Raabe Sept. 18 at Goodwin House Alexandria.



Nada Boris displays her American flag shoes after celebrating her U.S. citizenship Sept. 18 at Goodwin House Alexandria.

PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET

Celebrating Citizenship

Goodwin House honors newest U.S. citizens.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Employees who recently became U.S. citizens through the Goodwin Living Foundation's citizenship grant program were honored at a reception and panel discussion Sept. 18 at Goodwin House Alexandria.

Among those celebrating their new citizenship were Nada Boris and Melvin Palmer, both employees of Goodwin House and The View Alexandria.

"I was blessed to be part of Nada's naturalization ceremony at which time 49 individuals from 29 countries were made new citizens," said program coordinator Judy Hansen.

"For us as friends and family it was a joy but for those becoming new citizens it was a solemn and moving chapter in their very long journey."

In 2018, Goodwin Living and the Goodwin Living Foundation created a citizenship ap-

plication fee program that provides employees with grants to cover the cost of the \$725 citizenship application fees. Nearly 1,000 Goodwin House employees from more than 60 countries are non-U.S. citizens.

"I am very grateful for the diversity that

"It is the many places, people and cultures that makes the United States so special."

— New U.S. citizen Nada Boris

I have living here," said Boris, who came to the U.S. in November of 2016 and works as a marketing and communications coordinator. "It is the many places, people and cultures that makes the United States so special."

Palmer came to the U.S. in October of 2015 from Sierra Leone.

"The United States is the greatest coun-

try in the world," said Palmer, who works in maintenance. "In my country, there is no opportunity. I started here as a dishwasher but did not have the money to pay for citizenship so I am excited to be given this opportunity to become a U.S. citizen."

Goodwin House residents volunteer to tutor the employees to prepare for their citizenship exams.

The program has been so successful that Goodwin Living has extended the citizenship program to the spouses and children of employees and created a Citizenship Playbook to help other institutions implement similar programs.

Five years after creating the program, Goodwin House has impacted 130 lives in creating new U.S. citizens.

"What surprised me most about America is how diverse, different, and accepting it is," Boris said. "No matter where you are from or who you are, you will always find your tribe here and I feel very grateful for that."

Alexandria City Council Town Hall

Come to ask questions of and hear from your elected officials at the City of Alexandria's City Council Town Hall on Sunday, Sept 24, 1-3 p.m. at the Del Pepper Community Resource Center, 4850 Mark Center Dr.

Mayor Justin Wilson, Vice Mayor Amy Jackson, and all members of City Council will be present to speak about the issues impacting you and your family. You can also get the latest news on upcoming projects and initiatives in Alexandria. Spanish, Amharic, and Arabic interpretation services will be available at the event.

Online Registration is Strongly Encouraged <http://survey.alexandriava.gov/s3/september24counciltown-hallrsvp>

To learn more about the Alexandria City Council and City Council Priorities, visit alexandriava.gov/Council.

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact ebony.fleming@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.3965, Virginia Relay 711.

If you prefer communication in another language, free interpretation and translation services are available to you. Please email newsroom@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.3960.

Fall Book Sale at Duncan Library

Fall Book Sale at Duncan Library from Wednesday, Sept. 27-Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023. Friends of Duncan Library Members can take advantage of a special Members-Only Preview Sale and will receive discounts throughout the rest of the sale.

Book sale hours:

❖ Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023, 5-8 p.m. Members-Only Preview Sale

❖ Thursday, Sept. 28, 2023, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. General Public Sale

❖ Friday, Sept. 29, 2023, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. General Public Sale

❖ Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. General Public Sale

Books will be priced at \$3.00 for hardcover, \$2.00 for paperback, unless otherwise marked. Book sale profits go directly back to Duncan Library to support the purchase of books, programming, materials, community events, equipment and more.

Stop by to support James M. Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave, Alexandria, VA 22301

Not sure if your Friends of Duncan Library Membership is up-to-date? We will email reminders as we get closer to the book sale dates. If you're not a Friend and want to sign up, it's easy to join online. <http://www.friendsofduncanlibrary.org/donations/>

Celebrating a Century City celebrates local centenarians.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The City of Alexandria paid tribute to local centenarians with a celebration event Sept. 12 in the Vola Lawson Lobby of City Hall.

“This is an amazing milestone,” said Kate Garvey, Director of the Department of Community and Human Services. “We have 25 centenarians in the City of Alexandria and want to acknowledge the amazing contributions they have made.”

Mayor Justin Wilson welcomed the centenarians in attendance, presenting each with a certificate after giving a brief background on the resident.

“I think there is a theme here,” said Wilson, after several centenar-

“I have such a wonderful family. I count my blessings.”

**102-year-old
Walter Hammersley**

ians agreed that the best advice to the younger generations is to be kind to each other.

The secrets to longevity varied, with 103-year-old Ann Samuel attributing hers to the fact that she never learned to drive and walked everywhere.

For Frances Webb, also 103, she attributes her longevity to getting up every day, putting on her make-up and being kind to everyone.

Walter Hammersley, 102, attributed his long life to his family.

“I have such a wonderful family,” Hammersley said. “I count my blessings.”

Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director of Senior Services of Alexandria, was on hand to congratulate the attendees.

“At Senior Services, we support residents so that they can stay in the community and become centenarians,” Anderson said. “We honor and respect them for all they have given to Alexandria and to their families. This is truly my favorite event of the year.”

At 101, Ruby Wells advises everyone to “keep your sense of humor always.”

Added Garvey, “Today shows that this is a community where older adults can flourish and influence and teach us how to do better.”



Family members and friends gather around Ann Samuel, seated, as the 103-year-old is honored at the Centenarian Celebration Sept. 12 at City Hall.



Ruby Wells, center, celebrates as a 101-year-old with Erica Moyler and Odanny Espinal at the Centenarian Celebration Sept. 12 at City Hall.



Walter Hammersley, 102, right, receives a certificate from Mayor Justin Wilson at the Centenarian Celebration Sept. 12 at City Hall.



Eve Capps, 100, left, with nurse Corrie Cyre at the Centenarian Celebration Sept. 12 at City Hall.

Members of the Alexandria Citizens Band, which has existed for more than 100 years, perform at the Centenarian Celebration Sept. 12 at City Hall.



PHOTOS BY
JANET BARNETT
GAZETTE PACKET

Nancy Palma Receives Prestigious Marriott Award

By SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Nancy Palma, Springfield resident, recently received the news she will receive the 2023 J. Willard Marriott Award of Excellence. “It’s huge, only 10 in the world every year,” Palma says. She joins other Marriott employees from areas such as Poland, Fiji, Florida, China and Mexico.

Palma says she thinks she knows why she received the award. “There are so many reasons. I come every day. I care for the job, the guests, the associates. I always look for a way to be better every single day.” Under her leadership Guest Satisfaction and Associate Engagement scores have soared.

Palma is currently the Assistant General Manager at Springhill Suites Alexandria Old Town/Southwest. But her goal is to be General Manager. “I’m ready.” She says she started in the company at 19 years old and has grown in the company over the last years. “I always tried to learn as much as I can. I would look at the person above me and tell them I would like to know how to get the skills to do their job. Then I could start handling that, moving up the ladder.” Now she is practicing being General Manager.

But this road has not been easy. When Palma was 13-years-old her mother was diagnosed with metastatic cancer and told she was terminal. “When I was really young I would go to all of my mother’s appointments with her to translate. Because of the responsibility which I learned in that

“Nancy is the sand in a jar full of rocks. She instinctively knows how to fill the gaps and make our work complete.”

experience my mother told me when something happened she would like to have me adopt my two younger siblings.”

Palma says her mother went to Honduras in 2010 because she wanted to see her own mother who she hadn’t seen since 1990. “The plan was my mother would see a good specialist while she was there and we would all go back and live there.” But Palma remembers two months later at 4:30 in the afternoon she was working and the kids were in school when she lost her mom.

She didn’t have much time to get back to Honduras and she had lost her passport but two days later she did get to Honduras. Palma was 18. She says when she returned to the United States she went to the courthouse and they wanted to put her younger siblings Jose (12) and Dulce (16) in foster care. She said no and decided to get a second job in addition to Taco Bell where she worked nights. She started working at the Hampton Inn in Springfield.

“I had a hard time because I was still the sister and my siblings didn’t want to listen to me.” But in a few months she had moved to the Marriott in Springfield, and her General Manager and mentor there supported her with a schedule that worked better for her.



Nancy Palma, Marriott Assistant General Manager at Springhill Suites in Alexandria.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

“And communication was important with my siblings. I told them listen to me — it’s this or they take you away.”

Palma says her philosophy is to always look out for the associates at Marriott and they will look out for the guests. She says she has a scoring system which she shares with her team “so they aren’t blindsided and can do a better job.” In addition, she initiated ESOL classes because a lot of her housekeepers don’t speak English and can’t speak to the guests. “They are absolutely excited about that.”

Palma says she believes that every day we all learn something new and “even me. I learn from the associates and I always thank them. It will motivate them to do better. I try to give them an opportunity to develop and advance.” Every Tuesday she holds a team

huddle where all departments are welcome and they update on the scores.” She says she tries “not to just wait for the official employee week to thank everyone; I do it every day.”

According to her General Manager Pio Mendes, “Nancy is the sand in a jar full of rocks. She instinctively knows how to fill the gaps and make our work complete.” She is described as keeping her team motivated by bringing an unfailingly positive outlook to any circumstance She believes responding calmly to stress and focusing forward is the key to being a good leader.”

In addition to her work at Marriott, Palma is involved in a lot of community events including helping her church and singing in the choir as well as working with United Community. “There is a lot of need in Honduras for the food bank, administrative assistance and monetary contributions.”

Palma says she was surprised the day they announced her award and she is currently working on her speech. “My team had decorated my office, bought me a beautiful edible arrangement and took me out to lunch at my favorite place.” She is looking forward to the awards ceremony, “my big day,” on Oct. 16 at the Marriott headquarters in Bethesda.

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Beyer Shares Constituent Stories Of Hardship From 2018-19 Government Shutdown

Shutdowns are very bad, actually.

From the office of U.S. Rep. Don Beyer

U.S. Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA), who represents a Northern Virginia district containing one of the largest concentrations of federal employees in the U.S. House, today shared excerpts of letters constituents sent him during the 2018-19 shutdown. Their stories, shared with personal identifiable information removed, show the hardship and uncertainty experienced by federal employees who were furloughed or worked without pay during that shutdown.

The 2018-19 lapse in appropriations resulting from Donald Trump's demands for border wall funding caused a partial government shutdown of many agencies, affecting 800,000 federal employees.

If Republicans block passage of government funding beyond Sept. 30, 2023, it will result in a wider shutdown that would halt

pay for far more of the federal government's 2.2 million permanent, civilian, non-postal employees. Large portions of the nation's millions of contractors would also face loss of pay, many of whom never received back pay after previous shutdowns. More than half of Americans say they live paycheck to paycheck.

A shutdown would also result in the loss of key services to the American people across the country, weaken national security, and damage the economy. Despite the hardship a shutdown would inflict on millions of Americans, however, House Republicans continue to downplay the negative effects of – and even express the desire to see – a government shutdown.

"I urge my colleagues to remember that there are a lot of real people out there who will be hurt if there is a government shutdown. These letters and emails show how shutdowns are a disaster for my constituents, our region, and millions of Americans across the country," Beyer said.

"When Donald Trump caused a shutdown five years ago, we had people who work for the government of the most powerful country in the world waiting in food lines

in our capital city. Today untold numbers of federal employees and contractors – most of whom live and work outside the capital region – are preparing to face that hardship and uncertainty again.

"Intentionally forcing millions of workers to go without pay and shutting down essential services for the American people isn't responsible governance, it is extremism," Beyer said. "Yet today Republicans in both chambers are confidently predicting a shutdown that they are themselves making more likely with bad faith posturing, nihilism, and unrealistic demands that violate the Speaker's agreement with President Biden."

Beyer is the lead sponsor in the House of the End Shutdowns Act. He previously helped pass legislation during the 2019 shutdown that ultimately gave back pay to federal employees at the end of that shutdown, and guaranteed back pay to federal employees following any future lapse in appropriations.

Excerpts from letters from 2018-29 shutdown:

Letter One:

My name is [REDACT] and I am

a resident of [REDACT]. I am also a Federal employee. I currently work, or should be currently working, in [REDACT]. As I sit at home, I think of all of my work piling up and reports with fast approaching due dates; I want to be able to do my job. Next week will be my first missed paycheck due to the current furlough.

I would like to tell you about the hardships that my family is currently enduring. We have a small savings, but not much, and estimate that we may be able to miss two of my paychecks before we are in dire straits. I have a husband, who is currently working, but who also has a lower income than I do, so relying on his income alone is not an option. We are a one car family, as I have been able to rely on the Metro to take me to and from my job; just two days ago we needed a large brake job on our car. That was a \$800 unexpected and unavoidable expense and at a time when I have no income. We are relying on credit cards which, until last month, we had been working diligently to pay off.

I have a two year old son; he is currently in daycare. To pull him
SEE BEYER SHARES, PAGE 11

Early Voting Begins September 22nd

BY DEL. PAUL KRIZEK

Get ready for the upcoming November General Election in Fairfax County, where all 140 seats in the Virginia General Assembly are up for grabs. Along with Senate and House seats, 12 other local offices are on the ballot, including Clerk of Court, Commonwealth's Attorney, Sheriff, Chairman of Board of Supervisors, District Supervisor, School Board Members At-Large, District School Board Member, and Soil and Water Board Members. As you know, Virginia holds elections every year, but this year is extra special: it is what we call an "off-off-year" election. Virginia is one of just five states in the entire nation that conducts off-year elections, meaning an election when no federal offices are on the ballot. Virginia takes it a step further with "off-off-years", when there are also no major statewide offices such as Governor or Attorney General on the ballot.

Early voting begins this Friday, Sept. 22. Here in the new 16th

House District, we are fortunate to have an in-person early voting location so accessible to us at the Mount Vernon Governmental Center on Parkers Lane. Before you head out to vote, make sure your voter registration is current and accurate, and remember to bring an acceptable ID. For a full list of accepted identification methods, you can visit <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/registration/voterid/>.

The voter registration deadline is Monday, Oct. 16, but you can still register up to and including Election Day and cast a provisional ballot. If you prefer to vote by mail, request a ballot by Oct. 27 at 5 p.m., and postmark it by Election Day. Those who have already applied for a mail ballot can expect to begin receiving them on Sept. 22.

Voting early offers flexibility and reduces Election Day wait times for all. And, with a bill I passed in 2019, if you arrive at an early



Krizek

polling location and are still in line at closing time, you can remain in line and cast your ballot. In total, voters now have 45 days before Election Day to cast their ballots.

This election is crucial, as it impacts various critical issues that affect the daily lives of Virginians. With a one-seat majority in the Virginia Senate, Democrats defended abortion rights, gun safety laws, public education, LGBTQ+ protections, clean energy standards, and more. On the flip side, extremists have pushed inaccurate history teaching, favored wealthy corporate tax cuts, and worked against democracy.

Let me emphasize that each and every vote counts. Several of this year's June primary election races were decided by just a handful of votes. For example, the Republican candidate in SD-29 in Prince William County won his primary race by only 2 votes. And, in 2017, a key House of Delegates race end-

ed in a dead tie and was decided by pulling a winner's name out of a fishbowl! In many of these local races, and especially with so many new candidates running for office, you have the opportunity to be a deciding vote.

This is even more so the case in an off-off year election, where turnout is lower than in a Presidential or Gubernatorial election year. Do not sit this one out!

If you are interested in volunteering your time, there are a plethora of opportunities to assist in this year's elections, including becoming a poll worker with the Fairfax Office of Elections, participating in voter registration drives, assisting a candidate of your choice with door knocking or phone banking, attending or hosting events, and finally assisting at the polls on Election Day.

Virginia sets the example. We are the bellwether for the nation. So, let's send a message this November that divisive policies won't work for Virginians or the nation. Vote for your Democratic Party candidates.

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NEWS

Senior Services of Alexandria Thanks its Summer Volunteers

BY MARGARET SHETLER
DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH
AND DEVELOPMENT

Senior Services of Alexandria recognizes the immense impact of our volunteers all year round, but we would like to give a special shout out to those who supported us during the busy summer months. Our dedicated summer volunteers delivered

Meals on Wheels every day of the week, even weekends; shopped for mobility impaired older adults and delivered groceries to their homes; visited with socially isolated seniors once a week; delivered pet food to older adults and their furry companions; and kept senior communities informed on upcoming events and crucial resources. Volunteers support SSA's mission

of fostering independence and self-sufficiency, enabling seniors within the City of Alexandria to age with dignity. To SSA's volunteers: we are grateful for your time and effort in making Alexandria a better place for our seniors!

If you are interested in volunteering with SSA, please visit SSA's website www.seniorservicesalex.org or call 703.836.4414.



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SSA's Senior Ambassador Volunteers, Carole Pyle and Suman Nayyar, are pictured here with former SSA Board Member Kathi Trepper at SSA's 55th Anniversary Celebration. Senior Ambassadors keep their communities informed and engaged.



Meals on Wheels Volunteer David Colton supports SSA's Meals on Wheels deliveries several times per week. Thank you, David!

Past issues of

THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

back to 2008
are available at
<http://connectionarchives.com/PDF>



Friendly Visitor pair Armonet and Millie meet every week to enjoy each other's company. Thank you, Millie, for your caring spirit!




The Zebra Newspaper staff volunteer to deliver Meals on Wheels. SSA appreciates the lively group and the energy they bring to volunteering!



SSA welcomes volunteers of all ages. Thank you to Westminster Presbyterian Church Youth Group for bringing smiles to our Meals on Wheels clients!



Thank you to Senior Ambassador volunteer Francine Carrera, who organized an information session for seniors in her building. We appreciate your dedication to your community.

Legals	Legals
 <p>CITY OF ALEXANDRIA VEHICLE PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX AND BUSINESS PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX DUE OCTOBER 5, 2023</p> <p>The City of Alexandria has mailed 2023 vehicle personal property and business personal property tax bills. Payment must be received by October 5, 2023, to avoid late payment penalty and interest.</p> <p>Vehicle personal property tax payments can be made online at alexandriava.gov/Payments or mailed to: City of Alexandria, P.O. Box 34710, Alexandria, VA 22334-0710.</p> <p>Business personal property tax payments can be made online at alexandriava.gov/Payments or mailed to: City of Alexandria, P.O. Box 34901, Alexandria, VA 22334-0901.</p> <p>In-person payments can be made at City Hall, 301 King Street, Room 1510, or at the new West End Finance Office, 4850 Mark Center Drive, Second Floor, Suite 2011, Monday-Friday, 8AM-5PM.</p> <p>Payments are also accepted 24 hours a day at the City Hall drop box on the Royal Street side of the building. Drop box payments must be in the drop box by midnight on October 5, 2023, to be considered on time.</p> <p>Comprehensive information regarding vehicle personal property taxes is available at alexandriava.gov/CarTax and business tax information is available at alexandriava.gov/BusinessTax.</p> <p>For payment questions or to request a tax bill, please call the Treasury Division at 703.746.4800, or email payments@alexandriava.gov. For vehicle registration or assessment questions or to change a mailing address, please email vehicletax@alexandriava.gov. For business personal property assessment questions, please email businessstax@alexandriava.gov.</p> <p>Si necesita ayuda en Español, por favor llame al 311 o 703.746.4311 (Alex311).</p>	

ENTERTAINMENT

NOW THRU OCT. 8

Progression Exhibit. At Multiple Exposures Gallery (MEG), at the Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N Union Street, Alexandria. The exhibition features a sequence of photographs, with each one chosen for its relation to the previous image. The relationships among the 56 included images may be based on composition, color, geography or other characteristics — the choice was left to each of the 14 contributing artists. Exhibition visitors are invited to observe each image as it appears in the sequence and consider what the connection to the previous image might have been. Exhibition Artists: Soomin Ham, Tim Hyde, Eric Johnson, Clara Young Kim, Irina Lawton, Sandy LeBrun-Evans, Matt Leedham, Francine B. Livaditis, Maureen Minehan, Van Pulley, Sarah Hood Salomon, Alan Sislén, Tom Sliter and Fred Zafran. Exhibition hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. daily.

ALEXANDRIA COLONIAL TOURS' GHOST & GRAVEYARD TOUR

Wednesdays through Sundays in September at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Nightly in October at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30, 8:30 and 9 p.m. Admission: \$15 for adults; \$10 for children; free for children under 6 years old. Tours meet at the Alexandria Visitor Center, 221 King Street, Alexandria. Walk your way through the charming streets of historic Old Town Alexandria. Follow a colonial-costumed guide by lantern light for an engaging history tour on Alexandria's original Ghost and Graveyard Tour. During this entertaining tour, you'll hear ghost stories, legends, folklore, unsolved mysteries, tales of romance and angry ghosts looking for revenge. Visit alexcolonialtours.com.

WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SATURDAYS Tours Aboard Tall Ship Providence and Sen. John Warner Maritime Heritage Center.

10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At Alexandria's Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. Guests of all ages are recruited into the Continental Navy aboard Tall Ship Providence with legendary Captain John Paul Jones. Recruits are assigned jobs on the ship, learn where they will work and live, how to load a cannon, etc... Tours conclude in the Naval History Theatre with a film about the ship. The Heritage center is a floating museum on the Alexandria waterfront. Visit <https://tallshipprovidence.org/>

SEPT. 1-30

The "Farther Afield" Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Featuring art by local artists that takes the viewer on a journey, whether that is someplace an hour away from Alexandria or halfway across the world. Opening Reception: Friday, September 1, 7-9 p.m. Open Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on October 1). Details: DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

SEPT. 2-30

Perspectives Exhibit. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. At Van Landingham Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Gallery 311, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association's (TFAA) Van Landingham Gallery presents Perspectives, a juried membership show featuring artworks that showcase the talent and creativity of the TFAA. Artworks include original hand pulled prints, original paintings, jewelry, works on paper, sculpture, and more. The following artists are featured in the main exhibit: Diana Papazian, Samantha Shelton, Guido Zanni, Helen Power, Karen Waltermire, Nancy Ramsey, Ann Barbieri, Tara Barr, and Lynn Chadwick.

SEPT. 7 TO OCT. 15

Every Rock Has a Story – Anne Stine. At The Athenaeum Gallery, 201 Prince Street, Alexandria. Artist's Reception is Sunday, Oct. 1, from 4-6 p.m. Award-winning painter Anne Stine debuts her latest collection of encaustic works titled, Every Rock Has a Story, in September, at the Athenaeum Gallery.



The Made in ALX Fall Makers' Market will be held Sunday, Sept. 24, 2023 in Alexandria.

Made in ALX Fall Makers' Market

12-5 p.m. At Port City Brewing Co., 3950 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria. This is the fall's most fun sip-and-shop, featuring craft beer from the award-winning Port City Brewing Co. along with food, shopping and activities. The kid-friendly and pet-friendly event will feature more than 30 artists from Alexandria and nearby with a wide variety of crafts and items. Several vendors will be new to the Made in ALX Fall Makers' Market this year!

This year's market will include: a scavenger hunt with prizes from Made in ALX and Port City Brewing Co. the National Breast Center Foundation Angel Wings photo station oracle readings with Alexandria's Blonde Spiritual Millennial Sarah Locke new crafts and artworks from the region's best artists, creators and makers. Food vendors will include Rockland's BBQ, Kam and 46 Hawaiian and Filipino Food Truck, Watts Popcorn, Pickles & Cures, and Scuttlebutt Bakeshop.

Her collection of 20 geological paintings explores the interconnection between Earth and humanity through representational and abstract imagery. "Every rock has a story", a popular geological phrase, meaning history is captured within the Earth's formations from the majestic mountains to the tiniest pebbles that reside beneath our feet.

Festival is your one-stop destination for gardening inspiration and unique finds. Gather your friends and family and join us for a day filled with nature's beauty and the joy of the gardening community.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 21

Taste of Old Town North. 4-8 p.m. At Montgomery Park, 901 North Royal Street, Alexandria. The Taste of Old Town North is a free, family-and pet-friendly event where you can shop at the farmers market, create 'art in the park,' taste gourmet dishes and wines from local restaurants and businesses, taste cider from Lost Boy Cider, participate in instructor-led wellness demos and listen to music from two local bands. Participating restaurants include Julia's on the Potomac, St. Elmo's, Yunnan by Potomac, and Hank's Oyster Bar. The Taste will feature a reading by City of Alexandria Poet Laureate Zeina Azzam of the three winning haiku from the Haiku Project. Visitors to the Taste can also learn more about the great work of ALIVE!, a local non-profit dedicated to fighting poverty and hunger and helping neighbors in need. The rain date for the Taste of Old Town North is September 28, 4:00 - 8:00 pm.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Fall Garden Festival. 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. At Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. This free event celebrates a world of unique plants, captivating garden accessories, live music that sets the perfect ambiance and delectable food options to satisfy your cravings. It's not just any garden gathering -- it's a vibrant celebration of all things green and gorgeous. The Fall Garden

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

The HALLOWEIRD Art Market. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. At Del Ray Artisans Gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Features a variety of artwork from local artisans celebrating the spooky and playful sides of the fall season and aerial performances by Monarca in Flight. Join us for lots of fun at this outdoor, family-friendly, rain-or-shine event. HALLOWEIRD takes place at corner of Commonwealth and Mount Vernon Avenues). Details at DelRayArtisans.org/halloween-2023

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

Eisenhower Partnership Rock The Ave Block Party. 12-4 p.m. At Saltbox in Alexandria. Eisenhower Partnership, a non-profit advocacy organization promoting local businesses and development of the Eisenhower Valley in Alexandria, VA, introduces the first ever inaugural Rock The Ave Block Party. SaltBox, a hybrid warehouse and office space, partnering with the Eisenhower Partnership to host an old school style block party. This outdoor, free, family-friendly event will feature kid-friendly activities, local Eisenhower businesses and area artisans, live music from Yellow Door Concert Series, a pop-up Cider Garden hosted by Lost Boy Cider and much more. Visit <https://eisenhowerpartnership.org/events/>.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 23

81st Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. At various locations throughout Old Town Alexandria. Admission:

\$45/person. The Twig, The Junior Auxiliary of Inova Alexandria Hospital, proudly announces the 81st Annual Historic Alexandria Homes Tour to be held on Saturday, September 23. New this year, a digital tour book guiding participants through the homes will be accessible to ticket holders via their mobile device. Hard copies of the tour book are available for purchase, in advance, for \$5 each. Please note that this event sold out last year, so early ticket purchase is recommended. Visit thetwig.org/homes-tour.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 24

TUESDAY/SEPT. 26

Simpson Park Demonstration Gardens. Tuesdays @ 10. 10 - 11:30 a.m., Simpson Demonstration Gardens, 420 E. Monroe Ave, Alexandria. Meet and talk with Extension Master Gardeners in the Simpson Demonstration Gardens to learn about lawn alternatives suitable for our climate and your growing conditions. Free.

SEPT. 27-30

Fall Book Sale at Duncan Library. At 2501 Commonwealth Ave, Alexandria. Friends of Duncan Library Members can take advantage of a special Members-Only Preview Sale and will receive discounts throughout the rest of the sale.

Book sale hours:

- ❖ Wednesday, Sept. 27, 2023, 5-8 p.m. Members-Only Preview Sale
- ❖ Thursday, Sept. 28, 2023, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. General Public Sale
- ❖ Friday, Sept. 29, 2023, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. General Public Sale
- ❖ Saturday, Sept. 30, 2023, 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. General Public Sale

Books will be priced at \$3 for hardcover, \$2 for paperback, unless otherwise marked. Book sale profits go directly back to Duncan Library to support the purchase of books, programming, materials, community events, equipment and more.

SEPT. 30 TO OCT. 1

21st Annual Alexandria Art Festival. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. At 300 John Carlyle Street, Alexandria. Rated one of the top 100 art shows in Sunshine Artist Magazine, the annual art festival features a variety of works exemplifying the gifted artists in regions from all over the country.

SEPT. 30 AND OCT. 1

Alexandria Symphony Orchestra. Sept. 30 at 7:30 p.m. At Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center. Oct. 1 at 3 p.m. at George Washington Masonic Memorial. Tchaikovsky's 4th & Brahms Violin – ASO at 80-oh! Brahms' violin concerto soars with lyricism and virtuosity—soloist Elissa Lee Koljonen brings it to life. Lester Green kicks off the ASO at 80 celebration with flair. Tchaikovsky's dramatic symphony concludes a powerful season opener. Elissa Lee Koljonen appears by arrangement with the Curtis Institute of Music.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 30

Native Plant Sale. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. At 1701 N. Quaker Lane parking lot, Alexandria. Largest native plant sale in DC Metro Area hosts 12 vendors from VA, MD, PA, DC, and MA selling native perennials, shrubs, and trees for sun or shade. 20th anniversary of this sale! This event is free. Call 571-232-0375 or www.NorthernAlexandriaNativePlantSale.org.

Oct. 7, 2023

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 hardbacks and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

NEWS

Remembering Parker-Gray

Alumni Brooks is honored at 103rd anniversary.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Brig. Gen. Leo A. Brooks Sr. (ret) was the guest of honor at the 103rd anniversary of Parker-Gray High School held Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Center.

"An Evening With the General" was presented by the Alexandria African American Hall of Fame. Brooks, a member of the Parker-Gray class of 1950, spoke about his time at the segregated school as well as his storied career in the military.

Mayor Justin Wilson presented Brooks with a proclamation on behalf of the city with Cheryl Lewis Hawkins serving as emcee.

The annual Parker-Gray anniversary celebration acknowledged Brooks as one of the school's most prominent alumni.

Brooks Sr. was born in Alexandria on Aug. 9, 1932. He graduated from Parker-Gray High School in



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Mayor Justin Wilson, right, welcomes Brig. Gen. Leo A. Brooks Sr. (ret) to the stage as the guest of honor at the 103rd anniversary of Parker-Gray High School Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Center. Brooks graduated from the segregated Parker-Gray High School in 1950.

1950, when education in Virginia was segregated, and from Virginia State University four years later.

Brooks received his commis-
SEE PARKER-GRAY, PAGE 11

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OPINION

Beyer

FROM PAGE 6
out of daycare temporarily to save money would forfeit his spot and, as you may know, daycares in this area are at a premium and waitlists are long. In addition, daycares in the DMV area are also very high cost; we are required to continue to pay more than \$1500 a month for his daycare while we wait for the government to re-open.

If that were not enough, we recently found out that we are expecting our second child. At a time that we should be making every effort to save money, instead we are terrified about how we will pay our rent next month, adding to our credit card debt, not paying down our student loans.



Letter Two

Having been in the military, we are no strangers to government shutdowns. However, until this point, we had not experienced one in which there was seemingly no end in sight. This email is not a political message (we are well aware of the Hatch Act), but instead a plea to you, our elected representative, for help. We love our jobs, and we love contributing to the greater good. We have been fiscally responsible ... and we have multiple months worth of savings for emergencies such as this. However, the prospect of a shutdown lasting months, or even years, is terrifying.

While [REDACT] has told us that our health insurance will continue to be covered even though we are not getting paid, how long will that last? At what point should we start applying for other jobs? And how can I take leave when our baby is born if all leave has been cancelled? It is the undefined length of this shutdown, the not knowing, that is the worst part. ... Nevertheless, we continue to go to work each day without pay and without knowing what the future holds.



Letter Three

I am a ten-year federal employee [REDACT]. I am on furlough and am extremely concerned about the adverse effects of this shutdown. On a personal level, I'm concerned that my federal health insurance (which covers myself, my husband, and our two-year-old son) will lapse. I am even more concerned, however, for the many families facing difficulty paying their rent, mortgages, and other bills due to the lapse in appropriations. It is completely unacceptable that federal employees are facing eviction, late fees, and adverse credit actions because our Congress cannot pass a budget.

SEE BEYER, PAGE 11

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Knock Out Visit

Olympian Isley returns to Lyles-Crouch.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The cheers were long and loud as Olympian Troy Isley paid a visit to Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy Sept. 11, talking to students at his Alma Mater about his life as a professional boxer.

Isley, who represented the United States in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, won a bronze medal at both the 2017 World Championships and 2019 Pan American Games. He turned pro in 2021 following the delayed Olympic games and currently has a record of 10-0 as a professional.

Known as “The Transformer,” Isley posed for photos and selfies with the students during an assembly organized by Lyles-Crouch principal Laura Burkhart. He told the students about his time at Lyles-Crouch and his start in boxing with the Alexandria Boxing Club, where he continues to train at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

“You can accomplish anything,” said Isley, who talked about his troubled childhood. “Don’t let anyone try to make fun of you or shoot your dreams down because you want to do something different.”



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET
Boxer Troy Isley talks to students during a Sept. 11 visit to Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy.

Remembering Parker-Gray

FROM PAGE 9

sion in the Army in 1954 as a Distinguished Graduate of the Reserve Officer Training Corps. He served in Alaska, and two tours in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. During his military career, he earned a master’s degree in financial management from The George Washington University.

Brooks Sr.’s sons – Leo Brooks Jr. and Vincent Brooks – also rose to the ranks of generals in the U.S. Army, with Vincent retiring as a full general in 2019, and Leo Brooks Jr. as a brigadier general. Brooks Sr.’s nephew Mark Quander also achieved the rank of brigadier general. To date, the Brooks family is the only African American family to have a father and two sons rise to the rank of brigadier general or higher.

Brooks was married for 65 years to Naomi L. Brooks, a 1951 graduate of Parker-Gray and a longtime educator. The Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School was named in her



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET
ACPS Superintendent Melanie Kay-Wyatt, right, thanks Brig. Gen. Leo A. Brooks Sr. (ret) at the 103rd anniversary of Parker-Gray High School Sept. 9 at the Nannie J. Lee Center.

honor in 2021 following her death in 2020.

The Alexandria African American Hall of Fame’s website features Brooks and other prominent graduates of Parker-Gray.

www.alexandriaafricanamericanhalloffame.org

Beyer Shares Constituent Stories

FROM PAGE 10



Letter Four

I am a single mother to 3 small children. My ability to provide for my children stops the moment the government goes into shutdown. As an [REDACT], my job is difficult enough as it is. However, every [REDACT] is placed under undue stress when our ability to provide for our families becomes limited.



Letter Five

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Small Business that has contracts with the Federal Government. Our contracts with [REDACT] have been stopped due to the shutdown. My company and our employees work hard to support the Federal Government to help them solve complex issue and ultimately save taxpayer money. Up to this point I have chosen to pay our employees that are not able to work. I have expended our available cash and have taken loans against my home to keep paying our employees. I am now at a decision point. Do I borrow more money or do I layoff my hard-working employees. With no end in sight I struggle with what to do.

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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.

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 return 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.

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On The Cusp of ...



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

... my/our 45th wedding anniversary on Oct. 20, 2023, quite by familial coincidence, my wife, Dina and I attended her Godson's wedding in Philadelphia last week. Yes, we risked our lives and limbs while escaped prisoner Danelo Cavalcante was on the loose. Nevertheless, we figured it was an acceptable risk, given the occasion. We we're fortunate however, as were the bride and groom and all invited guests, that the wedding wasn't happening at Longwood Gardens, a magnificent and well-known, former Dupont Estate, located in Kennett Square – in Chester County, Pa. Due to the escaped convict, the grounds were closed as a precaution. But other than a few raindrops that landed on the assembled guests, as well as on the bride and groom, the late afternoon/early evening festivities went on without a hitch, although none of us remained dry. And though Danelo was a topic of conversation throughout, since he wasn't an invited guest, we weren't worried too much, as we all ate, drank, and danced to our heart's content.

Seeing so many people so much younger than ourselves dancing the night away with their futures very much in front of them was in stark contrast to us as our futures are our present and have pretty much already been lived. The age difference between Chris, Shannon, and yours truly and most of their friends is almost 40 years, a generation and a half. We are contemporaries – of their parents. Yet, we attended as peers of a sort, who happen to be family. In addition, I think our knowing Chris his entire life gave us a certain curiosity and legitimacy among many of Chris and Shannon's friends. After all, we were there at Chris' birth.

I wouldn't say it was awkward being around so many 20-somethings, but I will admit to it being a teachable moment/learning experience as the generations – as worlds did on a long ago “Seinfeld episode,” collided. Though we acted our age, comparatively speaking, we stayed out past midnight, and tried to be as interested in the attendees lives as the occasion allowed. Meaning, the music was loud and hearing any conversation was challenging. Still, we tried to stay in the moment. All of which was made easier at the pre-wedding and afterparties that occurred in the hotel's bar, as well as at the groom's mother's house the following day for Sunday brunch. In each instance, the energy and enthusiasm were super positive and amazingly genuine.

All throughout the weekend festivities, I couldn't help looking around at all the younger people and doing the math, and juxtaposing our ages and marital years, and wondering (A) where had all the time – since we got married in Oct., '78, gone and (B) how in the heck did we get this old? Granted, you are young as you feel, or as Grouch Marx so famously said: “You're as young as the woman you feel,” so I don't feel old even though my wife is age 68. It matters more to me what's in your heart and head more so than the color of your hair or the lines in your face. I prefer to listen to what one says and does, not focus of what they can't do. Moreover, I want to see if they still have a rye smile on their face and a bounce in the step, regardless of their age or circumstances. I realize age/years married is just a number but holy smokes, 45, compared to witnessing and participating in a married couple's day one of year one, gave us both (Dina and I) pause and cause to reflect. I can't say “What a long, strange trip it's been,” because unlike The Grateful Dead, we've generally colored between the lines and stayed on the straight and narrow. Though we've accumulated lots of life's experiences, we tried not to offer too much advice too soon to too many people, many of whom were getting ready to embark on their own post-college adventures. We figured they'd live and learn on their own. They didn't need any unsolicited advice from us.

But the occasion and simultaneous reflection of our life together didn't give us indigestion or constipation or remorse/anxiety in the least. Instead, it gave us/me one of the happiest weekends we've experienced in quite a while. Being around all these young people, full of hopes and dreams and ambitions for the future was infectious, even for us old fogies. It wasn't at all bittersweet. It was more like milk chocolate for me: extremely satisfying.

Best wishes to Chris and Shannon. We look forward to seeing them soon and hearing about their honeymoon abroad, and hanging out with them and their friends, if they'll allow us. It turns out their energy and enthusiasm were just what this older couple needed – and prefers. “Peace and serenity” is for “Festativus,” not the rest of us.

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

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OPEN SAT 9/23, 2-4 & SUN 9/24, 1-4

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