

Alexandria Gazette Packet



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NOVEMBER 16, 2023

ACHS Students Walk Out To Support Palestine

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Shoutng chants of “From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,” hundreds of students at Alexandria City High School participated in a walk-out Nov. 9 in protest of the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

In an email to parents sent less than 24 hours prior to the event, ACHS Executive Principal Alexander Duncan confirmed the protest scheduled for 10 a.m., saying that school staff were prepared for a “peaceful and safe environment for our students.”

The chants could be heard from across King Street, where news media were gathered after Alexandria City Public Schools barred all but the protesting students from school grounds during the walkout.

Rabbi David Spinrad of Beth El Hebrew Congregation held an Israeli flag as he observed the protest.

“I just heard the leader of this walk out use two common anti-Semitic tropes regarding this conflict between Israel and Hamas,” Spinrad said. “The first was when she called what is happening there a genocide, which is not only factually untrue -- the population has increased 150 percent in the last 30 years in the West Bank and Gaza -- but by calling it a genocide



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Students at Alexandria City High School stage a walkout in support of Palestine Nov. 9.

it is a demonization. Israel is at war with an aggressor that came into this sovereign territory and killed almost 1,400 civilians. Calling this a genocide when it is a war -- a war

“When they chant ‘From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free,’ I ask them to ask themselves, I ask the principal and the school board to ask themselves ‘What does free mean? What river? Which sea?’” Spinrad said. “The river is the River Jordan, the sea is the Mediterranean. And free means free of the state of Israel, free of Jews in the

time activities. School officials did not respond by deadline to several inquiries regarding the process for obtaining approval for walkout protests during the school day.

“I hold the principal responsible for this,” Spinrad added. “I emailed him and the entire school board. I want to know what is going to happen -- what will be the consequences and repercussions for those students and how can we guarantee that our Jewish students at Alexandria City High School will be safe? I have been told they are hiding in a safe room.”

Duncan’s complete message is below:

It is our understanding that tomorrow (Thurs., Nov. 9, 2023) is a national day of protest related to current events in the Middle East. We have learned that there will be at least one student walk-

out at Alexandria City High School (ACHS) -- King Street Campus that is scheduled for 10 a.m. tomorrow. We want to assure you that plans are in place as we work to ensure a peaceful and safe environment for our students.

As students exercise their right to free speech during the school day tomorrow, ACHS administrators and staff, in addition to Central Office staff, will be prepared and positioned to ensure that this walkout is conducted in a safe and respectful manner, with as little disruption to normal operations as possible. As stated in our Student Code of Conduct, we ask students to be kind, respectful and cooperative to prevent problems and solve problems in a peaceful and collaborative way.

For any student who has concerns about these ongoing events and wants to talk to a counselor or another trusted adult, there are resources in place. At ACHS, students can always reach out to a counselor or another Student Support Team (SST) member, administrator, or any trusted adult in the school if they are in need of help. Our students can also reach out to CrisisText and Crisis Link at any time, 24/7, through the contacts below:

Text: CONNECT to 85511

Call CrisisLink: 703-527-4077

We have collaborated with our Safety and Security Team to ensure that we have adequate security supports in place. The safety and security of our students and staff are of utmost priority.

“How can we guarantee that our Jewish students at Alexandria City High School will be safe?”

— Beth El Hebrew Congregation Rabbi David Spinrad

that is just and necessary with 248 hostages -- is absolutely an example of demonization, which is an instance of antisemitism.”

The protest at ACHS, which has a student population of approximately 4,000, coincided with pro-Palestinian protests across the nation. By some estimates, 300,000 people marched on the National Mall Saturday in support of Israel.

state of Israel and free of Israelis. That is the delegitimization of a sovereign state, again denying Israel’s right to exist. Again, another instance of antisemitism.”

In March of 2022 approximately 50 students staged a walkout to protest the repeal of the state’s mask mandate while earlier this year another walk out was in protest of the cancellation of lunch-

Bailey Resigns School Board

Former councilmember to step down Nov. 30.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Willie Bailey, a former City Councilman, has resigned from the Alexandria City School Board effective Nov. 30. He was first elected to the School Board in November 2021 after having served on the City Council from 2016 to 2019.

“It was the right thing to do

“This is not a decision I made lightly.”

— School Board member Willie Bailey on his resignation

for me,” said Bailey, who recently lost his brother Gary following the death of his father last year. “This is not a decision I made lightly.”

A resident of Del Ray since the age of 5, Bailey was raised in public housing and attended ACPS public schools. He is a 21-year military veteran and for more than 30

years served as Deputy Chief of the Office of the Fire Marshall with the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.

“I was honored to be chosen by the voters for the opportunity to serve on the Alexandria City School Board, and I thank the community for your trust and con-

fidence,” Bailey said in a statement. “I wish the School Board and superintendent much success in achieving the goals of the 2025 strategic plan and supporting students to be successful in life, college and career.”

During his tenure on the School Board, Bailey was part of the selection process for the new superintendent, which led to the appointment of Melanie Kay-Wyatt to the position.

A Living Legend of Alexandria, Bailey founded the nonprofit



Willie Bailey

Firefighters and Friends to the Rescue more than 25 years ago. The organization supplies thousands of children in Northern Virginia with backpacks, school supplies, new coats and gifts during the holiday season.

Bailey is a member of the Board of Trustees for Operation Warm, the largest nonprofit children’s coat distributor in the U.S., and serves on numerous local boards and

SEE BAILEY’S RESIGNS, PAGE 7



8104 East Boulevard Drive, Herbert Springs

Neighboring Old Town Alexandria in this exclusive and distinctive enclave is this two-year-old, custom build which has been carefully curated with detailed high-end finishes throughout. Here are featured the benefits of modern living with fashionably gracious, classic finishes. The high ceilings, large rooms, millwork, and design details are incomparable, and the sweeping staircase sublime. One primary suite is on the main level with a roll-in shower – only one step up takes you into these divine premises. The great room is the heart of the home, and the kitchen features a Lacanche seven-burner stove and custom solid white oak cabinet millwork. Behind pocket doors are quiet work and homework spaces with smart wi-fi; and entertaining flow is well-designed and fluid. There are four levels with six en-suite bedrooms. The Diamond Glass lacquered wet bar, pantry, and 1,000-bottle wine cellar are unparalleled. The three-season living room features a wood-burning fireplace and television connector – for some major football viewing, and there is a grilling porch with hood! Formal spaces and quiet nooks for the most discerning. It will be your great fortune to become the steward of this amazing residence. Whether birthday parties or black-tie galas, this property will host many years of joyous laughter and clinking glasses. DCA is eight miles away! Offered at \$5,000,000.

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Home of The Brave

Ceremony honors veterans, Gold Star families.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

It was the war to end all wars. After four years of fighting, hostilities formally ended between the Allies and Germany at the “11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month” in 1918. On Nov. 11, the Friends of Rocky Versace commemorated the 105th anniversary of the armistice to end World War I with a Veterans Day ceremony featuring Lt. Gen. Dan Christman (ret.), a 1965 graduate of the United States Military Academy and former superintendent of West Point.

Christman, a decorated combat veteran and current senior vice president of international affairs for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, served as the guest speaker at the event held annually at Mount Vernon Recreation Center, home to the Capt. Rocky Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Del Ray.

Humbert Roque “Rocky” Versace, an Alexandria resident, was a 1959 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and several of his classmates were in attendance.

The ceremony included a reading of the 68 names of Alexandrians who were killed or reported missing in action during the Vietnam War. Versace, along with six other Alexandria veterans, are among those who remain missing in action in Southeast Asia.

On Oct. 29, 1963, with less than two weeks before the end of his tour, Versace was ambushed and taken prisoner in South Viet-



West Point class of 1959 and Rocky Versace classmates present a wreath during the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center. Pictured are Jack Bohman and Mary Lidy (holding wreath) John McNerney, Lucas Gebhart (USMA 2009), and Al Phillips.

nam. On Sept. 26, 1965, Vietnam’s Liberation Radio reported that Versace had been executed. His remains have never been recovered. In 2002, Versace was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

Several of Versace’s West Point classmates were in attendance to present a wreath in his honor as were members of Special Forces Association Chapter XI. Versace was a member of the Special Forces unit.

Following the formal portion of the ceremony, Christman presented Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pins to Vietnam veterans in attendance.

Gold Star family members in attendance at the ceremony included Earl Valentine, SEE HOME OF THE BRAVE, PAGE 10



Lt. Col. Steve Tracy sounds TAPS during the Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.



Members of the St. Rita Parish American Heritage Girls Troop 1381 participated in the annual Veterans Day Ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.



Members of Special Forces Association Chapter XI Gene Henwood, Jim Hooker, Ray Oden, Frank Levesque, Joe Visinski and Mike Grant at the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.



Earl Valentine, center, is joined by Gold Star family members of Valentine’s Fallen Hero brother, PVT Jeron Valentine, at the Nov. 11 Veterans Day ceremony at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.

PHOTOS BY MCARTHUR MYERS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Eugene "Red" McDaniel, a six-year POW at the Hanoi Hilton during the Vietnam War, gazes at the flags lining his driveway on Veterans Day. The flags were placed by his Alexandria neighbors in a surprise tribute to the 28-year Navy veteran.



Navy Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel, right, spent six years as a POW during the Vietnam War. He continues to fight for the return of those missing in action, including his navigator James Kelly Patterson.

Neighbors Surprise Vietnam POW McDaniel awakens to Veterans Day tribute.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Eugene "Red" McDaniel, a retired Navy Captain once described by Time Magazine as one of the most brutally tortured POWs during the Vietnam War, awoke on Veterans Day to a surprise at his Alexandria home.

"My dad went out to get his paper this morning and was greeted by this," said Michael McDaniel in sharing a photo of his 92-year-old father on social media. "Someone in the neighborhood lined their driveway and front yard with American, POW, and Navy flags overnight. They have some wonderful neighbors."

Named a Living Legend of Alexandria in 2019, McDaniel was on his 81st combat mission over North Vietnam when his A-6 Intruder aircraft was shot down on May 19, 1967. The Top Gun pilot was captured and spent six agonizing years as a POW in the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison.

"There is no feeling quite like knowing you are in a strange country, surrounded by a people who know no rule but death to the enemy," said McDaniel of his time in captivity. "Still, the one thing they could not take from me was my faith.

There were many times in my lonely cell when my victories were



JEANNE THEISMANN/GAZETTE PACKET

U.S. Navy Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel (ret.) holds the Living Legends of Alexandria portrait presented to him in March of 2022 at American Legion Post 24 in recognition of National Vietnam War Veterans Day.

known only by me and God."

For three years, McDaniel was listed as Missing in Action while his wife, Dorothy, and three children, Michael, David and Leslie, did not know if he was dead or alive. In 1970, the Hanoi government finally acknowledged that McDaniel was being held prisoner. He was released on March 4, 1973.

"My dad was so excited and appreciative to see what his neighbors had done."

— Michael McDaniel on the tribute for his father, Vietnam POW Eugene "Red" McDaniel

McDaniel spoke at a reception at the Capt. Rocky Versace Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaza in



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Capt. Eugene "Red" McDaniel, left, is shown after his release in 1973 following six years of captivity during the Vietnam War. McDaniel was shot down and captured over North Vietnam in May 1967 and was brutally tortured as a POW at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison.

Del Ray in June honoring Retired Army Colonel Paris Davis, recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor in March. McDaniel noted that as a Vietnam soldier at the height of the conflict, Davis never received the welcome home and accolades he and his men deserved.

"Those of us released in 1973 came home to a hero's welcome," McDaniel said. "Col. Davis never knew that feeling of appreciation for the service and

sacrifice he had given for his country. This recognition, this Medal of Honor, is long overdue."

"My dad was so excited and appreciative to see what his neighbors had done," Michael McDaniel said. "He has been trying ever since to figure out who did it ... calling neighbors, asking anyone he sees walking down the block. It's a hoot. But so far the culprit is staying anonymous, which I think makes it more special. It shows there are some great folks here in Alexandria."

NEWS

Children's and Teens' Gazette 2023

Yes, we will have the Children's and Teens' Gazette this year, although likely on a smaller scale. Please send submissions no later than Dec. 10.

In December for many years, this newspaper has devoted pages to the creativity of local students, teens and children. The results are always remarkable. It is a keepsake edition for many families. Even readers without children of that age spend time admiring and chuckling over the issue. The Children's Gazette, including Children's Connection and Children's Almanac, is a long-time tradition.

You can see last year's editions by visiting <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/PDFs/> and scrolling down to Children's Edition.

We welcome contributions from public and private schools, art classes, individuals and homeschoolers. We publish artwork, poetry, essays, creative writing, opinion pieces, short stories, photography, photos of scul-

ture, gardens and any other creative efforts.

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

Please include the full first and last name of the student artist/writer with the submission, along with the name of the teacher, school name, students' age, grade and town name. Use the file name to identify each piece of writing or art.

Please send all submissions by Monday, Dec. 5, 2023. The Children's Connection/Gazette will publish the week of Dec. 20, 2022.

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

— MARY KIMM

BULLETIN BOARD

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

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

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Is the Fix In? Don't Do It!

On changes to the Single Family Housing code.

To the editor:
On Nov. 1, the contest for the 2024 local Alexandria elections began. There were no banners and balloons. There were no contestants at the starting blocks, waiting for the pistol shot to begin. There were no signs saying, "Sign Up Here." There were no notices in the newspapers.

Instead, the first shot over the bow was the contentious Planning Commission hearing, covering 5.5 hours and 52 speakers. The seven commissioners on hand were all appointed by the City Council. And, unlike the Council members, those on the Planning Board are not held accountable by the voters at elections.

But Council members are.

The Nov. 1, 2023, hearing will be first on the check off list when residents head to the polls again next November to assess the actions of the Council AND the Planning Board. At the top of the list will be the responses by both groups to this volatile topic, relying primarily on staff-driven input, and not on extensive responses by tax-paying residents and voters.

In spite of numerous requests to defer the planned Nov. 28 final vote by Council on radical changes to the Single Family Housing code, the

Significant Seven steamrolled ahead 7-0. Chairman Nathan Macek turned a deaf ear not only to remarks by the audience seeking a more serious and measured approach to this plan, but he also ignored pleas from several of his own Board members who wanted to vote individually on components of the 132-page plan, which includes 41 text amendments.

Perhaps Planning Board member Stephen Koenig set the stage for a cavalier approach when he spoke dismissively of citizen input at a public session of Agenda Alexandria on Oct. 23. Speaking to a standing-room-only crowd, he announced that he had "no intention" of reading the full 132-page document, "line by line." And he emphasized he had "no qualms" about voting for the document, though he admitted he was unprepared to discuss the details buried within the massive transformational plan.

Another surprise was that three Council members have not bothered to hear one word of testimony before making up their minds. This is "Justin's Plan," so of course, he would be for it. But on Nov. 14, Alyia Gaskins and Kirk McPike announced their decision, with no public testimony. The two have already fallen into place for the prescribed 7-0 vote. They should

remember that the Accounting Rule applies to local elections: "Last In, First Out."

It appears again that the Council's job is to rubber stamp anything the Planning Board sends them. These seven elected members are ignoring the "will of the people" and instead are cheering for the developers, using the old mantra: "Alexandria never met a developer it didn't like." And, as their guide post, they turn to the 2019 vote, when Council approved the debacle of the Seminary Road plan, in spite of enormous city-wide objections.

In an autocracy, there is no need for boards or commissions or councils. The head of the Fiefdom decides. Here, we hear again that "The Fix is In," and it makes no difference how many residents object, as with Seminary Road, or the Kehrig Estates, or the Duke Street corridor, or the faulty upheaval of the 5325 Polk Open Space Park.

Our hope is that four Council members will find the will power to vote NO on this flawed plan. Seminary Road's mistakes affected a few blocks. The Single Family Housing flawed plan will affect every square inch of Alexandria and every resident in what is already the state's highest rate of density. Don't do it!

Kathleen M. Burns
Alexandria

United Community Holiday Gift Card Drive

Help make the holidays special for children in our local community.

Donate \$25 Target, Walmart, or Visa gift cards to help parents buy gifts. Drop off or mail in gift cards. <https://interland3.donorperfect.net/webLink/WebLink.aspx?name=E3464&id=151>

Gift cards can also be purchased from our Amazon Wish List.

<https://www.amazon.com/registries/gl/guest-view/DCXZ-KRATR2GU>

United Community, 7511 Fordson Road, Alexandria, VA 22306, (571) 255-8979, <https://www.unitedcommunity.org/>

Service Project at Monticello Park

Sunday, Nov 19 at 1 p.m.

Join the Audubon Society of Northern Virginia for its second worksession of service in Monticello Park this Sunday, Nov. 19, 1-3 p.m. The first one accomplished a lot. But there is more to do, planting, mulching, clearing and more.

Please join us on Sunday, Nov 19 at 1 p.m., 320 Beverly Drive Alexandria, VA 22305; sign up here, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/service-project-at-monticello-park-tickets-755557381467?aff=oddtcreator>

Submit a Letter to the Editor

To submit a letter to the editor, email editors@connectionnewspapers.com or via the following form <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/contact/letter/>

Ideally, letters will be original, about local issues and less than 300 words. Please submit letters by noon Friday before publication week, although letters received on Mondays can be considered. Letters must include your first and last name, home address and a phone number. Letters are routinely edited for libel, length, grammar, good taste and accuracy.

Your name and town will be published with your letter, other personal information will not be shared. If you are a student, your school name, age and grade will also be published.

Annual Old Town Holiday Outdoor Decorating Contest

The Old Town Walled Garden Club will hold the annual holiday outdoor decorating contest. Founded in 1959, this will be the 54th year the Old Town Walled Garden Club has sponsored this contest.

From traditional greens to more contemporary designs, Alexandria's decorations make Old Town a holiday destination. The contest recognizes the most striking holiday exterior decorations in the Historic District.

In keeping with Old Town's historic provenance, contest rules require that — except for festive bows and ribbons — the decorations should feature only natural materials. For the residential contest, the decorations must all be made by the homeowners themselves.

Professionally-made decorations are not eligible for the residential contest. For the commercial contest, decorations can be professionally created, however decorations should only feature natural materials.

Judging criteria include originality of design, scale, color, contrast, and attractiveness from the street.

The first, second, and third place winners for the residential contest will receive gift certificates from local area restaurants or businesses.

Judges will consist of Old Town Walled Garden Club members and judging will take place sometime the week of Monday, Dec. 11 to Thursday Dec. 14, so we encourage everyone to start planning today.

The contest is free to enter.

If you're interested in participating in the contest, please send an email to OTWGClub@gmail.com and provide your name, address, email address and telephone contact, and our judges will be sure to come by and check out your décor.

For additional information regarding the contest, contact the Old Town Walled Garden Club at OTWGClub@gmail.com.



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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.)

Bailey Resigns School Board

FROM PAGE 1

commissions, including Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Educational Opportunities for Alexandrians and Carpenter's Shelter.

In 2003 Bailey earned the Positive African American Men Award from Christians in Action. In 2005 Alexandria City Schools presented him with the Business and School Partnership Award and Commerce Bank named him Hometown Hero. Firehouse Magazine recognized him with its Heroism and Community Service Award.

Other honors include the Fairfax County Volunteer Service Award and the county fire department's highest award, Career Firefighter of the Year. In 2007, he earned Fairfax County's highest award for county employees, the A. Heath Onthank Award. In 2010 the NAACP of Northern Virginia honored him with its Community Service Award. In 2011 he earned Fairfax County's Neighbor-

hood and Community Services Award. And in 2012 the Rotary Club of Tysons Corner named him the 2012 Citizen of the Year.

"On behalf of all members of the Alexandria City School Board, I want to thank Willie Bailey for his service on the Board and for his deep commitment to the children and families in the City of Alexandria," said Board Chair Michelle Rief in a statement announcing Bailey's resignation. "There is a reason that Mr. Bailey has received Alexandria's Living Legends award, given his long-standing dedication to ensuring our students have the community supports they need to learn and thrive."

Following Bailey's departure at the end of the month, the School Board will petition the Circuit Court to order a special election to fill the vacant seat as required by the Alexandria City Charter.

The election is expected to take place in early 2024.



NOV. 24
Plaid Friday
NOV. 25
Small Business Saturday



Alexandria is the region's top "shop small" destination for the holidays. Don't miss the biggest shopping days of the season November 24-25 with deals and special offers at more than 50 boutiques throughout Old Town and beyond.

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RAPTORS AT FORT HUNT

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH



Olive, a barn owl and her handler, Kathi



An Eastern screech owl named Little Voss.



Tim Dennison and a barred owl named Scarlet.



An owl's eyes are large. Here, using two plastic oranges, Colin Surovell shows the size of an owl's eyes in proportion to its head.



A red shouldered hawk named Little Red



A male American kestrel named Pippin.



PHOTO BY DEBORAH HAMMER
Homer, the great horned owl



The National Park Service and the Friends of Dyke Marsh had children's activities. Here Jonathan Molineaux shows a youngster animal pelts.



A Friends of Dyke Marsh banner.
ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE PACKET ♦ NOVEMBER 16-22, 2023 ♦ 9

Enraptured by Raptors

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH

Four owls, a red-shouldered hawk and an American kestrel mesmerized 400 dotting human admirers who got up-close looks at these raptors on Nov. 5. People spilled out of Pavilion A at Fort Hunt Park on a balmy Sunday afternoon.

Liz and Tim Dennison from Secret Gardens Birds and Bees brought the birds to the park for a two-hour educational event sponsored by the Friends of Dyke Marsh and the National Park Service.

Raptors, also called birds of prey, have keen eyesight and hearing, sharp talons and a hooked beak. They typically eat meat. Diurnal raptors like hawks, eagles and vultures mostly hunt during the day. Nocturnal raptors like owls hunt at night. Many catch their prey with their feet.

Each of these birds was injured at some point and cannot survive on their own in the wild. The Dennisons have given each bird a name.

Pippin, an American kestrel, has two distinctive black vertical stripes on his face. The male kestrel has blue on the wings, but the female is mostly rusty brown, Liz Dennison explained. Someone found Pippin near Washington, D.C.'s National Mall, unafraid of people and appearing to beg for food. Because he had imprinted on people, he never learned to hunt or mate.

Little Red, a red-shouldered hawk, is blind in his left eye, probably because a great horned owl grasped its head in an attack. These hawks, between 17 and 24 inches in length, often perch on tree branches or utility wires. In the wild, they eat small mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Also birds.

One pair feasted on three of the Dennisons' chickens, Liz said.

Scarlet, a female barred owl, has a damaged beak from a vehicular collision. Her caretakers have to trim this bird's beak regularly which "she does not like," Liz said. In the wild, barred owls hunt mice, frogs, bats, snakes and other animals. From 16 to 20 inches in length, they fly almost silently because of their velvety feathers.

Olive, a three-year-old perky barn owl, seemed to zero in on her fans. Barn owls have a distinctive white, heart-shaped face and are around 16 inches long. These owls hunt almost exclusively at night and are a favorite of farmers because they eat mice, Liz Dennison commented. One young barn owl can eat eight to ten mice a day. A family can scarf up 6,000 to 10,000 mice a year, she offered.

More on Raptors

www.SecretGardenBirdsAndBees.com
www.fodm.org
www.nps.gov/gwmp

On the topic of mice, Dennison said, "There are no safe poisons." A raptor that eats a mouse that has eaten rat poison will not survive. She recommended a "good snap trap" and consulting Raptors Are the Solution, an organization working to eliminate rodenticides.

Owls eat the whole animal Liz Dennison explained, but they cannot digest bones and fur. They don't "poop them out," she said. Instead, they regurgitate pellets, a clump of indigestible items. She once found a crow's foot in a pellet.

Homer, the great horned owl, the largest owl at Fort Hunt that day, fixated on his many admirers with his big yellow eyes. His head tufts or plumicorns are not horns, Liz Dennison explained. Great horned owls are

18 to 25 inches in length, "at the top of the food chain," she noted, and have a grip of 200 to 400 pounds per square inch. They can "carry away a five-pound chicken," but she reassured, probably not a pet dog or cat. They may take over other birds' nests and live 12 to 15 years in the wild.

Smaller but equally impressive, Little Voss, an eastern screech owl, about 10 inches in length, evoked many oohs and ahs and comments like, "He's so cute!" Little Voss also has a damaged eye from a collision. Eastern screech owls are experts at camouflaging, blending into tree bark. They can even make themselves skinny, sit still and close their eyes to resemble a tree branch, Liz Dennison said.

The audience members, from one-year-olds to octogenarians, were totally enraptured by raptors.



Pavilion A was full, with people gathered outside as well.



PHOTO BY MCARTHUR MYERS

Mayor Justin Wilson, second from left, is joined by former councilmember David Speck and council members Kirk McPike and Canuk Aguirre at the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.

Home of the Brave

FROM PAGE 3

whose brother Jeron Valentine was killed May 7, 1968, while serving in South Vietnam.

In addition to Valentine, Gold Star family members included Susan Lilly Harvey, Gold Star Sister of MIA 1st Lt. Lawrence Lilly; Reba

Bayliss and Patrick Bayliss, Gold Star widow and son of USAF Capt. Paul M. Bayliss; James Spengler, Gold Star brother of Capt. Henry M. Spengler; and Helen Curtis Versace, sister-in-law of POW/MIA Rocky Versace.

Participating in the ceremony were members of the St. Rita American Heritage Girls Troop 1381, who opened the ceremony with the Pledge of Allegiance. Deacon Steve Dixon, also of St. Rita's Parish, delivered the invocation.

Alayshia Spears, a member of the Bishop O'Connell High School choir, performed the National Anthem, America the Beautiful and God Bless America during the ceremony and Lt. Col. Stephen Tracy of Bugles Across America concluded the event with the playing of Taps.



PHOTO BY MCARTHUR MYERS
Army Reserve Military Intelligence Col. Kevin Carroll, left, at the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.



PHOTO BY MCARTHUR MYERS

Bishop O'Connell High School choir member Alayshia Spears performs the National Anthem at the Veterans Day ceremony Nov. 11 at Mount Vernon Recreation Center.

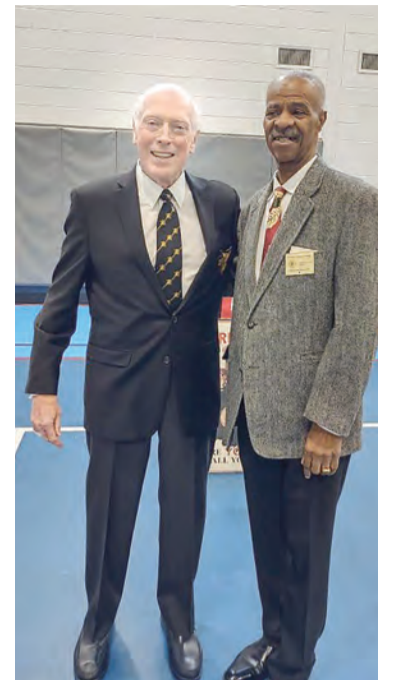


PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Guest Speaker Lt. Gen. Dan Christman with Friends of Rocky Versace member McArthur Myers.

Attending the event were Mayor Justin Wilson, Council members Kirk McPike and Canuk Aguirre and former Mayor Allison Silberberg. Former Council member David Speck, who was the driving force behind establishing the Capt. Rocky

Versace Plaza and Vietnam Veterans Memorial, was also in attendance.

For more information or to become a member of the Capt. Versace Memorial Association, contact the Friends of Rocky Versace at FoRV59@gmail.com.

**A Classical Christmas
with Barclay Brass**

December 2 | 2:00 p.m.

Get into the holiday spirit at St. Paul's!

Celebrate the season with us as we present a program of familiar carols, Classical masterpieces, and a few surprises along the way. A brass ensemble of the highest caliber, Barclay Brass will be joined by St. Paul's internationally acclaimed organist Adriano Spampinato to present this family friendly afternoon of music. For more information and for tickets, please scan below.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
228 S. Pitt St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
www.stpaulsalexandria.com



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Salute To Veterans

Navy veteran Shirley Artis, seated center, was honored by volunteers from Capital Caring Health as they entertained Woodbine Rehabilitation & Healthcare residents with an uplifting program including music and a salute to members from each branch of the U.S. armed services. Certificates were presented to all veterans at Woodbine. www.woodbinerehab.com

Ebbin Among Champions of Innovation Celebrated by TechNet

TechNet, the national, bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives, today honored its 2023 Champion of Innovation winners during a luncheon at its annual State Policy Conference in Austin, TX.

Sen. Adam Ebbin was one of the seven lawmakers from across the country who was honored.

TechNet's Champion of Innovation awards are given to state policymakers who champion policies that spur innovation, create jobs, and drive economic growth. TechNet's 2023 Champion of Innovation award winners are: Ebbin; Sen. Lou DiPalma (D-RI); Rep. John Bucy III (D-TX); Sen. Liz Brown (R-IN); Sen. Marko Liias (D-WA); Speaker Javier Martinez (D-NM); Sen. Chris Cournoyer (R-IA)

"I want to congratulate each of our Champion of Innovation award winners and thank them for all they have done this year to enact legislation that advances innovation and economic growth in their state," said David Edmonson, TechNet's Vice President of State Policy and Government Relations. "We look forward to continuing



TechNet Award for Sen. Adam Ebbin

our work with these Champions and state policymakers across the country on policies that will help America win the next era of innovation."

Each year, TechNet's State Policy Conference brings together leading state policymakers and TechNet members for meaningful discussions on key issues impacting states across the country. This year's event is being held in Austin, TX, and includes 39 TechNet member companies and lawmakers from 15 states.

Public Notice

Updated weight limits on Virginia bridges and culverts

In accord with state and federal law, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has imposed new or changed existing weight restrictions and installed new signage indicating the updated weight restrictions on the following bridges and culverts (structures) in Virginia within the last 30 days.

Location	Fed. Route Id	Route #	Route Name	Structure	Posted Date
GRAYSON	8797	603	FAIRWOOD RD.	BIG FOX CREEK	10/26/2023
BUCHANAN	29763	2175	DOOLEY RD.	STREAM	10/26/2023
SCOTT	16776	654	CLIFF MTN. WAY	DRY CREEK	10/25/2023
WASHINGTON	18838	11	LEE HIGHWAY	HALL CREEK	10/24/2023
BEDFORD	2730	639	HURRICANE DR/RT 639	BRANCH OF OSLIN CREEK	10/23/2023
ROANOKE	14809	0F880	BRETHERN RD/RT F880	BRANCH OF BACK CREEK	10/23/2023
FAUQUIER	7359	681	HOLTZCLAW RD.	STREAM	10/17/2023
HIGHLAND	10327	640	BLUGRASS VALLEY RD (RT 640)	S BR POTOMAC RIVER	10/16/2023
ROCKBRIDGE	15547	646	BIG HILL RD (RT 646)	COLLIERS CREEK	10/12/2023
BEDFORD	2823	695	GOOSE CK VLY RT 695	N. FORK GOOSE CREEK	10/5/2023
LOUDOUN	11147	600	NEW RD.	BULL RUN	10/2/2023

The list above is not a comprehensive list of all structures with weight restrictions in the Commonwealth, but shows only structures that have new or changed weight restrictions within the last 30 days. The list contains only basic structure identification and location information and the date the new or changed weight restriction and signage became effective.

For a full listing of all bridge and culvert weight restrictions with detailed information about specific structures, including location data and actual weight limits, visit <https://www.virginiadot.org> and navigate to Info Center/Trucking Resources. This page references a posted structures report and a GIS map tool that contain detailed information about restricted structures in Virginia. To receive email notifications regarding new or updated weight restrictions for structures statewide, complete the sign-up form on the web page.

Notices regarding bridges and culverts with new or updated weight restrictions are published monthly by VDOT. For additional information or questions, please contact haulingpermits@vdot.virginia.gov.

The Virginia Department of Transportation is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, as protected by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. If you need further information on VDOT's Title VI Program or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, please contact the Virginia Department of Transportation's Title VI Program Specialist at 804-786-2730.

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Heeey was a misfit, so was Rudolph. They were two of a kind, so these new friends set off to see what they could find.

COMMUNITY

“How do we live with war and peace at the same time, with love and hatred at the same time?” — Rabbi Steven Rein



Rev. Dr. Larry Hayward of Westminster Presbyterian Church with a group of walkers during the Nov. 12 Interfaith Walk for Peace.



Participants stop at the Episcopal Church of St. Clement as part of the Nov. 12 Interfaith Walk for Peace.

Interfaith Walk for Peace

Community gathers to walk and pray for peace.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Clergy and individuals of all faiths took to the streets of Alexandria as part of the Nov. 12 Interfaith Walk for Peace.

Representatives of Agudas Achim Congregation, the Episcopal Church of St. Clement, Trinity United Methodist Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church led participants from Trinity UMC to Agudas Achim making stops at each house of worship to offer prayers for peace.

“This is an opportunity for everyone to gather in prayer and in fellowship,” said Christine Hershey, a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. “We are of different religions and different faiths and are here as a reminder to love and serve God and to come together and pray and be in community together.”

Rev. Robin Razzino of the Episcopal Church of St. Clement read the poem “What They Did Yesterday Afternoon” by Warsan Shire before offering a prayer for peace at one of the stops along the walk route.

Rabbi Steven Rein of Agudas Achim Con-

gregation spoke about the meaning of “shalom” and the emotional toll that the current events are taking on the faith community.

“Many of us are yearning, searching for a sense of wholeness right now,” Rein said. “The book of Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time for war, a time for peace. But how do we live with war and peace at the same time, with love and hatred at the same time?”

He added that “many of us feel our emotional fuel tank draining. But many of my clergy partners here have shared the most heartwarming notes and messages and that sort of refills that emotional fuel tank when we realize that the challenges we face we do not face them by ourselves but with friends, with family, with community.”

Carol Supplee, owner of Imagine Artwear in Old Town, participated in the walk.

“I’m glad I made the walk this year,” Supplee said. “We have had personal connections with friends in Israel that we visited with and that makes it harder to bear.”

Added Sarah Vasquez, “This is a great reminder to not let the dialog stop. It’s been a couple of weeks but this is going to go on for some time and we need to support and love one another.”

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET



Clergy from area faith communities gather Nov. 12 for the Interfaith Walk for Peace. From left, Pastor Nicole Crouch, Trinity United Methodist Church; Rev. Dr. Larry Hayward, Westminster Presbyterian Church; Rev. Robin Razzino, the Episcopal Church of St. Clement; Pastor Grace Han, Trinity Methodist Church; Rev. Patrick Hunnicutt, Westminster Presbyterian Church; Hazzan Elisheva Dienstfry, Agudas Achim Congregation; and Rabbi Steven Rein, Agudas Achim Congregation.

CAPPIES

‘Pride and Prejudice’ at St. Stephen’s And St. Agnes High School

REVIEW BY CECE MEZA OF HERNDON HIGH SCHOOL

Miscommunication. The romance genre’s most simultaneously beloved and despised trope. And yet St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes High School’s production of “Pride and Prejudice” brought it to life in a most charming way, with period accurate garb and delightful actors.

A quaint romantic comedy that explored numerous relationships as the Bennet sisters took a swing at get-

ting married off, this beloved production stayed true to its source material. The second eldest Bennet sister, Elizabeth, was the main focus of the story as she entered a challenging dynamic with the prideful Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy, of whom she had the completely wrong impression.

Originally published in 1813, the novel by Jane Austen was adapted into a play by Jon Jory in 2006. The first production of the play featured endearing



PHOTO BY JAMESON BLOOM

From left, Charles McElwain, Reese Lay, Elizabeth Rutter and Kate VanDeVeer in St. Stephen’s and St. Agnes High School’s production of Pride and Prejudice.

SEE CAPPIES, PAGE 14

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, 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/>



"Peter and the Starcatcher" can be seen at Mount Vernon High School on Nov. 16-18, 2023.

OCT. 10 TO NOV. 19 "Reflection Unknown" Photography Exhibit by Fred Zafran. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Alexandria. Opening Reception: Sunday, October 22, 2023, 2 - 4 p.m. Fred Zafran has long been interested in photography 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 "poetic narrative," are post-documentary in that the stories are open ended, subjective, rich in symbolism and metaphor, and encourage consideration 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 photography." 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: Friday, 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/event/housemates

NOV. 16-18 "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.

NOV. 16-18 "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.

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.

FRIDAY/NOV. 24 Plaid Friday in Old Town Alexandria. More than 50 participating businesses throughout Old Town and Del Ray will open their doors early on Friday, November 24th to participate in Plaid Friday - Alexandria's Small Business Black Friday. Come patronize Old Town boutiques the day after Thanksgiving and enjoy great discounts, merriment and good cheer, all while shopping small, supporting local businesses and celebrating the plaid vibes that are iconic to Old Town Alexandria. Early shoppers will receive extra discounts. Early Bird Discounts: A special incentive to get up early the day after Thanksgiving are the early-morning deals offered by participating businesses: 6 AM - 8 AM: 30% off; 8 AM - 10 AM: 20% off; and 10 AM - Closing: 10% off!

SATURDAY/DEC. 2 23rd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. 5:30 p.m. At Waterfront Park, 1A Prince Street, Alexandria. More than



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

50 brightly lit boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline from Canal Center to Ford's Landing Park. Head to Waterfront Park at the foot of King Street for festivities from 1 to 8 p.m. including a pop-up beer garden from Alexandria's Port City Brewing Company with hard cider from Alexandria's Lost Boy Cider. Also at Waterfront Park, from 1 to 5:30 p.m. enjoy hands-on activities from independently owned Alexandria businesses. Head to Canal Center on the Old Town North waterfront from 3 to 9 p.m. for the Canal Center Holiday Art Mart to enjoy family friendly festivities and watch the start of the Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights on the terrace with parade assembly anticipated between 5 and 5:30 p.m. At 3:30 p.m., Santa and Mrs. Claus will arrive by fireboat at the Alexandria City Marina before attending the annual Holiday Festival at Torpedo Factory Art

Center, which takes place from 12 to 6 p.m.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2 52nd Annual Alexandria Scottish Christmas Walk Parade. 11 a.m. In Old Town Alexandria. 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. Today, the city continues celebrating its heritage with the iconic parade. 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. The 2023 Master of Ceremonies is Ian Houston, an international non-profit leader in the Washington, D.C. area who is

dedicated to promoting cultural links between Scotland and the U.S. For more details on the parade route, transportation alternatives and weekend happenings, visit ALXScottishWalk.com.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2 Tall Ship Holiday Boat Parade of Lights Viewing Party. 5-7 p.m. Guests are invited to experience exclusive access to view Alexandria's Holiday Boat Parade of Lights. Guests can choose between two unique experiences: VIP Ticket (aboard Providence) \$85, includes glass of champagne upon boarding, onboard bar and food, TSP gift or General Admission Ticket (on dock) \$65, includes food and bar. Tickets at www.tallshipprovidence.org.

SATURDAY/DEC. 2 Classical Christmas Concert. 2 p.m. Featuring Barclay Brass and Adriano Spampinato. At St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 228 South Pitt Street, Alexandria. The hour-long program will feature familiar carols, Classical masterpieces, and a few surprises, designed perfectly for families with young children, and the young-at-heart. Tickets are available through EventBrite. \$10 for individuals, capped at \$25 for a family of four. For more information: Lisa Eskew (703) 298-3901 or www.Stpaulsalexandria.com

SATURDAY/DEC. 2 Used Book Sale: 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Sherwood Regional Library, 2501 Sherwood Hall Lane. Selection of over 20,000 gently used children's books, fiction, history, biography, home and garden, cooking, crafts, sports, religion, travel, CDs, DVDs, and more. Unless specially priced, \$1 for hard backs and large paperbacks, and 25 cents for mass market paperbacks. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional>.

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

NOVEMBER
 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 \$59.50
 Mon. 27: Musiq Soulchild \$89.50
 Tue. 28: Musiq Soulchild \$89.50
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Obituary

SARAH ROBIN (WILLIAMS) BLAIR
April 6th, 1945 - November 29th, 2022



Robin left our sight but never our hearts on November 29th, 2022 at the age of 77. She was the center of our family, revered by her community, and had lead a rich and love-filled life.

Robin was born in Oceana, Virginia to Francis "Bill" and Sarah "Sally" Williams, little sister to Tony. She had a joyous childhood on the shore of The Atlantic, lived in Richmond for a time where she was a cheerleader and a Homecoming Princess at Douglas Freeman Highschool and later settled in Alexandria where she raised a family.

As a well-respected school counselor at MacArthur Elementary, Robin founded The Peace Club, a conflict resolution group for kids, and promoted good character as her costumed alter ego "Countess Character."

In retirement, Robin became certified as a hypnotherapist and opened a therapeutic practice in Del Ray. She was also an ardent volunteer, donating her time and skills to the Alive House, a women's shelter, and serving on the board of directors for Campagna Center, a family resource non-profit. Helping others however she could was her driving purpose.

At the age of 65, Robin walked the Camino de Santiago, a five-week solo pilgrimage through the mountains of Spain. She later wrote a book about her experience, "Musings Along The Way." She was an adventurous spiritual seeker and this Camino journey exemplified her fearlessness and appetite for meaningful experience.

Robin was an adoring, fun-loving partner to Bill for fifty life-filled years of marriage. She was a loving, encouraging mother to her sons Macon, Brooke, and Will. She was an endearing mother-in-law to Lee, Tirzah, and Liz. She was a devoted grandmother to Buck, Kieran, Sonny and Oli, who all call her Wabi. And she was a caring, invested, and delightful friend, aunt, cousin and niece to many others, all of whom have felt the loss of her passing and the gift of her life over this last year.

CAPPIES

FROM PAGE 12

actors highlighted by a fairly bare stage setup, which St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School took and expanded upon.

At the helm, playing the titular Ms. Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy, were Charlotte Nichols and Max Gehlhoff, respectively. Tapping into Elizabeth's sarcastic, yet anxious persona, Nichols brought the character to life with her fidgety busy work and smooth vocal and facial changes, expressing her likes and dislikes. Gehlhoff also displayed exceptional acting as he acted out Mr. Darcy's complicated inner troubles. Through silence and stillness, Gehlhoff was able to successfully convey Mr. Darcy's longing for Elizabeth. Together, Nichols and Gehlhoff presented a dynamic worthy of one of history's favorite romances. As they showed Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth's move from hatred to love throughout the play, the audience could feel the tension and shifts in their relationship through the leads' choices of withering glares and longing glances.

Another standout performance was presented by Gabriella Miller Milow as Jane Bennet. Miller Milow's facial expressions as Jane were endearing, properly portraying Jane as she tapped into her hopeless romanticism. Similarly to Nichols' Elizabeth, Miller Milow was able to seamlessly switch between Jane's emotional beats. One second, Miller Milow showed a world of hurt on her face, and the next, she brought hope into the hearts of the audience with her starstruck looks.

Working to highlight all of the actors were their costumes, and working to highlight all of the costumes was the hair and makeup. The historically accurate costumes, done by Indira Brown, Elona Michael, Cate Nickson, and Grace Hendy, worked to communicate the character's personalities as well as the settings they were in. For example, Catherine and Lydia Bennet, the youngest of the sisters, were dressed in baby blue tulle to highlight their naivety, while the detestable Caroline Bingley's sunny outfit showed the proper exterior she attempted to maintain. Accenting the costuming was the hair and makeup (Grace Hendy, Emerson Belle-Dufault, Indira Brown and Tyler Troy). The team did extensive research with much success. With historical hairstyles for the ladies, the hair and makeup team was also able to show their personalities in conjunction with the costumes. Carefree and silly Lydia's curls were in complete contrast to old, stressed-out Mrs. Bennet's slicked back 'do.

A solid production, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School certainly didn't miscommunicate to the audience their intentions of putting on a lovely performance.

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PHOTO BY E PALLORINA FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA

Massed Band a Scottish Christmas Walk Parade.

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 Scot-

tish 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 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.

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.

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 5

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.volunteer-alexandria.org/ALIVE>

Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

Join Friends' Board. Those who care about mental health, the Alexandria community, and collaborating with fellow residents to make

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THE CONNECTION Newspapers & Online

Mount Vernon Gazette Potomac ALMANAC 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 websites and to meet obligations to our loyal and patient employees, writers, contractors and suppliers.

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

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

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

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Visit connectionnewspapers.com or <https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-keep-your-newspaper-printing>
Connection Newspapers... Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette, Centre View, Potomac Almanac
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Cause and Effect



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

What a pleasure the last few months have been for you Kenny-column readers who aren't particularly interested in cancer. Rarely, if at all, has there been a cancer-centric, dare I admit, self-indulgent column for your tepid perusal. Oh sure, there's been the odd reference here or there, but nothing too intense or the least bit intentional to focus you on the ups and downs of life in the cancer lane. A bumpy road if there ever was one.

In fact, it's been over three months since I've droned on about cancer. An amount of time which coincides with the longest interval between scans that I've ever experienced: over four months. And as much as I would like (Oh, how I would like) to say that this reflects a cancer remission, it does not. Instead, it reflects how slowly my thyroid cancer is progressing, and a modest attempt as well by my oncologist to reduce/manage the amount of radiation I've been exposed to, and likely will continue to be exposed to, so long as I shall live, that is. Granted, from what I've been told, the amount of radiation I'm exposed to during one of my C.T. or P.E.T. scans are modest, in the scheme of things. Nevertheless, in my scheme, considering the number of scans I've had over nearly 15 years, there might be a cumulative – and side, effect: cancer. I guess having one cancer doesn't preclude you from getting another. (I think that's sort of unfair, don't you?)

When my oncologist explained his thinking for extending my scan interval to four months from three months, I was 100% for it. Initially he said that obviously my cancer is slow moving, given the almost 15 years we've been involved, so an additional month between diagnostic scans is reasonable/not likely problematic; especially because, he added, after all these years/scans, it is prudent that we try to minimize my exposure to radiation. One doesn't exactly build up an immunity to radiation. Upon hearing that concern, which I don't recall ever hearing or considering before, I perked up and asked "Really? Why now? What's the risk?" His answer was somewhere between ironic and predictable: "Cancer."

Incredulous, I blurted out: "Cancer? Do you mean to tell me that a side effect of my cancer treatment/diagnostic scanning is more cancer and not simply more of the same cancer?" "Yes, he replied." After all these treatment years of chemotherapy and changing my diagnosis from non-small cell lung cancer to papillary thyroid cancer, and beating all the odds, the (I don't want to say end) result might be that I've possibly caused another set of cancer tumors to take hold and threaten my life? "Cheese and crackers," as my late father said many times when surprised and disappointed by something somebody said to him. Or as I might have uttered, when I heard the oncologist's explanation: "Holy s***!" Seems like a dirty trick. But I imagine the choice at the beginning of my treatment was the here and now, not the maybe later. When you're diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer, and given a terminal prognosis as I was, there's often not much talk of a later, so the focus better be on the present. And so, it was. And now, nearly 15 years later, the success of my own unexpected survival has a side effect of its own? As my former co-worker, Monique, would say: "Crazy kookie." Meaning, you can't make this stuff up. How I wish I was.

Well, I'm not going to overreact yet. I'll wait, as my oncologist said, for my late Nov. scan and my mid-November lab work to see if there have been any unfortunate changes. I often joke that the longer I live, the closer I get to the end rather than further away from the beginning. Not that I'm the least bit negative, as you regular readers know, but occasionally when you're aware of your health, as most cancer patients are, you do pay attention to what's happening to your body. And as much as you might want to chalk up any changes to older age, that's probably not the best approach. As my oncologist told me years ago, if I were to experience any new symptoms, particularly ones that persist for a few weeks, please contact him. And over the years, I have gotten better about honestly assessing my situation and making real-time decisions to get medical help, or at least get a medical opinion/evaluation about whatever is happening to me. As much as I'd love to ignore my situation and pretend that it's not as serious as it is, turning a blind eye or a deaf ear to my reality is not likely to solve the problem. Although the cancer I have is "incurable," it doesn't mean that I can't live a relatively normal life. It just means that I'll be undergoing treatment of some kind for the rest of my life. But I can live with that, hopefully. It just requires patience and understanding, and a whole lot of love.

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

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