

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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JANUARY 8, 2026



PHOTOS BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria residents Douglas Goist and Jonathan Lucas, at right, with HapWare founders Bryan Duarte, a Sterling resident, and Jack Walters Jan. 6 at CES 2026 in Las Vegas.

Viva Las Vegas

All in for AI at CES 2026.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Innovation once again takes center stage as CES 2026 is underway in Las Vegas with top attractions ranging from robotics and artificial intelligence leading the way.

The world's largest technology showcase, produced by the Arlington-based Consumer Technology Association, feels less like a gadget expo and more like a global innovation summit where AI, mobility, health, sustainability, and immersive experiences converge.

"Each year the technology advances, particularly regarding accessibility," said Alexandria resident Douglas Goist, who works for NSite, a subsidiary of the National Industries for the Blind.

Goist and NSite founder Jonathan Lucas attended CES, which

SEE VIVA LAS VEGAS, PAGE 6



The IGRIS-C robot.



A robot from Tommoro Robotics demonstrates an assembly line process.



A CES attendee tries out the AceMate tennis robot.

News

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PHOTO BY GLENDA BOOTH

The 2026 Virginia General Assembly will convene in Richmond on Jan. 14. The target adjournment date is March 14. Virginia's 75th governor, Abigail Spanberger, will be inaugurated at the capitol on Jan. 17. Visit <https://vga.virginia.gov>

Sen. Adam Ebbin To Resign To Join Spanberger Admin

**Special election to fill Ebbin's seat not yet scheduled;
Del. Bennett-Parker says she is running.**

Virginia State Senator Adam P. Ebbin (D-Alexandria) announced today his acceptance of a position in Governor-elect Abigail Spanberger's administration as Senior Advisor at the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority.

Ebbin's resignation from the state Senate has been submitted to Senate President Pro Tempore L. Louise Lucas, to take effect on Wednesday, Feb. 18. A special election will take place to fill his seat but has not yet been scheduled.

Del. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker has announced her candidacy to fill the position.

Currently vice-chair of the Senate Democratic Caucus, Ebbin has served in the Virginia General Assembly for 22 years, beginning in 2004 as a Delegate and since 2012 as a Senator.

"I share Governor-elect Spanberger's goal that adults 21 and over who choose to use cannabis, and those who use it for medical treatment, have access to a well-tested, accurately-labeled product, free from contaminants," Ebbin said. "2026 is the year

we will move cannabis sales off the street corner and behind the age-verified counter."

Spanberger, who will be sworn in on Jan. 17, said, "I'm grateful to have the benefit of Senator Ebbin's policy expertise ... and I look forward to working with him to prioritize public safety and public health."

Ebbin passed legislation decriminalizing marijuana in 2020 (SB 2) with Del. Charniele Herring (D-Alexandria) and then in 2021 passed legislation legalizing possession of marijuana in Virginia with co-chief Patron Senator Louise Lucas and Herring (SB 1406).

No regulated retail cannabis marketplace exists even though the Virginia General Assembly had passed legislation to create such a market, because then-Governor Glenn Youngkin (R) vetoed those bills.

Ebbin serves as the Chair of the General Laws and Technology Committee, as well as a member of four other Senate Committees. Ebbin is also the Chair of the Commission on Unemployment Compensation, the co-founder and Co-Chair of the Gun Violence Pre-

vention Caucus, the Vice-Chair of the Joint Commission on Technology and Science, a member of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission, and is a member of the Joint Subcommittee on Health and Human Resources Oversight.

Ebbin has been honored by many organizations for his service, including by the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML) with their Vanguard Award in 2015; as well as "Solid as a Rock for Education" by the Virginia Education Association; an Environmental Hero by the League of Conservation Voters; an OUTstanding Virginian by Equality Virginia; and is the recipient of Neighborhood Health's Health Equity Award; an All Star for Animals by the Virginia Humane Society; and as the Legislator of the Year by the Metropolitan Washington Building Trades Council.

Ebbin has lived in Alexandria since 1989.

Spanberger has tapped several members of the General Assembly for her administration and cabinet, with several special elections being held as a result.

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Men of Courage

Community leadership honored at 10th anniversary gala.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

The spirit of service and mentorship filled the room as the 2025 Men of Courage Lifetime Achievement Awards were presented Dec. 6, 2025, at the Oswald Durant Center, celebrating five men whose leadership and dedication have made a lasting impact on the city's youth and families.

The evening celebrated the 10th anniversary of the organization, which was founded in 2013 by former boxing champion Anthony Suggs Sr. The Men of Courage Awards have become a cornerstone of Alexandria's community recognition efforts, highlighting men who lead by example and dedicate themselves to uplifting others through mentorship, service, and advocacy.

The annual awards ceremony drew a full house of community leaders, past honorees, families, and supporters who gathered to honor the 2025 recipients. The evening emphasized the central theme of the Men of Courage mission: recognizing individuals who "reach back" to guide and support the next generation.

The 2025 awardees, recognized for their commitment to youth development, community engagement, and leadership, included Col. Jim Paige (ret), Robert Trout, Michael Diggins, Gregory Wright and Bill Euille. Each honoree was acknowledged for consistent, hands-on service that has strengthened Alexandria neighborhoods and institutions.



Past Men of Courage honorees gather for a photo to honor the 2025 awardees Dec. 6, 2025, at the Oswald Durant Center.

Suggs, who founded the program after reflecting on the mentors who shaped his own life, emphasized the role his faith played in shaping his life following his downfall due to drugs.

"Anyone that lived the life that I lived before I came to the other side shouldn't even be here," Suggs said. "So many times it could have turned another way for me but I always felt

that God brought me through what he brought me through because he wanted me to give back."

Suggs, a local boxing legend, was on track to make the 1988 U.S. Olympic team before drugs and jail torpedoed his career in the ring. In 1987, Suggs was a five-time Golden-Gloves Champion, National Golden Glove Finalist, Golden Gloves Outstanding Boxer of the

year and Olympic Festival Gold Medalist Amateur boxer which ranked him # 1 in the country and #4 in the world by the USA Amateur Boxing Federation.

As an amateur, Suggs won 138 matches, 116 of which were knockouts. He lost only 12 times. He shares his life story as a cautionary tale in his book "Da Beast Within — Still the Champ."

In recent years he has devoted his work to the community, which includes honoring the Men of Courage who have been positive youth role models.

His efforts throughout the region were recognized in 2023 when he received the Presidential Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award.

Said Suggs, "I always felt that God didn't bring me this far to leave me."



Men of Courage 2025 Lifetime Achievement honorees pose for a group photo Dec. 6, 2025, at the Oswald Durant Center. From left, Col. Jim Paige (ret), Robert Trout, Founder Anthony Suggs Sr., Michael Diggins and Gregory Wright. Not pictured is recipient Bill Euille.

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Regina Suggs congratulates Anthony Suggs Sr. on the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Men of Courage Lifetime Achievement Awards program.



PHOTO BY CELSO FERREIRA (GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY).

What happens when high tide and lots of rain come at the same time? Compound-nuisance flooding overwhelming stormwater infrastructure in the City of Alexandria during a high-tides and precipitation event.

Virginia Faces Climate Change Risks, GMU Warns

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
THE GAZETTE

Across Virginia, temperatures are rising, the state is getting wetter, precipitation is more frequent and extreme, drought is a growing concern and sea level is rising. These are the key findings of a recent, first-of-its-kind assessment of how climate change is impacting Virginia.

The state has been warming since the 18th century, said Dr. Jim Kinter, Director of George Mason University's Center for Ocean-Land-Atmosphere Studies, in a Dec. 12 briefing. He drew this conclusion in part using Thomas Jefferson's meticulous 1776 to 1826 weather logs, records that "raised more questions than answers."

Other conclusions of Virginia

Climate Assessment:

Of Virginia's 8.7 million people, more than three million live in "relatively high multi-hazard risk" counties and 1.4 million "socially vulnerable residents face the greatest cascading impacts." Impacts vary by region.

Extreme weather, like floods, heat waves and wildfires, is worsened by the events' longer duration, frequency and severity and bigger temperature swings.

The northern and western parts of the state are most affected by drought, with more flash droughts anticipated. Droughts especially affect water supply, data centers, forestry and agriculture. Data centers' water use rose 63 percent from 2019 to 2023. "In Northern Virginia, drought-induced disruptions to water availability in the Potomac River could reduce economic output by more than \$4.5

billion in just one month," according to the report.

In a follow-up email, Dr. Kinter stressed the urgent need to act because he expects the "negative impacts to become more intense and frequent if global carbon dioxide and methane emissions continue to grow as they have for the past several decades. ... Virginia needs to take bold action within this decade to sharply reduce emissions of these pollutants through programs of both conservation and transition to non-fossil energy sources," he argues. He commends Fairfax County's resiliency plan.

Compounding or over-lapping climate events will bring more power outages, communication disruptions and threaten air quality, infrastructure and emergency systems.

Heat risk is increasing, creating significant health impacts and

healthcare costs. Heat risk is "inequitably distributed," with the elderly and outdoor workers, for example, at high risk.

All areas "are experiencing flash flooding and stream overflows," the study concludes. Spring and fall are getting wetter and the flood risk to housing is rising. Nine percent of Virginia's housing stock, 344,000 homes, is already at substantial risk. Flood insurance premiums could rise 45 percent, according to the report.

Warming and increased precipitation will continue through the middle to late 21st century.

All economic sectors and natural systems face more exposure because of climate change.

Northern Virginia

"Compound flooding" is already affecting Northern Virginia, the report maintains, "caused by the

interaction of precipitation, storm surge, tides and riverine overflow" in the Potomac River corridor.

One of Northern Virginia's vulnerabilities is aging stormwater infrastructure, with some systems a century or more old. The study includes a photo of flooded Alexandria streets during concurrent high tides and rain.

The assessment singles out as a "credible and growing concern" Northern Virginia's concentration of data centers as being at "emerging risk" and cites data centers in California and the United Kingdom overheating and shutting down from power failures during heat waves. "Northern Virginia, home to the world's largest concentration of data centers, with 13 percent of global data center capacity, has seen outages and is increasingly exposed to flash floods, extreme

SEE VIRGINIA FACES, PAGE 11

Lights! Camera! Action! ACHS unveils new student broadcasting center.

By JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

PHOTOS BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria City High School celebrated a new chapter in student media and communications with the debut of its newly renovated television and broadcast studio, an investment that elevates hands-on learning and gives students real-world experience in modern media production.

Unveiled Dec. 12, 2025, the transformed space reflects the school division's commitment to career-connected education and to preparing students for postsecondary pathways in journalism, film, broadcasting and digital storytelling.

"This spectacular studio represents more than an enhanced makeover of an older facility," said ACPS Superintendent Melanie Kay-Wyatt. "It was a total transformation into a state-of-the-art studio with technology and software offering all of our Titan students the exciting experience of being on a set very similar to actual local regional and national TV networks."

The impact of the new studio is immediately visible across campus. Morning announcements now carry a production quality that mirrors professional broadcasts, thanks to a purpose-built environment that includes an anchor desk, a dedicated area for stand-up reports, backlit signage, teleprompters, and high-end cameras and lighting. Collectively, these upgrades allow students to practice directing, operating cameras, writing scripts, and producing segments using industry-standard workflows.

At the heart of the studio is ACHS's TV and Media Production class, where students plan, shoot, edit, and deliver content for schoolwide broadcasts. Producing a five-minute video package can take an entire class period and involves collaboration across multiple roles, mirroring the pace and teamwork typical in professional newsrooms. Students cover feature stories around school life, capture athletic events on location, and explore the community, blending technical skill with storytelling.

For students like senior Laura Barry-Lenger, the program has become a defining part of the high school experience. Speaking at the opening, she emphasized how the class provides opportunities to document everything from sports to local culture.

"The new studio is amazing," Barry-Lenger said. "It's a new studio with professional equipment

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ACPS TV Media production program teacher Vilma Zefran, standing second from left, poses with her students in the new control room of the broadcast studio Dec. 12, 2025, at Alexandria City High School.



News anchor Kory Simms gets instructions from a director in the ACPS broadcast studio Dec. 12, 2025, at Alexandria City High School.



Anchor Kory Simms at the news desk in the ACPS broadcast studio at Alexandria City High School.

and so much better to prepare us for careers in broadcasting."

Beyond the classroom the studio is home to ACPS-TV, the school division's television station, which delivers school and division-wide news, student-produced content,

public service announcements and coverage of community and School Board meetings. Distributed on cable and online, ACPS-TV extends the reach of student work and reinforces the studio's role as a civic and educational resource for

Alexandria.

The renovation was funded through federal grant dollars included in Alexandria City Public Schools' capital improvement budget.

"I feel like this program really set

me up well in the technical aspects of filmmaking," said 2025 program graduate Trudy Hardman, who is studying cinema at Virginia Commonwealth University. "It's a great program and I am so glad I was able to be a part of it."

Viva Las Vegas

PHOTOS BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

FROM PAGE 1

features everything from massive flagship displays to founder-led startup demos.

Goist, who is blind, met with several companies focused on advancements in accessibility, including HapWare. HapWare is a wearable that allows people who are blind or neurodiverse to understand nonverbal communication cues, such as facial expressions, gestures, and body language using AI and haptic technology.

"Anything that can improve the quality of life for individuals is a good thing," said Goist, who wears Meta glasses and saw an increase in smart glasses by several companies.

Artificial intelligence is no longer the "next big thing." In 2026, AI appears not as a standalone category but as embedded intelligence across nearly every sector.

Major exhibitors are showcasing AI devices that process data locally for speed, privacy and resilience. Generative AI is now embedded into consumer hardware, vehicles, productivity tools and health-care platforms, both for people and pets. Birdfy, a maker of camera-equipped birdhouses and feeders, was a popular attraction.

A noticeable difference this year is that companies are launching deployable products, not prototypes, and conversations have shifted toward governance, trust, and power efficiency. The AI race is now about scale, regulation readiness, and real-world adoption, not novelty.

Eureka Park, a specialized section of CES, features over a thousand startups from around the world. Showcased are AI-driven diagnostics and digital health, climate and energy technologies, robotics and autonomous systems, accessibility and assistive tech, and smart sensors and next-generation hardware.

In addition to host CTA and its foundation, other Northern Virginia area exhibitors include Virtual Health Associates (Burke), VibeBrux and Sheeva.AI (Vienna), Spectrohm, PixaLate, and Eye Chip Corp. (McLean), National Waste and Recycling Foundation, A2 Labs, and Edge Cortex (Arlington), IriHealth and George Mason University (Fairfax), Comscore (Reston) and Alarm.com Inc. (Tysons).

As expected, Amazon has a significant presence showcasing advances in consumer devices along with its AWS cloud services.

Other popular attractions include vehicle tech and advanced



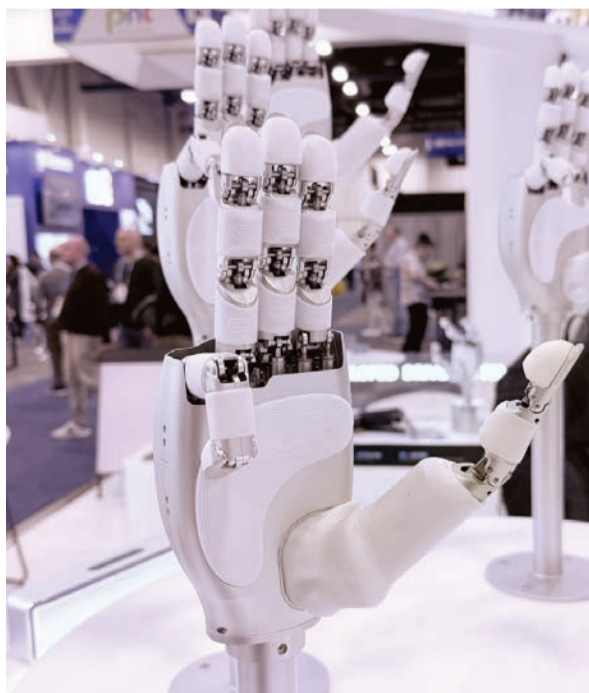
Smart glasses such as these from Rokid are gaining in popularity.



Douglas Goist checks out the new HapWare wearable.



The HapWare wearable uses pulsations to convey emotive information to blind individuals.



A hand robot on display at CES 2026.



Douglas Goist checks out the TomBot robotic puppy.



PHOTOS BY JOHN BORDNER/GAZETTE PACKET

CES 2026 features the latest in technology from around the globe.

Viva Las Vegas

FROM PAGE 6

mobility. Highlights include in-car AI assistants, advanced driver-assistance systems and smart city mobility infrastructure.

Featured digital health innovations include remote patient monitoring devices cleared or nearing FDA pathways; AI-powered diagnostics for imaging, cardiology, and chronic disease management; personalized wellness platforms integrating wearables with predictive analytics; and hospital-at-home technologies designed to reduce strain on healthcare systems.

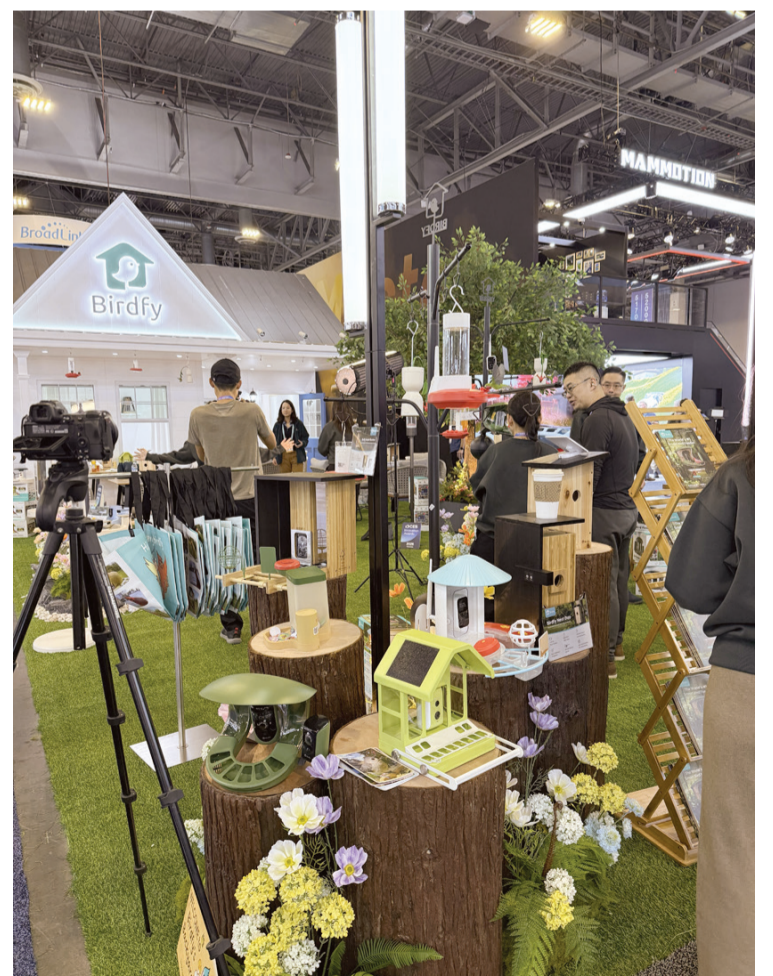
Said Lucas, "It's easy to feel overwhelmed but the technology is advancing with the goal of improving the lives of individuals, particularly those with accessibility needs."

For more information on CES exhibitors and advances in technology, visit www.CES.tech.

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A robotic lawn mower at CES 2026.



Birdfy was a popular exhibitor at CES 2026.

Living Legends of Alexandria

Mary Lee Anderson changes the culture of aging.

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

Mary Lee Anderson is the Executive Director of Senior Services of Alexandria and is responsible for all staff supervision, budgeting, contract management and organization compliance issues. But beyond the job description as her nomination as a Living Legend of Alexandria states, “She has redefined how our city uplifts and cares for our senior citizens. Her vision has allowed more senior adults to age in place with dignity, security and a sense of belonging.”

Anderson was hired by SSA in 2011 as the Director of SSA’s Senior Resource Cen-

“Her influence extends beyond the programs she oversees. She has changed the culture of how we view aging.”

— James Paige on
SSA executive director
Mary Lee Anderson

ter. “My job was to start a program database about what services were available to seniors in Alexandria.” After it was completed she decided it would be great to distribute this in a public forum so now September-June, SSA has public events to share information, featuring different speakers and topics each month. “People are better informed, and we know they take advantage of a number of the opportunities available.”

Two years later Anderson was in charge of Senior Services of Alexandria and as she explains, “responsible for the overall health and well-being of this 57-year-old agency with an annual operating budget exceeding \$1.1 million.”

Anderson says when she began, “I looked at what was available for seniors in Alexandria and the gaps in services.” Over the last 12 years, she has tackled the needs, one by one, and created programs to serve them.

In addition to the ongoing familiar Meals on Wheels, Groceries to Go delivery, and Paratransit Call Center she began looking at other areas of need. One of the new programs put in place was the Friendly Visitor program, which was designed to combat senior isolation through consistent, meaningful social connection.

Anderson says, “Their physical needs are met, but many seniors feel lonely and lack



PHOTO BY STEVEN HALPERSON/TISARA STUDIOS

Mary Lee Anderson is a 2025 Living Legend of Alexandria.

social contact.” The program pairs seniors with volunteers for regular visits. The program has grown through building relationships with the community. Anderson says, “connections are important — building relationships with other nonprofits.”

An outgrowth of the Friendly Visitor Program is the Friendly Callers program which became fully operational in June 2025. Anderson explains some people don’t feel comfortable with a visit so the telephone call can bring connection to people who live alone or lack social connection. Carefully trained volunteers provide a well-being check or a longer chat during the time period convenient for the senior during designated hours.

Another SSA program initiated by Anderson is the Senior Ambassador program which is designed to train volunteers who stay up-to-date on city programs and services available to seniors. The Ambassadors reach out into the community to communicate that information in many different creative ways. In recognition of the evolving demographics of the city, 24 bilingual ambassadors speaking Spanish and Amharic have been added to reach culturally and linguistically diverse

populations.

SSA not only serves seniors who come to them but it also reaches out to where the seniors live and tailors the program to their needs. Anderson says as a first step SSA has created a hub at Claridge House, home to many Amharic-speaking residents. They offer a number of programs on a regular basis including exercise classes, vision screenings and health activities. SSA is planning to expand this program to other residential buildings. MaryAnne Beatty says, “Mary Lee has taken the organization to a new level of support by developing new programs and reaching out to the various populations across the city that are sometimes overlooked and underserved.”

Anderson came to SSA after what was already a life full of commitment acting as caregiver to her mother and mother-in-law where she says she first saw the need for coordination of services for senior residents.

She spent nearly 20 years with an international telecommunications company “where I went through seven mergers in 10 years.” She then took a break for some years to raise two daughters who live locally.

And then the offer from SSA came. She

thought “why not?”

“I love this job. I’m in a job I’m well qualified for, and I can make a difference in people’s lives. When they don’t know where to turn, I know where to connect them. One of the things I’m proud of is people come to us and they know we’ll help.”

Anderson was a member of the Alexandria Commission on Aging from 2013-2023 where she chaired the Economic Development Committee. She is a Deacon at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House where she has been a member for almost 40 years. She is also a member of the Alexandria Rotary Club, Alexandria’s Chamber of Commerce, serves on the Executive Committee of Alexandria’s Council of Human Services Organizations, the Steering Committee of the partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and was a member of the Steering Committee for the recently completed Community Health Assessment.

James Paige explains, “Her influence extends beyond the programs she oversees. She has changed the culture of how we view aging. Simply put she has made Alexandria a better, more humane city.”

www.alexandrialegends.org

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ENTERTAINMENT

YEAR ROUND

ON SATURDAYS

The City of Alexandria's historic Old Town Farmers' Market will temporarily move to the 100 block of North Royal Street and the courtyard at Tavern Square starting on Jan. 10, 2026. The new location is just across the street from Market Square. This move allows the market to keep operating during the upcoming renovations to City Hall and Market Square. The Farmers' Market has operated uninterrupted at Market Square since 1753. Because City Hall and Market Square will undergo major renovations starting in early 2026, the Farmers' Market must move to keep operating during the renovation. The Market Square Garage will also be closed during construction, and the new location provides easier access to nearby parking options. The Market Square Garage will be closed by Jan. 17. After this time, Farmers Market visitors are encouraged to use the Tavern Square garage (418 Cameron St.), which will offer FREE parking on Saturdays from 6:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. There is also parking at nearby Courthouse Square (111 S. Pitt St.). For a full list of parking locations, visit the Parking in Alexandria page. Shoppers can expect the same variety of local produce, baked goods, flowers, meats, dairy, and specialty items from over 70 vendors, now in a more spacious setting. The Market continues to run every Saturday morning from 7 a.m. to noon, year-round, rain or shine.

MEETS EVERY SUNDAY

Bird Walks. 8 a.m. At 6401 George Washington Memorial Parkway, Alexandria. Friends of Dyke Marsh organizers lead bird walks every Sunday morning. Meet at 8 a.m. in the south parking lot of the Belle Haven picnic area. Walks are led by experienced birders and everyone is welcome to join us.

MEETS EVERY MONDAY

Monday Morning Bird Walk. 7 a.m. Meets at 3701 Lockheed Boulevard Alexandria. The Monday Morning Bird Walk is sponsored by the Friends of Huntley Meadows Park and takes place every Monday at 7 a.m. April-September and 8 a.m. October-March. Following the walk, members of the group gather at the nearby Denny's for breakfast and to compile the morning's bird list. Call (703) 768-2525.

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

Wednesday Night Bingo. 7 p.m. At Atlas Brew Works, 2429 Mandeville Lane, Alexandria. The Capital City Showcase, the company that brings you some of the DC area's best events, is hosting an amazing night of everyone's favorite game at Atlas Brew Works Alexandria. Win prizes on every round, and the winner of the final round gets a \$50 Atlas



The Toy Stories Art Exhibit will be held Jan. 2-31, 2026 at Del Ray Artisans in Alexandria.

Brew Works gift card for your next visit! There's also \$6 select Atlas drafts! Plus pizza served from the world famous Andy's Pizza! Email at capitalcityshowcase@gmail.com

MGNV PLANT CLINICS ARE OPEN

The Alexandria Old Town Farmer's Market Plant Clinic at 301 King St., Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 7 - 9:30 a.m. Del Ray Farmers Market Plant Clinic at Oxford & Mt. Vernon Avenues, Alexandria operates on Saturdays from 8:30 - 11 a.m. The Arlington Farmers' Market at N. 14th and N. Courthouse Roads, Arlington operates on Saturdays from 8 - 11 a.m. The Fairlington Farmers' Market Plant Clinic at 3308 S. Stafford St., Arlington, operates on Sundays from 9 - 11 a.m.

YEAR ROUND ON SUNDAYS Farmer's Market. 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

At Casa Chirilagua Community Center, 4109 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Experience fresh foods, native plants, artisan crafts, music and community at Four Mile Run Farmers & Artisans Market in the heart of Arlandria outside the Casa Chirilagua Community Center, every Sunday 9-1 p.m.

ONGOING

Revolutionary War Exhibit. At the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Alexandria. The National Museum of the United States Army has opened a special exhibition, Call To Arms: The Soldier and the Revolutionary War. The two-year exhibition commemorates this year's 250th Birthday of the U.S. Army and next year's 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. This 5,000 square-foot exhibition features a rare collection, specially curated by the Museum, that includes Revolutionary War artifacts from the original colonies, England, France and Canada. Among the exhibit's highlights are a pair of General George Washington's pistols, the original flag of the 1st Rhode Island Regiment carried by the Army's first African American Soldiers, and a complete Loyalist uniform—one of the rarest items in the collection. The sword of British General Charles Lord Cornwallis, presented to Washington at the surrender at Yorktown, Virginia, will also be displayed for a limited time.

NOW THRU JAN. 25

A Winter's Walk. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. This exhibition captures the beauty of winter through the lens of botanical drawings

and paintings by The Botanical Art Society of the National Capital Region. Featuring work by: Joseph Bailey, Esther Carpi, Anne Clippinger, Karen Coleman, Liz Cusell, Nancy Davis, Marcia Dewitt, Joan Maps Ducore, Cheryl Exley, Margaret Farr, Gail Goodrich Harwood, Mary Page Hickey, Ann Lesciotto, Joan Mathys, Elena Maza-Borkland, Marsha Ogden and Cynthia Rice.

JAN. 2-31

Toy Stories Art Exhibit. At Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Explores the cultural, emotional, and imaginative world of toys. Celebrate the toys that brought you happiness in your childhood or comfort you with nostalgia as an adult. Opening Reception: Friday, January 2 from 7-9 p.m. Gallery hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits.

SATURDAY/JAN. 10

Public Hearing for 2026 General Assembly Session. 9 a.m. At Fairfax County Government Center, Board Auditorium, 12000 Government Center Pkwy, Fairfax. The Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly will hold a public hearing for the upcoming

2026 General Assembly session. Fairfax County residents and those representing organizations serving Fairfax County residents will have the opportunity to address the Fairfax County Delegation to the General Assembly. Fairfax County residents who want to sign up in advance to speak at the hearing should register online (2026 Fairfax County General Assembly Delegation Pre-session Public Hearing Speaker Registration) or contact the Department of Clerk Services at 703-324-3151, TTY 711, by noon on Thursday, Jan. 8. Residents will also have the opportunity to sign-up on the day of the event.

THURSDAY/JAN. 22

The Chamber ALX's Professional Women's Network January Coffee & Connections. 8:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m. At Together We Bake, Alexandria. Start 2026 with meaningful connections and inspiring conversation! Join the Professional Women's Network for its first Coffee & Connections of the year, where you'll network with some of the region's most accomplished women (and men)! This quarter, they're thrilled to welcome Tricia Allen, Executive Director of Together We Bake, who will share her powerful journey and the inspiring mission behind an organization that's changing lives.

FEB. 6-28

"Lunar New Year: Year of the Horse" Art Exhibit. Del Ray Artisans presents "Lunar New Year: Year of the Horse" art exhibit celebrating traditions, mythology, and the dynamic symbolism of the horse in the zodiac through diverse interpretations inspired by movements, heritage, and storytelling with an emphasis on cultural respect and authenticity. View at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

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.

JANUARY

Fri. 9: Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder \$55.00
Sat. 10: Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder \$55.00
Wed. 14: Derek Gripper & Ballaké Sissoko \$39.50
Fri. 16: Jarrod Lawson \$45.00
Sat. 17: GRAMMY Award Winner AVERY*SUNSHINE \$69.50
Wed. 21: Herman's Hermits starring Peter Noone \$65.00
Fri. 23: DEVOTION: An Earth Wind & Fire Experience \$39.50
Sat. 24: Who's Bad – The Ultimate Michael Jackson Experience \$39.50
Wed. 28: Jesse Cook \$49.50
Thu. 29: Loudon Wainwright III & Chris Smither \$45.00
Fri. 30: Will Downing \$79.50
Sat. 31: Will Downing \$79.50

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Obituary

William Stanley Armstrong

William Stanley Armstrong, known best as Stanley, died peacefully in his sleep early in the morning of Saturday, December 27, 2025. He is survived by his wife, Lillian Somner, his daughter Mary Robertson, her husband, Reid Roberson and the four grandchildren, William Robertson, Armstrong (Army) Robertson, Blake Robertson and Brooks Robertson. He was beautifully cared for at the hospice wing of Martinsburg West Virginia VA Medical Center. They made his last 7 days as painless and pleasant as possible. The funeral was held at Everly Wheatley funeral home on January 3, 2025.

Obituary

Theresa (Terry) Marston

Theresa (Terry) Marston passed away at Fairfax INOVA Hospital at the age of 75 on December 20, 2025. She was born in Atlanta, GA on December 16th 1950 to parents Joseph and Rosemary McCaffrey. In 1968, Terry graduated high school from St. Cecilia Academy in Nashville, TN. After high school, she took numerous nursing classes at St. Mary's Memorial School of Nursing in Knoxville, TN. Later, she got a B.A. in Communications from George Mason University in Northern Virginia, where she lived most of her adult life. Terry initially worked in a hospital after high school, but for most of her career, she was employed by the federal government; first at the National Transportation Safety Board, and ultimately with the Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). She had a 24-year career with the government that culminated in a position as a Logistics Manager at NAVSEA, supporting shipbuilding and maintenance functions on U.S. Navy ships. Terry had fond memories of the comradery she experienced at NAVSEA. It was while working for NAVSEA that Terry met her husband, Ralph Marston. They married in September of 1998 and were married for over 27 years when she died. During all of their married life, they resided in Alexandria, VA where Terry was a faithful and loving wife. Ralph misses her greatly. Terry was very bright, had a clever sense of humor and a quick wit. But she could perhaps best be characterized as an avid lover of animals. Charles Darwin once said "The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man" and this could be no truer of Terry. She had a strong compassion for all creatures, including insects. Whenever a wild animal came into the yard, she quickly arose to watch intently. And if an insect found its way into the house, she would carefully trap it into a paper towel to put it outside without harm. This love of animals was particularly evident in the care and attention that she afforded her cats. Terry was predeceased by her parents. She leaves behind her husband, Ralph; sisters Mary Gates, JoAnn McCaffrey, and Angela Rosenberg (Marty Rosenberg); nieces Kathy Stringer (John Stringer), Maria Johnson (Victor Johnson), and Beth Wilde (Don Wilde); nephew Michael Gates; and several great nieces and nephews. And let's not forget her cats, Tommy and Teddy. Terry attended St. Louis Catholic Church where the family will be holding a Catholic Mass for her at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to The Angela and Marty Rosenberg MS STEP UP Endowment for Multiple Sclerosis and Neurodegenerative Diseases at UNC Chapel Hill.

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Virginia Faces Climate Change Risks, GMU Warns

FROM PAGE 4
heat and grid strain,” notes the report.

Federal agencies and contractors could face “disruption of mobility” and telecommunications. “Tidal flooding and storm surge at Naval Station Norfolk, the world’s largest naval base, threatens military readiness,” the report warns.

“Northern Virginia’s economic output, based in government and data infrastructure, depends on continuous access to high-functioning transportation and facility operations,” the report contends. “Flash floods in 2019 and 2021 overwhelmed parts of Fairfax County, shutting down arterial roadways and temporarily closing government buildings, demonstrating an instance where a localized event threatened government functions.”

Global Warming Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions in Virginia peaked in 2005 and declined by about 26 percent in 2023, according to U.S. Energy Information Administration data. Dr. Kinter attributes the drop to converting some electricity generation from coal to natural gas since “natural gas combustion emits about half as much greenhouse gases as coal combustion.” The EIA data does not reflect Virginia’s 2020 Clean Economy Act effects.

A State Climate Office?

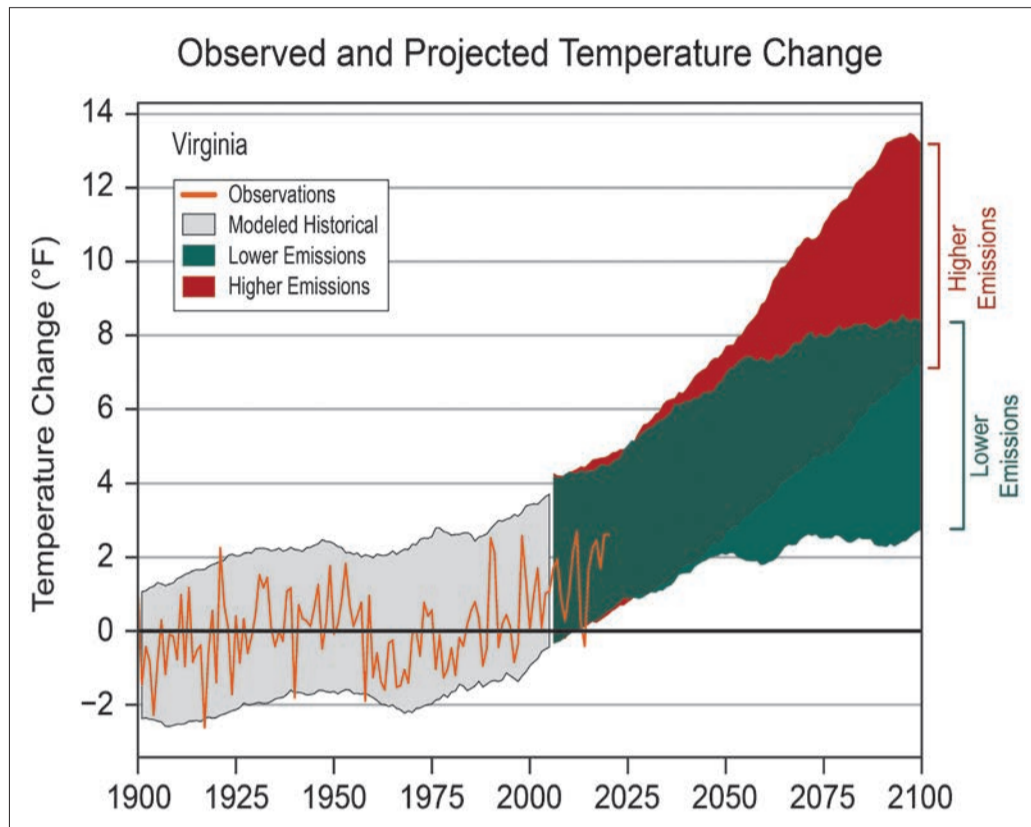
Dr. Kinter advocated for a state climate office to collect and analyze data, conduct assessments and recommend solutions, noting that Virginia is one of only two states without one. George Mason is “willing to host it,” he said, and will again ask the state legislature to fund a state climate office.

A Landmark Study

The science-based assessment is the first of its kind establishing a baseline for measuring future changes. Unlike national and global analyses which examine broad climate trends, this study focuses on regional impacts in Virginia.

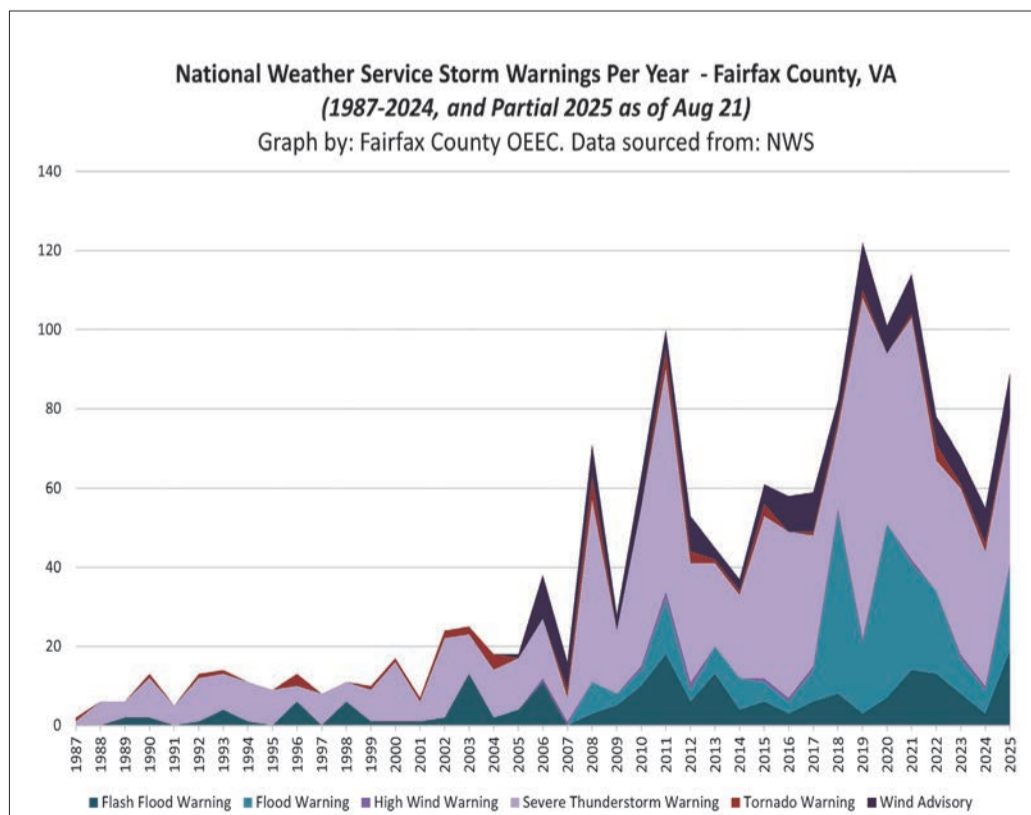
The 90-page study reflects the work of 26 authors, eight institutions and over 300 articles, coordinated by GMU professors. GMU plans future reports with finer-scale geographic details, sector impacts and “adaptation effectiveness.”

For more, see <https://www.gmu.edu/news/2025-11/george-masons-virginia-climate-center-releases-first-ever-statewide-climate-assessment>



NOAA TECHNICAL REPORT NESDIS149-VA. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION.
<https://statesummaries.ncics.org/chapter/va/>

Observed and Projected Temperature ChangeChanges (relative to 1901–1960 average) in observed statewide average mean annual air temperature for Virginia (1900–2020), and projected temperatures (2006–2100) under uncontrolled (higher) and optimistic (lower) global greenhouse gas emissions pathways. Shading reflects confidence around observed and projected temperatures.



PROVIDED BY ALLISON HOMER
(FAIRFAX COUNTY OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY COORDINATION)

Examples of flooding in Fairfax County, VA, showing A) a swift-water rescue, B) transportation infrastructure failure due to flooding, and C) the increasing trends of flash flooding, thunderstorms, tornadoes, and other related weather events over the past nearly four decades.

A Hannukah Miracle



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

No, this will not be a retelling of the legend of the menorah and the Maccabees who, with “one small purse of olive oil” kept their lamp lit for eight days, when they had only enough oil for one. This story will be updated “for your consideration,” as Rod Serling used to say to begin the episodes of his “Twilight Zone” television show and whatever “dimensions” he was referring to. The miracle to which I now refer makes this legend hardly worth its holiday association and countless retellings.

It happened on Dec. 18, 2025. I ended up - per my intention, at the new Amazon Marketplace in Silver Spring, Md. It is, for all intents and purpose a supermarket, with a few Amazon touches which are hardly worth mentioning since they are not central to my miracle.

I had selected my items and placed them in my basket as I rolled it around the store until I ended up at the self-checkout area (cash not accepted) to pay for my goods. Naturally, I had to take out my wallet from my right rear pocket to select a credit card. The store was not crowded, and I wasn’t the least bit flustered by this task. The register was a bit different than I had become accustomed to. Nonetheless, I figured it out, paid for and bagged up my groceries and then walked to my left to exit the store. Unfortunately, I didn’t remember anything more about my wallet. I got to my car where I placed my one bag onto the back seat and then drove on home.

It wasn’t until the next afternoon that I realized my wallet was missing. This ‘missing’ is not so unusual as I’ve experienced similar misplacements as I’ve aged into retirement and beyond. After exhausting all possible places in my house and car, I started thinking of places it couldn’t or rather shouldn’t be: outside the house and car. This exact ‘missing’ had happened a time or two before and in my retracing of my steps/drive there was a successful ending with wallet and contents remaining exactly where I had inadvertently left them.

As I now recalled that strategy, I had made multiple errand-type stops and realized that Amazon Marketplace was my last stop. In fact, I remembered taking my wallet out of my right rear pocket and laying it across the register’s scanning window. A bit unusual, but nothing totally irregular. Moreover, I really can’t say I remember placing my wallet back in my pocket. However, over the last 60 years, the number of times I’ve performed this movement has to be in the thousands. As such, it’s become almost like a knee-jerk-type reaction. I have no conscious memory of doing anything with that wallet.

After sorting through my movements, I convinced myself that I had left my wallet at Amazon Marketplace and so I grabbed my car keys and off I drove. Finding the customer service counter, I asked about whether a wallet had been found/turned in since yesterday. The lady manning the window picked up a brown cardboard box and quickly she and I both saw my wallet. I said, “That’s it.” She grabbed the wallet and took out the driver’s license and asked my name and home address. I answered correctly so she returned the wallet to me. Once in my hand I checked for cash and credit cards. All were present and accounted for.

Now that’s what I call a miracle.

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

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