

Alexandria Gazette Packet



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NOVEMBER 9, 2023

‘Shared Blood’

Wreath laying honors Civil War Colored Troops.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

They were Black yet fought alongside their brethren as equals, soldiers determined to see an end to slavery during the Civil War. On Oct. 28, a wreath laying ceremony honoring the soldiers of the United States Colored Troops was held at Alexandria National Cemetery.

“U.S. Colored Troops shared blood to be Americans,” said McArthur Myers, Worshipful Grand Historian Universal Lodge #1 and one of the organizers of the event.

African Americans were recruited during the Civil War to serve in the newly created United States Colored Troops. By the end of the war in 1865, the 175 USCT regiments constituted about one-tenth of the manpower of the Union Army.

“U.S. Colored Troops shared blood to be Americans.”

— Organizer McArthur Myers

“The regiments of the USCT became the largest standing army of Black soldiers in the history of the world,” Myers said.

The Bureau of Colored Troops was created in 1863 as a special branch of the military for the purpose of implementing President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, which read “that such persons of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.”

The USCT consisted of 135 regiments of infantry soldiers, six regiments of cavalry, one regiment of light artillery and 13 regiments of heavy artillery.

Additionally, 19,000 African Americans served in the United States Navy, and women served in roles such as cooks and nurses.



Members of the Magnus Joint Military Affairs Committee pose for a photo at the wreath laying ceremony honoring the United States Colored Troops Oct. 28 at Alexandria National Cemetery.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Members of the Magnus Joint Military Affairs Committee place at wreath honoring soldiers of the United States Colored Troops Oct. 28 at Alexandria National Cemetery.



Band of the 107th United States Colored Infantry at Fort Corcoran, Alexandria (Arlington) County, 1865.

The troops were predominantly African American, but Asian Americans, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders also served under the USCT.

When the war ended in April of 1865, about 20 percent of USCT soldiers had died, a rate about 35 percent higher than that of white Union troops. Many USCT soldiers fought with distinction, with 16 receiving the Medal of Honor and many more receiving other honors.

The graves of 118 USCT soldiers who died during the Civil War are located at Alexandria National Cemetery, one of the original national cemeteries that was established in 1862. Originally interred at the Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery, a protest and petition in 1864 resulted in the reburial of the

USCT troops alongside other fallen soldiers in Alexandria National Cemetery.

The wreath laying was sponsored by the Joint Military Affairs Committee of Magnus Temple Number 3 and Magnus Court 100. In addition to Myers, speakers at the event included Mayor Justin

Wilson and keynote speaker Vincent Patton III, Coast Guard Master Chief Petty Officer (ret).

“Black men and women have fought for the ideals of America from the Revolutionary War to the present,” Myers said. The USCT affirmed the African American existence as American.”



Mayor Justin Wilson delivers remarks at the wreath laying ceremony honoring the United States Colored Troops Oct. 28 at Alexandria National Cemetery.



McArthur Myers speaks at the wreath laying ceremony honoring the United States Colored Troops Oct. 28 at Alexandria National Cemetery.



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Represented Buyer



8612 LOMBARDY LN | SOLD FOR \$1,157,500
Represented Seller



8507 STABLE DR | SOLD FOR \$1,050,000
Represented Seller



3523 N VALLEY ST | SOLD FOR \$2,650,000
Represented Buyer



1622 N JACKSTON ST | SOLD FOR \$1,675,000
Represented Buyer



9008 COLESBURY PL | SOLD FOR \$1,300,000
Represented Buyer



282 TRAIN WHISTLE TER | SOLD FOR \$585,000
Represented Seller



7654 WESLEY RD | SOLD FOR \$460,000
Represented Buyer



3189 ATLANTIS LN | SOLD FOR \$636,300
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2228 CAPRI CT | SOLD FOR \$2,400,000
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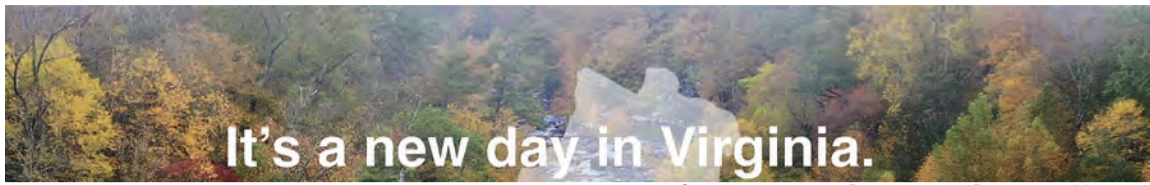
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SCREENSHOT VIA REPUBLICAN PARTY OF VIRGINIA

The banner image of the Republican Party of Virginia

Virginia Dems: Blue Wall in Both Houses

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE PACKET



SCREENSHOT VIA INSTAGRAM

Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria): “Let’s send a message to the nation that Democrats will stand up for the environment, protect reproductive freedom, and defend democracy and equality for all.”

The morning after the Nov. 7 general election in Virginia, the Republican Party of Virginia had yet to update the tagline on its website. It read: “It’s a new day in Virginia.” The statement is accurate — not how the GOP probably meant it, but for most voters who cast their ballots yesterday.

Virginia Democrats emerged victorious in Tuesday’s elections, marking a significant shift in the state political landscape just two years after the Commonwealth took a right turn in the 2021 general election. In 2021, Republican Glenn Youngkin secured the governorship and the House of Delegates, propelling his conservative vision for Virginia. Because Democrats still controlled the Senate, much of Youngkin’s agenda hit a roadblock.

Now Democrats maintained control of the Senate and took a majority of seats in the House of Delegates. They will have even greater power over Youngkin’s policy agenda, but will have to work with him to advance their own.

Mark J. Rozell, dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University, said the issue of abortion rights was key to the most competitive races that the Democrats won, and delivered partisan majorities in both houses.

“The Republicans were hoping that issues such as crime and safety and the economy, where the GOP has advantages, would be foremost in the minds of voters. But ultimately, abortion rights drove the Democratic turnout and helped swing voters to elect Democrats,” Rozell said. “The issue was paramount for many voters in this election cycle.”

While the governor tried to stake a middle ground on the issue with his 15-week ban proposal, according to Rozell, the problem was that voters likely believed that Republican majorities in both houses

Unofficial Election Results Nov. 7, 2023

Virginia Senate

Democrats Hold the Majority with 21 of 40 Seats.

Unofficial Results Reported by Virginia Public Access Project
<https://www.vpap.org/electionresults/20231107/senate/>

Connection Newspapers Coverage Area

Candidate	Votes	Percent
<i>* Incumbent</i>		
SD 33 (Prince William/Fairfax)		
Jennifer Carroll Foy (D)	33,551	62.35%
Mike Van Meter (R)	20,097	37.35%
SD 34 (Fairfax County)		
Scott Surovell* (D)	36,072	69.28%
Mark Springman (R)	15,853	
SD 35 (Springfield/Annandale)		
Dave Marsden* (D)	37,339	67.06%
Mark Vafiades (R)	18,159	32.61%
SD 36 (Fairfax County)		
Stella Pekarsky (D)	34,964	60.27%
Julie Perry (R)	22,843	39.38%
SD 37 (Fairfax County/Falls Church)		
Saddam Azlan Salim (D)	38,728	68.14%
Ken Reid (R)	17,879	31.46%
SD 38 (McLean/Great Falls/Reston)		
Jennifer Boysko* (D)	44,978	67.92%
Matthew Lang (R)	21,059	31.80%
SD 39 (Alexandria/Arlington)		
Adam Ebbin* (D)	39,139	78.35%
Sophia Moshasha (R)	10,816	21.65%
SD 40 (Arlington County)		
Barbara Favola* (D)	46,127	80.68%
David Henshaw (R)	10,872	19.02%

Unofficial Election Results

Virginia House of Delegates

Democrats Take the Majority with 51 of 100 Seats.

Unofficial Results Reported by Virginia Public Access Project
<https://www.vpap.org/electionresults/20231107/house/>

Connection Newspapers Coverage Area

Candidate	Votes	Percent
<i>* Incumbent</i>		
HD 1 (Arlington County)		
Patrick Hope* (D)	23,584	95.46%
HD 2 (Arlington County)		
Adele McClure (D)	16,542	95.24%
HD 3 (Arlington/Alexandria)		
Alfonso Lopez* (D)	16,837	81.45%
Mike Webb (I)	3,582	17.33%
HD 4 (Alexandria/Fairfax County)		
Charniele Herring* (D)	10,368	93.09%
HD 5 (Alexandria)		
Elizabeth Bennett-Parker* (D)	21,622	91.27%
HD 6 (McLean/Great Falls)		
Rip Sullivan* (D)	18,951	61.27%
Kristin Hoffman (R)	11,904	38.49%
HD 7 (Western Fairfax)		
Karen Keys-Gamarra (D)	21,549	72.85%
Luellan Maskeny (R)	7,945	26.86%
HD 8 (Western Fairfax)		
Irene Shin* (D)	14,059	67.12%
Max Fisher (R)	6,814	32.53%
HD 9 (Fairfax County)		
Karrie Delaney* (D)	13,547	60.51%
Nhan Huynh (R)	8,782	39.23%
HD 10 (Fairfax County)		
Dan Helmer* (D)	14,790	58.87%
James Thomas (R)	10,262	40.84%
HD 11 (Fairfax City/County)		
David Bulova* (D)	14,993	69.99%
Almira Mohammed (R)	6,361	29.69%
HD 12 (Tysons/Vienna)		
Holly Seibold* (D)	17,441	92.18%
HD 13 (Falls Church/Fairfax)		
Marcus Simon* (D)	15,985	78.19%
Dave Crance (L)	4,199	20.54%
HD 14 (Annandale)		
Vivian Watts* (D)	13,147	68.90%
Curtis Wells (R)	5,881	30.82%
HD 15 (Fairfax County)		
Laura Jane Cohen (D)	18,430	61.24%
Marcus Evans (R)	11,589	38.51%
HD 16 (Fairfax County)		
Paul Krizek* (D)	16,225	90.45%
HD 17 (Fairfax County)		
Mark Sickles* (D)	16,873	91.99%
HD 18 (Springfield/Lorton)		
Kathy Tran* (D)	15,105	64.85%
Ed McGovern (R)	8,104	34.79%

Living Legends of Alexandria

David Baker honored as 2023 Living Legend.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

For David Baker, community service has been an integral part of a long and accomplished career in law enforcement.

The son of an Air Force officer, Baker grew up in a military family and moved often before settling in the DC area as a 10-year-old when his father was reassigned to the Andrews AFB Strategic Air Command.

“From a young age I grew up wanting to be a police officer,” said Baker of his chosen profession. “At least according to my mother, who said I spent time playing sheriff and chasing bad guys around the neighborhood.”

“My father was a nuclear physicist who also served in World War II and Korea,” said Baker, who also has a twin sister and two brothers. “He chose the military over a lucrative job offer he received after graduating from college. It was important to him to first be a patriot and to serve his country and that inspired my future service.”

Baker served as Alexandria’s Deputy Chief and Chief of Police after serving more than 20 years with the DC Metropolitan Police Department. He retired from the MPD as a Captain.

He first joined the MPD as a 20-year-old, assigned to the old #11 Precinct in Southeast Washington.

“It was the highest crime and lowest income area of the city, but to me it was full of hard-working people,” Baker said. “In those days most officers walked foot beats alone without a radio and pulled call boxes to check in with the station. You learn a lot of life lessons when you are out there by yourself. You learn to build relationships. You learn humility. And you learn and respect how people navigate through human suffering and difficult situations in their lives.”

Baker joined the Alexandria Police Department in 1990, serving 19 years including three as Chief of Police.

Throughout his law enforcement and community service careers, Baker earned the reputation as a caring, intelligent, innovative, and highly respected leader. He was known to be visible, compassionate, and engaging.

In the police department Baker initiated a Strategic Response Model of Policing that significantly improved police response and accountability. The department achieved record reductions in crime, increased community engagement, and benefitted from advanced use of crime analysis and other



PHOTO BY STEVEN HALPERSON/TISARA STUDIOS

David Baker was named a 2023 Living Legend of Alexandria.

technologies to help guide the department’s response to new or emerging challenges. Throughout, he believed in openness and transparency with staff and members of the community.

Baker led efforts to maintain the department’s national certification by the Commission on Accreditation in Law Enforcement. He partnered with George Mason University

to bring a criminal justice “cohort” college degree program to the department. This allowed officers and civilians interested in pursuing criminal justice degrees to do so after work hours at the police station. Approximately 40 officers of various ranks earned their undergraduate degrees. An additional 15 went on to earn graduate certificates or degrees.

Baker helped create a Citizen’s Police Chief’s Advisory Committee, which was the early precursor to what is now the Alexandria Police Foundation. He helped manage a successful city-wide police community liaison program to promote and enhance police-community partnerships. He then volunteered to be the long-time police liaison to the then Potomac West Business Association where he spent countless hours on and off duty meeting and interacting with residents and community leaders.

Baker brought these same qualities to Goodwin House Alexandria (now Goodwin

Living) where he served almost 12 years after retiring from the police force. There he distinguished himself as one of the primary contact people for many residents and their families. He worked to ensure and maintain resident safety, comfort, and well-being and was known as a “go to” person who worked tirelessly to solve whatever issue residents had.

Many times, he simply spent quality time sharing stories and learning from residents about important life lessons they experienced throughout their lives. For this and more, Baker received the 2012 Alexandria Commission on Aging Lois Van Valkenberg Excellence in Aging Award.

While at Goodwin House he joined the Senior Services of Alexandria Board of Directors where he served in many roles, including Board President. He was also appointed by City Council to Chair the Beauregard Small Area Development Plan Implementation Committee, for which he and his committee received a Proclamation of Achievement from City Council.

One of his favorite things to do was partner with former Goodwin Living resident and Senior Services Board member Admiral Mike McCaffree to deliver Meals on Wheels.

In addition to the Alexandria Police Foundation and SSA, Baker has served on the boards of the Friendship Veterans Fire Engine Association, the Alexandria Commonwealth’s Attorney Community Advisory Committee, City of Alexandria Budget, and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee, Carlyle Council Community Services Board; Jamieson Condo Association, City of Alexandria Commission on Information Technology; and Alexandria Child Advocacy Center Board of Directors.

Baker holds a master’s certificate in Criminal Justice Management from George Mason University and a bachelor’s degree in leadership and criminal justice management, also from GMU. He graduated from Session 139 of the F.B.I. National Academy, and from the Police Executive Leadership School, Jepsen School of Leadership, at the University of Richmond.

“Throughout my life many people have inspired me in so many ways,” Baker said. “Alexandria is a city with role models and mentors everywhere. It is unique in that regard. Everywhere I turned I met and was inspired by accomplished people who gave of themselves, who unselfishly volunteered their time and talents for the greater good of the community. I simply wanted to be a part of that by contributing as much as I could, wherever I could, for as long as I could. I highly recommend it.”

Baker fully retired in 2021 and he and his partner, Sandra, split their time between Alexandria and a new home outside Rehoboth Beach. He has two grown sons and especially enjoys being “Poppy” to his four grandchildren.

BULLETIN BOARD

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

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.volunteeralexandria.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.volunteeralexandria.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
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 10

NEWS BRIEFS

Tree Lighting Ceremony

The annual Alexandria Tree Lighting Ceremony will be Saturday, November 18, at 6 p.m. in Market Square (301 King St.). Admission is free, and the event will occur rain or shine.

The Town Crier will call everyone to gather around the tree to help countdown to the lighting. Then, after 7pm enjoy a singalong at the tree while Santa and Mrs. Claus walk the Square and visit with families until 8 p.m.

The public is encouraged to take public transit or walk to the event. Visitors to Old Town can take Metrorail's Blue or Yellow lines to the King Street-Old Town Station and then take the free King Street Trolley to the event in front of City Hall.

Flood Insurance Policy Discount Available for Residents

The City of Alexandria's flood mitigation efforts received a Class 6 rating from the National Flood Insurance Community Rating System (CRS), securing a discount on flood insurance policies for City residents.

The rating, recertified annually, entitles

property owners in designated Special Flood Hazard Areas of Alexandria to receive up to a 20% discount on flood insurance policies. The rating is based on a variety of flood mitigation efforts and outreach activities conducted by the City.

The CRS program is a voluntary federal floodplain management incentive program that recognizes flood management practices that exceed federal minimum requirements, as well as education, resident assistance and outreach, and disaster preparedness.

There are 1,343 flood insurance policies in Alexandria, according to City data as of April 30, 2023. Residents are encouraged to contact policy providers for more information.

Alexandria became the first community in Virginia to receive a Class 6 CRS rating in October 2013. To renew its certification through the CRS program every five years, the City conducts inspections of streams and routine dredging of flood channels, among other flood mitigation activities and programs.

Earlier this year, engineers from the Stormwater Management Division inspected 24.8 miles of local streams as part of the CRS program application. During the inspections, engineers examined

the stream's ability to convey water properly and scheduled work for issues that need to be corrected, such as potential blockages or severe erosion.

SEE NEWS BRIEFS, PAGE 15



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The Shoe Hive Boutique celebrated its 20th anniversary Oct. 12 in Old Town.



Shoe Hive Boutique owner Elizabeth Todd, seated, celebrates the 20th anniversary of the Old Town shop Oct. 12 with Shannon Donlevie, Annette Ayrapetia and Phoebe Schultz.



Owner Elizabeth Todd, standing, helps Shannon Donlevie try on a pair of boots at the 20th anniversary of the Shoe Hive Boutique Oct. 12 in Old Town.

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Well Heeled

The Shoe Hive celebrates 20 years.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

If you know fashion, you know Elizabeth Todd. The style maven began her retail adventures in a closet-sized space on South Royal Street that has grown into one of the region's top destinations for both men and women's design. It all began with The Shoe Hive, which celebrated its 20th anniversary Oct. 12 at the boutique now located on South Fairfax Street.

"My friend owned Hysteria, which was located in that original space, but she was moving and called me," Todd recalled. "I always said Old Town needed a shoe store but I didn't have a plan and this was not very thought out – it

was all very spontaneous and here we are 20 years later."

Todd opened The Shoe Hive to rave reviews in 2003, quickly outgrowing the original space before moving to 127 South Fairfax Street in 2009. She has expanded her brand, which now includes The Hive ready-to-wear clothing for women and Yellow Jacket designs for men, both located in the 300 block of Cameron Street.

Originally from Ohio, the long-time Alexandria resident does all her own buying, proving she has an eye for in-demand designs that offer both comfort and style to her discerning customers.

"I try to find the best that each brand offers each season," Todd said of the designers that she works with. "I like to work with smaller

"This was not very thought out – it was all very spontaneous and here we are 20 years later."

— The Shoe Hive owner Elizabeth Todd

labels that are family owned or female owned – that drives a lot of it."

Armed with a degree in magazine journalism from Ohio University, Todd expected to be a writer for a fashion glossy. But when the opportunity came to open her own business, she didn't hesitate.

"My advice to anyone thinking

of opening a business is to just do it," Todd said. "The hardest part about starting a business is exactly that – starting it. Don't let perfection get in the way of progress -- you just have to do the best that you can and figure it out as you go. Also make sure you have access to working capital. That is what got

us through COVID."

Tackling the challenges of COVID included expanding The Hive on Cameron Street and adding an option for online shopping.

"The first few months of COVID were rough but Alexandria has a very supportive business community," Todd said. "Customers were really supportive and wanted us to be here when it was all over. So we hustled and we pivoted but with the support of the community we figured it out."

The Shoe Hive, 127 South Fairfax Street. 703-548-7103, www.theshoehive.com

ASC to Celebrate 1973 Titans

District champs mark 50th anniversary.

The Alexandria Sportsman's Club will celebrate the 50th anniversary of 1973 T.C. Williams High School football team, one of the top five teams in school history, at the organization's Nov. 15 meeting at the Old Dominion Boat Club.

Under the coaching of the now legendary duo of Herman Boone and Bill Yoast, the 1973 Titans went into the season as reigning state champions. They suffered only two losses in a bid to repeat, losing to Fort Hunt and eventual state champions Annandale. They ended the season as District Cham-

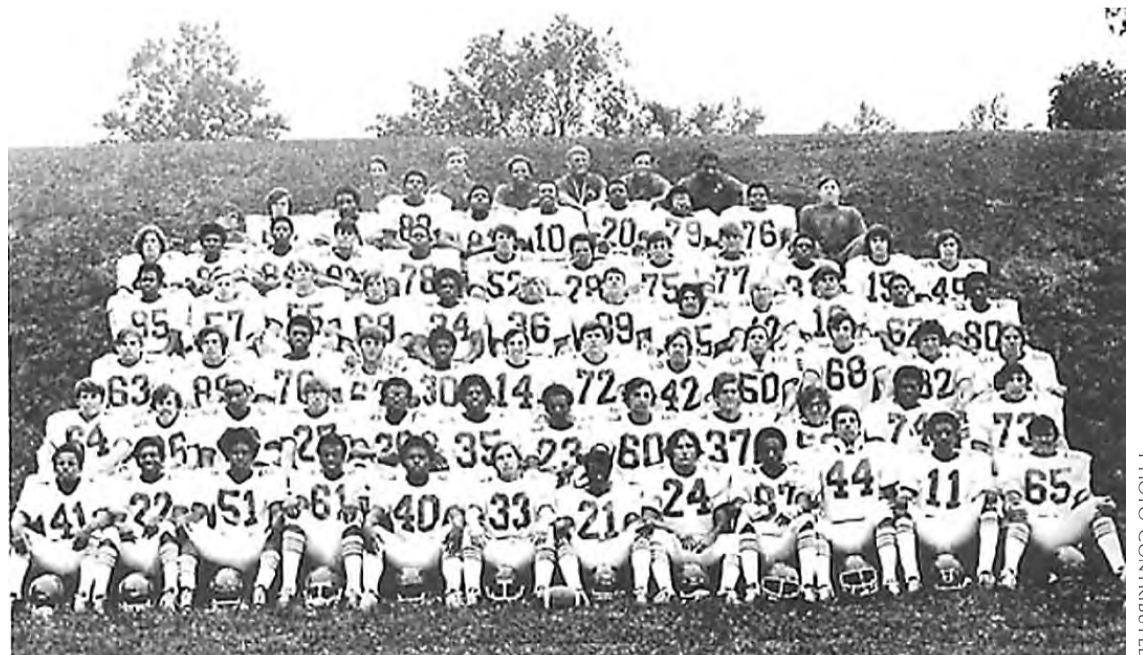
pions.

The team rose to worldwide fame in 2000 with the release of Disney's "Remember the Titans," based on the school's 1971 football championship. The film highlights the school's pivotal 1971-1972 school year when the Titans won the football championship after the three area high schools – Francis C. Hammond, George Washington and T.C. -- merged into one. Unlike what the movie leads viewers to believe, the schools had been integrated almost a decade earlier.

In addition to celebrating the 1973 Titans, the Club will also recognize the High School Athletes of the Month and Alexandria Rec Department Athletes of the Month.

The meeting will be held at the Old Dominion Boat Club, 0 Prince

SEE ASC, PAGE 7



The Alexandria Sportsman's Club will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the District Champion 1973 Titans football team Nov. 15 at the Old Dominion Boat Club.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

NEWS

Honoring Veterans

Christman to keynote ceremony at Rocky Versace Plaza.

Retired Lieutenant General Dan Christman, former Superintendent of the United States Military Academy at West Point and the current Senior Vice President for International Affairs of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, will be the featured speaker at the Veterans Day ceremony at the Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray.

Christman graduated first in his class from West Point in 1965. He went on to earn multiple postgraduate degrees and hold numerous commands during his army career. He was awarded four times the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the nation's highest peacetime service award.

The Veterans Day ceremony will be held at the Rocky Versace Plaza, located at 2701 Commonwealth Ave. at the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Del Ray. The event is free and open to the public and will begin at 1 p.m. For more information, contact Kevin Rue at



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Retired Lt. General Dan Christman will be the featured speaker at the Nov. 11 Veterans Day ceremony at the Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray. The ceremony begins at 1 p.m.

FofRV59@gmail.com.

- JEANNE THEISMANN

ASC to Celebrate 1973 Titans

FROM PAGE 6

St. in Old Town. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with dinner and refreshments at 6:45 p.m.

The meeting is free and open to the public. For more information visit www.alexandriavasports.org.

- JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Titans coach Herman Boone, center, during the 1973 football season.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF SPARC

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine was named a SPARC hero for his commitment to young adults with severe and multiple disabilities by championing SPARC's funding request to open three SPARC centers, two on Fairfax County's Rt. 1 corridor and one in Leesburg, Va.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPARC

From left: Adam Toobin, James Dyke, master of ceremonies, and State Senator Richard L. Saslaw, who received SPARC's Lifetime Achievement Award for his 48 years of public service including thwarting an attempt to kill Medicaid Expansion, thus providing over 400,000 Virginians with health insurance coverage.



Bailey Brandt of Springfield and Mikea Jackson



PHOTOS BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE GAZETTE

Supervisor John W. Foust (Dranesville) holds his auction number as he joins Hazem Eldarwish of Falls Church and Josephie Nwalipenja.

SPARC's Inaugural Gratitude Gala

U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine and State Sen. Richard L. Saslaw honored.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

On a stunningly beautiful fall evening, SPARC participants arrived at their gala. Dressed in creative cocktail attire, they graced the red carpet leading into the grand ballroom of the Washington Dulles Airport Marriott. It was a dream come true for the young adults.

SPARC is the acronym for Specially Adapted Resources Clubs. It is a nonprofit organization that provides vital day programs for adult participants with severe and multiple disabilities, and the evening of Saturday, Nov. 4, was their 2023 Gratitude Gala. The young adults planned the event themselves because they believed in the mission of SPARC, "Nothing about us without us," and they had two goals for the gala.

"The event was created by our participants as an answer to the question, 'What can SPARC do to help you live the life of your dreams?' Overwhelmingly, they wanted a sparkling event, pun intended, at which they could showcase their talents, make new friends, socialize, laugh, have fun, and dance however they fancied," said Ellen Dyke, SPARC's board chair.

Another goal of the reception-style gala emerged: everyone deserves a chance to attend SPARC. The gala raised funds for SPARC's cost-effective program, which as-



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/THE GAZETTE

From left, Debi Alexander, executive director of SPARC, joins Joanne Adams and Dave Adams, members of the SPARC Board of Directors, to acknowledge SPARC partners at the 2023 Gratitude Gala.

sists young adults who have outgrown the K-12 system's special education support and are ineligible for other community-based programs that help people with severe disabilities.

SPARC's public-private partnership with Fairfax County is an alternative to the Medicaid model. It provides a choice for many adults with severe disabilities who do not fit into traditional day support programs funded by Medicaid.

The reason SPARC participants called their event the "Gratitude

Gala," Dyke said, was that they wanted to express their gratitude to all of the attendees, sponsors, elected officials, and others who helped them realize not only their dream for the evening but also their concern for others and their willingness to give of their time, energy, financial resources, and, above all, their humanity.

Mark Ingrao, interim CEO and president of the Dulles Regional Chamber and chair of the Reston Hospital board of directors, served as auctioneer for the evening's live

auction while the silent auction continued in the hallway. Items in the silent auction included original wheelchair action art by SPARC participants. Jonah, one of the artists, said, "Everyone at SPARC can paint. Green represents the season, spring, when leaves begin to emerge." From choosing the bright paint colors, applying them with a paint roller extension pole, to using the tires of their wheelchairs to paint instead of brushes, the artists created original patterns across the painting papers that provided



MERCIA HOBSON/THE GAZETTE

Katherine Montgomery of Herndon, secretary of the SPARC board of directors, and Carla Claire of Arlington

a canvaslike surface with no buckling. A completed work, matted and framed above shows the artist's wheelchair tracks and was one of many sold during the silent auction.

From the roast beef carving station to the crispy chicken sliders, black-eyed pea hummus with vegetable crudites, and the dessert display of miniature cupcakes, chocolate truffles, and petit fours, SPARC participants planned every aspect of the gala. Award-winning chefs at the hotel prepared all of those dishes and more. The hotel's wait staff came forward as volunteers to support the fundraiser, serving the guests and thereby helping to cover the organization's costs. Guests noticed the event venue's all-around inclusive layout — wheelchair accessibility, stage ramp, and deliberate lack of high-top tables.

As master of ceremonies and emcee, Jim Dyke oversaw the proceed-

Front left, Patrick and Jennifer Callahan of Fairfax join Supervisor Pat Herrity (Springfield) and Madalyn Godfrey, Springfield District staff.



ings. "You have given your time, energy, and wherewithal to celebrate some of the most important, courageous, but often forgotten people in our community and, at the same time, make their dreams come true," Dyke said.

Dyke named the sponsors, including the Claude Moore Charitable Foundation, Dominion Energy, Google, Tullman Family Office, Washington Gas, and The Washington Group Special Care Planning Team. Dyke told how Sen. Janet D. Howell (D-Fairfax) received the first SPARC Hero Award this past June and set a high standard for other recipients. According to Dyke, Howell's leadership resulted in the 2023-2024 Virginia state budget including, for the first time, an annual \$250,000 line item for SPARC, positioning it to become a pilot program for Virginia.

"SPARC has changed the long-term care blueprint for young adults with severe disabilities by providing a safe, caring environment where they learn and have fun together," said Rose Mario Risley, chair of Fairfax Area Long-Term Care Coordinating Council. "The

SPARC model is designed to provide access to community services, individualized supports, and other forms of assistance that promote self-determination."

SPARC has five clubhouse locations: Fairfax, McLean, Reston, Vienna, and Arlington.

Katherine Montgomery, a SPARC participant and secretary of the SPARC board, took to the stage, joining Dyke, as did U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine, Sen. Richard L. Saslaw, Adam Toobin, Ellen Dyke, and Mark Ingrao auctioneer. Montgomery handed Kaine the award and said, "Thank you, Senator Kaine, for being a champion."

Montgomery commended Kaine for realizing the vital roles that family caregivers and direct care providers play in the lives of individuals with disabilities. She expressed her gratitude to him for his bill, the Supporting Our Direct Care Workforce and Family Caregivers Act, which directs the Department of Health and Human Services, through the Administration on Community Living (ACL), to develop a national care center for the direct care workforce and

family caregivers. It affects not just SPARC members but also individuals with disabilities and chronic medical conditions.

The SPARC Hero Award is given to a person who has tirelessly worked to fill the huge hole in our social safety net that ignores and neglects far too many citizens and who works to remove barriers when others have declined to act. "It's very difficult to find direct care professionals because of the lack of compensation and the ability to provide a living wage," Montgomery said.

SPARC honored Saslaw with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Jim Dyke said that for this award, SPARC honors those talented, committed, and visionary individuals who have dedicated their careers and devoted their time and energy to improving the lives of others.

"Individuals who have had a major positive imprint on our community and whose actions and accomplishments have been transformative. If you put those guidelines into Google, no doubt up will pop Senator Dick Saslaw," said Dyke.

Toobin presented Saslaw with the award and told Saslaw what his support meant to him and his friends. It meant that when he had COVID, he could join his SPARC friends from home on his computer and was still able to participate in the activities.

Shawn Flaherty, a board member at large and communications chair, reported that as of Monday, Nov. 6, SPARC had raised \$152,000 during the gala.

SPARC offers day programs five days a week. Programs include a curriculum based on daily living activities like continued education, skill building, exercise, outings, cooking, music, art, lectures, discussion groups, and more. The annual cost for each participant is \$9,000, compared to an average of \$39,000 per year in publicly funded costs for a program through Medicaid.

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ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ NOVEMBER 9-15, 2023 ♦ 9



A student at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School enjoys her first book from the school's new book vending machine Oct. 12.



Principal Suzanne Hess, right, cuts the ribbon on the new book vending machine Oct. 12 at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School as past PTA president Arvita Cohen and students look on.

A Novel Idea

Book vending machine unveiled at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Students at Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School celebrated Oct. 12 as Principal Suzanne Hess unveiled a new book vending machine courtesy of the school's Parent-Teacher Association.

"We are excited to celebrate bringing a book vending machine

to Naomi L. Brooks," said PTA president Maya Mahoney. "This was a huge endeavor of our past PTA president, Arvita Cohen, and we just wanted to have another way to reward children and to share the love of reading."

Naomi L. Brooks ES participates in the Alexandria City Public Schools' PBIS program, or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. PBIS is a process for de-

veloping safer and more effective schools.

"Naomi Brooks has a PBIS program," said Cohen following the ribbon cutting on the new book vending machine. "It is a positive behavior incentive where students receive Bee Bucks throughout the year."

The school mascot is the Bee, hence the term Bee Bucks,

"Students earn Bee Bucks if they are kind, supportive, and helpful to other students," Cohen said.

"This is a remarkable addition to our school."

— Naomi L. Brooks principal
Suzanne Hess

"Teachers can also give students tokens on the spot and for their birthday. They can then use those

Bee Bucks to purchase reward items including using them in the vending machine."

Hess added that there will be opportunities for all children to receive a book through the vending machine by the end of the scholastic year.

"This is a remarkable addition to our school," Hess said. "It's a creative way to encourage our students to do well in their classes and get rewarded for their hard work by earning a new book."

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 4

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

Interested candidates should email FriendsOfAMHC@gmail.com.

STEM Professionals Needed. Help assist K-12 STEM teachers as part of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Volunteer Program, stemvolunteers.org, during the 2018-19 school year. In the 2017-18 school year, there are 85 volunteers in 6 Northern Virginia school districts. Contact Don Rea at 571-551-2488, or 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 preteens are seeking volunteer mentors. SOHO, which stands for "Space of Her Own," and "Space of His Own,"

serves vulnerable fifth graders in Alexandria. The programs pair men and women with youth in need of positive adult role models, to help support and guide youth in making 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
SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

ELECTION

Virginia Dems: Blue Wall in Both Houses

FROM PAGE 3

would pass either an outright ban or a more severe restriction than the governor's proposal. "And, given that Virginia is the only southern state in the post-Dobbs environment not to have enacted an abortion restriction or banned abortion, this is the issue for this election. It powered Democratic turnout and benefited the Democrats with swing voters," Rozell said.

Before the polls opened yesterday morning, Youngkin reposted @GovernorVA, "Democracy is not a spectator sport." By late evening, most registered voters cast their ballots for the Democratic candidates running for Virginia's General Assembly seats.

"Governor Youngkin and Virginia Republicans did everything they could to take total control of state government, but the people of the Commonwealth rejected them," said Susan Swecker, chair of the Democratic Party of Virginia. "Even with tens of millions spent and after every attempt to suppress the vote ... the blue brick wall in Virginia stands."

The Virginia House unofficially turned from red to blue very late on Election Day, when



Mark J. Rozell, dean of the Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University

Democrats took the House majority with Michael Feggans' win for District 97, flipping the House to 51 Democrats to 45 Republicans, with four seats undecided.

In the Senate, Democrats won by a narrow margin, 21 Democrats to 18 Republicans, with one undecided. The double setback denied

Youngkin the critical advantage he sought to attain.

Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-Alexandria) said last night that despite breaking spending records, "Governor Youngkin was just served the biggest political rejection by voters of any Virginia governor in over three decades. Virginians sent Youngkin a message loud and clear: Virginians don't want the government banning books and interfering with their personal freedoms – whether it's their reproductive rights, the right to breathe clean air, the safety of our communities from gun violence, or the sanctity of our democracy."

Youngkin's stand on those issues mattered to many, as Ebbin said, as did respect for trans students in public schools, and Virginia remaining in the Regional Greenhouse Initiative (RGGI).

In December 2022, with Youngkin's nod, the State Air Pollution Control Board voted to begin withdrawing Virginia from the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative "despite overwhelming support for the program from Virginian voters. The public comment period leading up to the vote resulted in over 90 percent of comments vehemently opposing a repeal of RGGI," according to the Virginia Conservation Network.

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PARADES

23rd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights

Dec. 2, 2023, Parade begins at 5:30 p.m.;

Dockside festivities 1 to 8 p.m. at Waterfront Park (1A Prince St.)

Canal Center festivities 3 to 7 p.m. (44 Canal Center Plaza)

Parade viewing areas along one mile of the Old Town Alexandria waterfront stretching from Canal Center Plaza (44 Canal Center Plaza) to Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.)

Admission: Free; \$ for food/drink and some activities

ALXBoatParade.com

PARADE VIEWING AREAS

Canal Center Plaza (11 Canal Center Plaza), Rivergate City Park (2 Montgomery St.), Oronoco Bay Park (100 Madison St.), Founders Park (351 N. Union St.), Alexandria City Marina (0 Cameron St.), Waterfront Park (1A Prince St.), Point Lumley Park (1 Duke St.), Robinson Landing (7 Pioneer Mill Way), Shipyard/Harborside Park (1 Wilkes St.), Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union St.), Ford's Landing Park (99 Franklin St.)



PHOTO BY MICHIO FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk on Dec. 2

During Alexandria's Biggest Holiday Weekend, celebrate the return of top signature events, including the 52nd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade in historic Old Town Alexandria at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023. The parade is sponsored by Wegmans.

Dozens of Scottish clans dressed in colorful tartans parade through the streets of Old Town, joined by pipe and drum bands, as well as terriers and hounds, community groups and more. Alexandria was founded in 1749 by Scottish merchants and was named after Scotsman John Alexander who owned the land that became Alexandria.

This year's Grand Marshals are Congressman Don Beyer and Director of the Office of Art in Embassies at the U.S. Department of State Megan Beyer.

Some highlights:

More than 120 parade units include nearly 35 Scottish clans from around the D.C. region and other parts of the U.S.

Bagpipers including the Kiltie Band of York and the City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums plus a bagpiping Santa closing the parade.

Scottish country and highland dancers from Northern Virginia Branch, Royal Scottish Country Dance Society and Alexandria School of Highland Dance

More than 10 dog groups including Scottish breeds of West Highland Terriers, Gordon Setters and Scottish Terriers along with other rescues and clubs

After the last parade unit has finished the parade route, participating pipe bands will reassemble at Market Square under the



PHOTO BY E PALLORINA FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA

direction of City of Alexandria Pipes and Drums' Drum Major Joshua Cease to play a few tunes as part of a massed band concert.

Parade-goers and others should plan ahead to avoid traffic delays, taking alternative transportation and, if driving, parking outside of the immediate parade zone. The parade kicks off on S. St. Asaph Street at the corner of Wolfe Street and progresses north

to Queen Street, east to Fairfax Street, south to King Street, and west to terminate in front of City Hall. For the best views, spread out along the one-mile parade route. For a map of the parade route, visit ALXScottishWalk.com.

Taste of Scotland

The weekend kicks off on Friday, Dec. 1

with the Campagna Center's Taste of Scotland sponsored by The Goodheart Group, a festive cocktail party at The Atrium Building featuring top-quality Scotch tasting stations and paired cuisine. Proceeds from the event benefit Campagna Center programs.

For more details on the parade route, transportation alternatives and weekend happenings, visit ALXScottishWalk.com.

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ENTERTAINMENT

**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, Alexan-
dria. 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/>

**OCT. 10 TO NOV. 19
"Reflection Unknown" Photography
Exhibit by Fred Zafran.** At Multiple Expo-
sures Gallery, Alexandria. Opening Reception:
Sunday, October 22, 2023, 2 - 4 p.m. Fred
Zafran has long been interested in photog-
raphy as a distinctive means of storytelling.
His work examines the artistic possibilities
of photographs that combine the poetic with
a representational view of the world. The
resulting photo essays which Zafran calls "po-
etic narrative," are post-documentary in that
the stories are open ended, subjective, rich in
symbolism and metaphor, and encourage con-
sideration and interpretation by the viewer.

**OCT. 19 TO NOV. 26
Fleeting Moments | Street Photography.**
At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Fleeting
Moments features photographs that capture
candid moments, revelatory interpretations,
and brilliant reflections of the mundane —
work commonly referred to as "street photog-
raphy." In 1943 the New York Times referred
to the street photography of Helen Levitt,
as, "fleeting moments of surpassing lyricism,
mystery and quiet drama." Those qualities
are the hallmark of the works selected for this
show.

**NOV. 3-26
The Housemates exhibit.** At Del Ray Artisans
Gallery 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria.
Exhibit showcases art from Del Ray Artisans
members celebrating the beings we live with.
Housemates may have fur, feathers, fins,
scales, or be human. Opening Reception: Fri-
day, November 3, 7-9 p.m.. Open Thursdays
12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays &
Sundays 12-6 p.m. (Closed on Thanksgiving
Day). Plus bring in donations for cat and dog
rescue groups. Details at [DelRayArtisans.org/](http://DelRayArtisans.org/event/housemates)
event/housemates

**WEDNESDAY/NOV. 8
"60 BEEUTIFUL YEARS."** 10 a.m. Social
Hour, 11 a.m. Fashion Show, 12:15 Luncheon.
Fashion Show, Luncheon, Silent Auction and
Raffle featuring Sara Campbell. At Mount
Vernon Country Club, 5111 Old Mill Road,
Alexandria. Cost: \$60.00. Founded in 1963,
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ther education in horticulture, floral design,
and conservation among its members and
surrounding communities. For details and res-
ervations, contact: YHGC.2023@gmail.com

**SATURDAY/NOV 18
61st Holiday Shop.** 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. At
Mt. Vernon Unitarian Church, 1909 Windmill
Lane, Alexandria. Artisan vendors of many
styles and mediums plus baked and canned
goods, jewelry, household collectibles, lunch,
and quilt raffle. Come and enjoy a day of
shopping. Visit www.mvuc.org.

THE BIRCHMERE
At 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. All
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NOVEMBER
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"Peter and the Starcatcher" can be seen at Mount Vernon High School on Nov. 16-18, 2023.

"Peter and the Starcatcher."

Thursday to Saturday at 7 p.m.; Saturday at 2 p.m. Presented by Mount Vernon High School, 8515 Old Mount Vernon Road, Alexandria. The show tells the story of Peter Pan's origin story; appropriate for all ages. Tickets are \$10 General Admission, \$8 senior/military, \$7 students, and \$5 for children 5 and under. Tickets are available online, mvhstheatrearts.com.



The Hayfield Middle School Dramahawks are producing Disney's "The Descendants" Nov. 16-18, 2023.

"The Descendants."

Thursday to Saturday at 7 p.m.; Saturday at 2 p.m. At Hayfield Middle School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. The Hayfield Middle School Dramahawks are producing Disney's "The Descendants." The show is appropriate for all ages. Tickets are available online, www.hayfielddrama.com, and at the door and cost \$10 each.

Sat. 11: Charles Esten \$59.50
Sun. 12: Jonathan Butler \$59.50 SOLD OUT!
Mon. 13: Jeff "Skunk" Baxter \$45.00
Tue. 14: Keiko Matsui \$45.00
Thu. 16: Rufus Wainwright \$69.50
Fri. 17: Paula Poundstone \$59.50

Sat. 18: Paula Poundstone \$59.50
Sun. 19: Marc Roberge (of O.A.R.) with Stephen Kellogg \$69.50 SOLD OUT!
Fri. 24: The Seldom Scene & Dry Branch Fire Squad \$45.00
Sat. 25: The Manhattans featuring Gerald Alston



Veteran's Day Activities will take place at the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Fort Belvoir, on Nov. 10-12, 2023.

Veterans Day Activities

At the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Fort Belvoir. The National Museum of the United States Army is offering a fitting way to honor Veterans Day with a weekend full of events November 10 - 12, and the ongoing special exhibit paying tribute to military working dogs. The special tributes to those who served our nation are all included with the Museum's free admission. Highlights include:

Family fun activities include a craft activity of writing greeting cards to veterans, a history scavenger hunt, and the Museum's Tiny Troops Story Time (Tiny Troops is best suited for children ages 3-6 years old).

History Demonstrations that explore a Soldier's life on and off the battlefield and take a closer look at uniforms and equipment.

Veterans Resources featuring representatives sharing information about resources available to veterans and their families.

Volunteer Showcase, where Museum volunteers share their personal artifacts and stories from their military service.

Documentary Screening of PBS's documentary "American Veteran." The four-part series will run continuously; visitors can drop in at any time to watch. View the trailer.

Free, timed-entry tickets are preferred and available through the Museum's website at theNMUSA.org.

\$59.50
Mon. 27: Musiq Soulchild \$89.50
Tue. 28: Musiq Soulchild \$89.50
Wed. 29: Three Dog Night \$85.00 SOLD OUT!
Thu. 30: A Peter White Christmas with Mindi Abair & Vincent Ingala \$59.50

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28	29	30	31		

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Announcements

Concerts at St. Luke's will present QuinTango, the 2023 Best Latin Artist-Group, on Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 8009 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria 22308 703-765-4342. \$25 for adults, \$10 for students. Dancing in the aisles will be encouraged! free parking.

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Virginia PRESS Association
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NEWS BRIEFS

FROM PAGE 5

Virginia Cider Week

Celebrate Virginia Cider Week Nov. 10 – 19 with a special tasting festival at historic Lloyd House on Saturday, Nov. 18 between 1 and 5 p.m. Hosted by the Office of Historic Alexandria in partnership with the Virginia Association of Cider Makers, this event includes cider tastings, live music, a tasting glass, and a little history too. While enjoying a selection of Virginia ciders, learn more about the growing Virginia cider industry and its connection to Alexandria history. The Alexandria Cider Festival includes offerings from Albemarle Cider Works, Bryant's Cider, Castle Hill, Ciders from Mars, Henway Hard Cider, Lost Boy Cider, Potter's Craft Cider, Sage Bird Ciderworks, and more. Rocklands food truck will be available for food purchases.

Cider was a popular beverage in 18th and early 19th century Alexandria and offered at area taverns, including Gadsby's Tavern. Thomas Jefferson cultivated eighteen varieties of apples in his orchard at Monticello (planted between 1769 and 1814). Today, there are over 30 different apple varieties grown specifically for cider production throughout Virginia. Cider is fermented like wine, not brewed like beer. Tickets are \$55 per person (advance sale pricing) and may be purchased by calling 703.746.4994 or through alexandriava.gov/Shop. Check in at The Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington Street. Day-of ticket pricing is \$65 per person (if space is available). For additional informa-

tion, please visit alexandriava.gov/historic.

Bark Social Acquires Barkhaus in Alexandria

Bark Social, the country's first social club for dogs and dog lovers, has acquired Barkhaus in Alexandria, Va. This makes Bark Social the first company in the industry to acquire another dog bar. The 6,000-square-foot Barkhaus facility will become Bark Social's fourth location – along with Bethesda, Md., Baltimore, Md., and Philadelphia, Penna. Barkhaus will continue to serve dogs and dog lovers, with an off leash dog park, a bar and a full kitchen. New leadership will bring freshly-trained Bark Rangers to keep dogs safe, a full calendar of social events, a full bar (adding liquor to the existing offerings), and a new boutique featuring both dog and human goods.

"We're thrilled to bring Bark Social to Alexandria and build upon the community that Barkhaus has built there," said Luke Silverman, co-founder and CEO of Bark Social. "As more dog lovers look for fun and safe places to bring their dogs, we are eager to meet the demand with our new locations."

Barkhaus opened in the fall of 2020 by Alex Benbassat and Justin LeGores. Benbassat will stay on as an operating partner at Bark Social, and continue to lead the Alexandria team.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 10

Morreale, brianmorreale@gmail.com

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 jkingconsulting@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.

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Publishing Since 1784

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CENTRE VIEW

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 to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

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

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

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

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

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Bucket List-less



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

As you regular readers have no doubt read in a previous column (or 500) I have cancer. I was first diagnosed with non-small cell lung cancer, stage IV in late February 2009. When I didn't die within my "13 month to two years" prognosis, my oncologist was surprised; nevertheless, he didn't pursue any medical explanation. He just characterized me as his "third miracle" and my treatment continued relatively unabated. It wasn't for another seven years or so that my diagnosis changed to papillary thyroid cancer. Whether my oncologist made an error in my original diagnosis or was slow to change/update my diagnosis, we'll never know as my original tissue sample/slide has been lost (I won't say conveniently). Moreover, the statute of limitations has expired so any incentive to research/investigate was lost in the figurative rubble. No real worries though. I have learned to live with it (live being the operative word) and besides, my life would have changed little since the damage was long since done, and likely would have stressed me out more.

But I must confess, living with incurable cancer is all it's cracked up to be. Meaning it's not exactly a picnic. If you've read any of my last umpteen columns on the matter, cancer does more than just invade your body, it affects you emotionally, almost subconsciously, as it re-wires your brain, sort of. And there's not a thing you can do about it. What you value, what you can tolerate, what motivates you; anything you want to say or do is filtered through this imaginary prism called cancer. And what goes in doesn't always come out as you expected, or have heard yourself saying, or seen yourself doing, or had expressed an interest in saying or doing like you had for the entirety of your previous life. This the new you, like it or not.

It is in this context that us cancer (or any other terminal-type situation) survivors are regularly asked what we want to do with the rest of our lives - or a reasonable facsimile thereof. Specifically, this awkward conversation inevitably veers into whether we have a "bucket list:" a list of sorts of the things you want to do before you die, places you want to visit, people you want to see, et cetera; and maybe even the songs you want to hear: "Live Like You're Dying" by Tim McGraw comes to mind.

When the opportunity (more like misfortune) presents itself at your ground-zero-type meeting with an oncologist when you hear the words "You have cancer" for the first time, you are changed forever, and not just physically, but every which way - and some you never imagined as well. Invariably, what is asked and/or what you think about your new reality as a "terminal" cancer patient, your answer is the framework of the all-too-familiar bucket list: the things/choices/places you want to do/say/go; presuming/understanding that you no longer have as much time as you thought you did - before this appointment. There's no future "woeing" is me, there's only the present and accepting/assimilating your new circumstances into your routine. Fighting it is one thing, but embracing it is quite another. Unfortunately, the odds/statistics are against you, but so what? Cancer may be the big dog, but if I want to get on the porch, I'm going to do so. Because even though cancer and all its insidious ways likely has other plans for you, plans you probably need to agree and proceed to, as we say in the sales world, standing pat ain't gonna cut it anymore. And cancer is as big a hurdle as there is. All you can do is learn to roll with the punches and put one foot in front of the other. And more often than not, my bucket-list answer surprises.

I want to live life like I'm living, not live like I'm anticipating dying. I don't want to fill up this hypothetical bucket, I want to empty it. Furthermore, I'd rather enjoy and appreciate what I have - and had, not think about what I don't have/didn't do.

After hearing what I heard - out of the blue no less, at that initial meeting with the oncologist, about my abbreviated life expectancy; to say it knocks you for a loop is to minimize loops everywhere. This 'loop' is more like the roller coaster from hell. Up and down and all-around is just the beginning. And one ride is more than enough. But you're going to be on this ride for the rest of your life so hunker down and buckle up. Eventually, at least I did, you get it sorted in some way which enables you to live life forward. I felt that if I was doing something on my so-called "bucket list," the reason for doing that thing was because I was dying and I wanted to do it before I died. To me, that would be reinforcing a negative. That's not how I want to decide that whatever it is I'm doing. I want to decide based on the merits/intrinsic value of the thing. To me, the 'bucket list' concept is too negative. I want to do things because I want to do them, not because I have too not because of some theoretical list of do-or-die experiences/accomplishments. Reinforcing a negative didn't/doesn't feel like a very positive thing to do. And here I am, nearly 15 years post-diagnosis.

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

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