

Mount Vernon Gazette

MOUNT VERNON'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER • A CONNECTION NEWSPAPER

MARCH 19, 2026

1916 Roadster Driving for Women's Equality

Jane Barker on ERA: 'This is long overdue.'

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Are women capable of driving cars? Are women smart enough to vote? These may be outrageous questions in 2026, but in 1916, two bold women faced insults like these.

Alice Snitjer Burke, 39, from California, and Nell Richardson, 25, from Winchester, Virginia, faced ridicule and skepticism for having the nerve to want to vote and for driving a 1916, lemon yellow Saxon roadster convertible, the Golden Flyer, 10,700 miles across 29 states in 26 weeks. Their purpose was to build public support for the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution to give women the right to vote. The century-old suffragist movement was stalled.

On March 14, 110 years later, their 21st century "sisters" brought a restored, yellow Golden Flyer II to Lorton's Turning Point Suffragist Memorial to bolster support for broader rights for women, the Equal Rights Amendment.

The 1916 Journey

Burke and Richardson met in New York City and embarked on a mobile expedition in a vehicle that had a top speed of 30 miles per hour.

Some men made snide comments like, "You women are not smart enough to vote;" and "The right to vote will take away your femininity."

Their response: "We have a sewing machine," and indeed, they did, in the car, along with seven prepared speeches, a typewriter, a cooker, water bags, camping gear and a Kodak camera.

With no national highway system, they rumbled over rough roads and through snow. They got stuck in rivers and mud and got lost in the Arizona desert, ran out water and walked six miles to a well. They were shot at in Texas.

Today's ERA Campaign

At the March 14 event at the Suffragist Memorial, with some locals in suffragists' attire, tour coordinator Mary Ann Gorman explained



Susan Nourse and Jeryl Schriever took the roadster for a spin. The brick-making kiln is in the background.



The Saxon is a two-seater with a top speed of 30 miles per hour.



Pat Wirth led the campaign to build the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial.



Map showing the route of the 1916 and 2026 tours.



Jeryl Schriever wrote a book about the 1916 tour.

More Information

The petition, www.Sign4ERA.org
Driving the Vote for Equality,
www.ERANow.org

that the tour today is focused on a petition drive to get the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) officially recognized as part of the U.S. Constitution. Congress approved it in 1972, imposed a deadline, extended the deadline and the required 38 states ratified it, with Virginia being the 38th in 2020.

Two U.S. Department of Justice opinions have questioned its legal status. Advocates are seeking signatures on a petition to Congress requesting support for H.J. Res. 80, to officially recognize that the ERA is a valid amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Quoting Virginia Congresswoman Jennifer McClellan, ERA Now Board member Kathy Bonk, commented, "We're in purgatory right now."

Jeanne Clark stressed, "We need to get this on fire."



In Alabama, instead of giving the drivers a donation, someone gave them a black kitten that then accompanied them.

The Saxon

The centerpiece of the Lorton gathering was the Golden Flyer II, a restored yellow convertible made by Michigan's Saxon Motor Car Company between 1914 and 1917. A two-seater that has to be cranked up to start, it has a manual trans-



Susan Nourse, a former Freeport, Maine, police chief, drives the Saxon today.

mission, two speeds and reverse, an accelerator in the center of the floor, running boards and a gas tank that holds six gallons. As it sputtered around, gas fumes filled the air.

In 1916, the manufacturer donated the car, but made a deal with

the drivers: In each town, they had to write to the local newspaper and praise the local Saxon dealer. The company touted, "Even a woman can drive it."

SEE 1916 ROADSTER, PAGE 11

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This is what the future BRT stations are going to look like.

Code Violations and Land Use Cleared Up at AC Tires in Mount Vernon

Voices from all sides contributed to the resolution.

BY MIKE SALMON
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

A tire shop is not known for polished appearances so at AC Tires in Mount Vernon, business continued and tires kept getting balanced and aligned until about two years ago when residents of the surrounding neighborhood of Gum Springs let it be known that AC was due for a makeover.

Tires were being stored in an unsightly fashion and residents of the apartments that overlooked AC Tires wanted to see some improvements, so the county stepped in to reveal some code violations as well. But after the owner made some little changes, everyone came out winners. The tires are now stored inside and the work is being done cor-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Everybody with a vehicle needs tires at one time or another.

rectly so customers continue to come and go.

The AC owner Alusine Canteh was happy with the dialogue. “They listened to me,” he said.

It wasn’t easy though and there is still a special exception on the zoning documents

pertaining to the split zoning that was discovered once the proceedings started. Part of the property is zoned residential and part commercial so zoning officials are working to straighten that out. Part of the property will be impacted by the Bus Rapid Transit

when that comes through on the edge of AC’s footprint.

During one of the hearings last December, officials on both sides of the issue had a chance to vocalize their concerns, and that list of speakers included Queenie Cox, a respected resident and leader of Gum Springs that traditionally speaks for her community.

While the land use was “a use that was not supported by Gum Springs,” she said, but things seem to be better now.

Mount Vernon District Supervisor Dan Storck was involved and put a positive note in his newsletter. “Approved a special exception for AC Tires on Richmond Highway, allowing the business owner to install tires inside the existing building as part of its current tire sales operation. Thank you to MVC-CA and the New Gum Springs Civic Association leadership for their work throughout this process,” it read.

At a Jan. 13 Gum Springs meeting, they voiced support for the application, and the Mount Vernon Council reiterated support in a letter, but wanted the owner to start the process of rezoning, which is underway.

Teen Job Fair and Career-Building Workshop

Saturday,
March 21

Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herry will host a Teen Job Fair and Career-Building Workshop on Saturday, March 21, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at West Springfield High School, located at 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA 22152.

The event will connect local students with employers across

multiple industries, while providing guidance on resumes, interviewing, and workplace readiness.

More than 50 employers representing retail, healthcare, technology, hospitality, and service industries will meet students seeking part-time, seasonal, and entry-level positions.

The fair is expected to attract more than 500 students.

Supervisor Herry is partnering with Fairfax County Public Schools, the Department of Family

Services (PAES Division), Neighborhood and Community Services, Fairfax County Times Newspapers, and regional chambers of commerce serving South Fairfax, Central Fairfax, Mount Vernon, and Springfield.

Registration is free and open to the public. Students and families are encouraged to register in advance:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/springfield/teenjobfairs>

Employers and vendors can re-

serve tables to recruit directly from student attendees. Vendor space is limited, and advance registration is required to guarantee participation.

Supervisor Herry represents the Springfield District on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, serving one of the most populous and economically active communities in Virginia. Initiatives like the Teen Job Fair are designed to connect students with employers, strengthen workforce readiness,

and support long-term economic growth in the region.

Event Details at a Glance

What: Springfield Teen Job Fair & Career Workshop

When: Saturday, March 21, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Where: West Springfield High School

Address: 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield, VA 22152

Who: Students, families, and regional employers

Recycle, Donate and Do Good

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

In our earlier March editions, we reported on Fairfax County's recycling efforts. This is a follow-up, ways to recycle that benefit good causes.

With home sales and spring cleaning season approaching, the time to focus on unused, unwanted stuff is nigh. In a scene from the 1990s television comedy sit-com "Seinfeld," Jerry Seinfeld's wild-haired neighbor, Kramer, surveyed Jerry's apartment and asked, "Why do we need this stuff?" Good question.

Instead of sending excess items to the landfill, you could serve a greater good. Here are a few ways to donate for worthy causes.

Clothes for Teachers-to-Be and Proms

Most closets have some rarely-worn clothes ("I'll lose some weight."). Over 85 percent of clothes get trashed, according to helpsy.com, equivalent to over 100 pounds per person per year.

For students studying to become teachers who lack professional clothing or financial resources, George Mason University has the Teacher Clothing Closet, professional clothing for interns for free. "A first-grade teacher, for example, needs clothing that is professional and modest without being restrictive so they can move quickly and freely," explains the website. "A high school teacher might need attire that is more business casual." Visit www.go.gmu.edu/teachercloset.

That fancy, special occasion dress that you haven't worn in years? Check out the Prom Boutique, run by the Junior League of Northern Virginia. They provide slightly-used prom dresses, accessories and makeup kits for high school students to wear at their school dances. Visit <https://www.jlnv.org/jlnv-prom-dress-drive/>.

Textiles

Fairfax County collects textiles at the I-66 Transfer Station. In partnership with Helpsy, they resell materials through thrift partners, donate to community organizations or repurpose them into new materials such as insulation and industrial rags. People can deposit clothing, footwear, linens, sport uniforms, stuffed animals, curtains and sheets.

Electronics

Many homes have a jumbled



Library bookstores, like this one at the Sherwood Regional Library, take gently-used books.



Toys are popular donations and sales items at the Goodwill store.

mishmash of cables, adapters, old cellphones and miscellaneous electronics sitting around. Richmond-based Tech for Troops supports veterans by collecting and refurbishing used electronic devices for training veterans and their families in need at no or low cost. The organization accepts working and non-working laptops with power adapters, working flat panel monitors, iPads, tablets, cell phones, keyboards, mice and other computer parts and some wiring. They wipe all hard drives prior to refurbishing or recycling them. Visit www.techfortroops.org.

Tools, Construction Supplies

Mount Vernonite Betsy Martin donated her late husband's table saw and drill press to Mount Vernon High School's Career and Technical Education program, expensive items the school welcomed.

Still have some unused two-by-fours taking up garage space from that DIY project? Habitat for Hu-

manity accepts new materials, salvageable materials and gently-used appliances at their Restores. Visit <https://www.habitatvirginia.org/>

Furniture, Décor, Vintage Items

High school theater groups are another place to see your discards put to good use. Students stage productions from all eras so a local high school may be able to use that anonymous landscape painting, your grandmother's Easter bonnet or that vintage lamp in the attic.

Plastic Bags

Plastic bags deposited at Safeway and Giant groceries go to a company like Trex that uses them to make composite decking and other materials.

Plastic bags become "crocheted" sleeping mats at Virginia Beach's Church of the Holy Apostles where volunteers upcycle plastic bags into mats for people experiencing homelessness. One mat requires 500 to 700 plastic bags. Visit <https://holyapostlesvb.org/>.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

Lions International accepts eyeglasses in this box at the Hollin Hall Senior Center and other sites.



The Goodwill Donation Center on U.S. 1 has a drop-off spot in the back of the thrift store on North Kings Highway.



Goodwill offers slightly-used shoes for sale.

Sports Equipment

Your kids grew up, moved on and left behind tennis rackets, baseball mitts, jerseys and more. Try Level the Playing Field and give youngsters the chance to play sports with donations of gently-used equipment and sports gear, like cleats, helmets, bats, skates, shin guards and more. Find a donation bin at <https://www.levelingtheplayingfield.org/ways-to-help/donate-equipment/donation-bin-locator/>.

levelingtheplayingfield.org/ways-to-help/donate-equipment/donation-bin-locator/.

Books

Many prisons accept books for incarcerated readers. Visit <https://prisonbookprogram.org/prison-booknetwork/> and <https://books-behindbars.info/about>.

SEE RECYCLE, DONATE, PAGE 5
WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

Recycle, Donate and Do Good

FROM PAGE 4

The Friends of Sherwood Library and other library bookstores accept clean, gently-used books. Visit friendsofsherwood@gmail.com.

Local schools often welcome reference books in good condition.

Furnish a Home

Refugees moving need furnishings for their new homes. NOVA Friends of Refugees represents 250 faith communities and others who help newly-arrived families resettle. Two examples are Temple Rodef Shalom in McLean and St. George's Episcopal Church in Arlington. Visit <https://www.templerodefshalom.org/adults/social-action/> and <https://www.saintgeorgeschurch.org/refugee-ministry>.

Vehicles

Help high school students learn automobile repair, from drive trains to steering systems at Fairfax County's Edison Academy by donating late model vehicles for refurbishing and then for sale to support scholarships and automotive technology training. <https://www.fcps.edu/get-involved/donate-fcps>

New Hope Housing partners with CARS (Charitable Adult Rides and Services) to take tax-deductible, vehicle donations to help end homelessness. They will tow the car at no cost. Visit <https://newwhopprd.wpenginepowered.com/get-involved/donate/vehicle-donations/>.

WAMU, a local public radio station, takes vehicles, operating or not. Visit <https://wamu.org/vehicle-donations/>.

More Ways to Help

Local nonprofits like Rising Hope Mission Church, Lorton Community Action Center and Inova Hospital's stores accept donations of new and slightly-used clothing. Visit <https://www.risinghopeu->



Inova Hospital's Select Seconds on North Kings Highway is one of several of the system's thrift stores that support the hospitals.

[mc.org](https://www.mc.org), <https://lortonaction.org/> and <https://www.inova.org/volunteer-opportunities-inova/thrift-and-consignment-shops>

Inova's Select Seconds on North Kings Highway also takes home décor, dishes, art, toys, small furniture and more.

New Hope Housing's Eleanor Kennedy Shelter on U.S. 1 needs new men's and women's underwear and socks, cleaning products and entertainment items like art supplies and games. Visit <https://www.newhopehousing.org>.

Goodwill's stores and donation centers accept many items, from gently-used shoes to pots and pans. Visit <https://goodwillvirginia.org/location-finder/>. Goodwill uses sales revenues for services like job training and education, according to www.goodwill.org.

Flags, Eyeglasses

There's a box for American flags at the Mount Vernon Government Center. Learn about proper flag disposal at <https://www.usflag-store.com/flag-disposal/>.

Lions International takes eyeglasses and hearing aids at Walmart Vision Centers, local clubs and recycling centers. For



PHOTOS BY CLENDIA BOOTH

People can properly dispose of American flags in this box at the Mount Vernon Government Center.

locations, visit <https://www.lionsclubs.org/en/explore-our-clubs/eyeglasses-and-hearing-aids-recycling>.

Decorations

Some senior and day care centers reuse art supplies, greeting cards, wrapping materials and decorations.

Office Supplies

Virginia has an election every year. Campaigns have to gear up. Most can use office supplies.



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Women Leading and Serving in Our Community

BY DAN STORCK
MOUNT VERNON DISTRICT
SUPERVISOR

Across the Mount Vernon District, many remarkable women are leading efforts that strengthen our community and support our residents every day.

Within Fairfax County government, we are fortunate to have remarkable women helping lead the vital services that keep our community strong. Jennifer Miller was appointed Deputy County Executive in July and oversees key public agencies responsible for public works, transportation, land development, environmental initiatives, and economic development. Through her leadership she is helping shape the initiatives that will define Fairfax County's future. Latishma Walters, Assistant Division Director for Neighborhood and Community Services, has been an incredible partner in supporting many of our community initiatives and events, including our annual Back to School Community Day and upcoming opening of The Commons Mount Vernon.

Many women also lead through their commitment to community service. Linda Brown of the New Gum Springs Civic Association has

spent decades advocating for the betterment of Gum Springs and preserving the strength and history of this important community. Yolonda Earl-Thompson, Executive Director of LAZERA Ministries, continues the legacy of service started by her father. Through programs like the annual "Stock the Block" event, Yolonda helps provide thousands of household supplies to families while serving as a community healer and champion for civic engagement.

Others are leading organizations that provide essential services to our residents every day. Leah Fraley, CEO of United Community,

works tirelessly to ensure families have access to food, resources, and programs that help build stability and opportunity. At the Lorton Community Action Center (LCAC), Client Service Administrator Elsa Galvan Delgado helps connect residents with critical support and assistance when they need it most and is known by local families and children as their go-to person when someone is in need.

Our community also benefits from women who help preserve and celebrate our shared history. Tammy Mannarino, Vice-Chair of the Fairfax County History Commission and a member of the Fair-

fax 250th Commission, has been instrumental in many efforts such as the street renaming process of Fort Belvoir and planning for America's Semiquincentennial events. Her passion for history is infectious!

And behind many of our community gatherings are dedicated individuals whose work often happens quietly but makes all the difference. Each year, our annual Town Meeting would not be possible without the incredible support from the team at Mount Vernon High School. Maria Marenco, Building Supervisor, who will retire later this year, and Akua Boamah, Assistant Building Supervisor, have gone above and beyond for many years to ensure our events run smoothly and our community feels welcome.



Jennifer Miller



Latishma Walters



Linda Brown



Yolonda Earl-Thompson



Leah Fraley



Elsa Galvan Delgado



Tammy Mannarino



Maria Marenco

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Please VETO SB388

Dear Gov. Spanberger,

SB388 allows faith institutions and other tax-exempt nonprofits to erect by-right affordable housing multiplexes on their properties and bypass local zoning rules and public input. Allowing, for example, a church parking lot or several proximate church parking lots in a low-density neighborhood to be turned into multiplex affordable apartment buildings with streets and sewer pipes designed for low-density zoning might overwhelm the local infrastructure's capacity.

An inappropriate multiplex built by a private developer does not magically become an appropriate multiplex merely because the owner is a religious or nonprofit organization.

On March 4 the Senate defeated a similar bill to allow by-right multiplexes in commercial zones because such by-right provisions would subvert local authority for development planning. You should veto SB388 for similar reasons.

Respectfully,

Dino Drudi
Alexandria, 22314

BULLETIN BOARD

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

<cal1>Volunteers Wanted
<cal2>Alexandria Families for Safer Streets - Executive Assistant to AFSS Board of Directors. The agency is seeking an executive assistant to help coordinate a diverse group of tasks necessary to keep us on track and moving forward. Someone with office manager skills would be the ideal candidate. www.volunteeralexandria.org

ALIVE! Volunteers are needed to assist with multiple programs relating to their Food Program, ALIVE! House, and Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership

Program will distribute food at Mobile Pop-ups and Truck to Trunk events, etc. <https://www.volunteerallexandria.org/ALIVE>
Assistance League of Northern Virginia is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that feeds, clothes and provides reading assistance and books to children in need. Assistance League's programs touch the lives of hundreds of children in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the City of Alexandria. There are many volunteer opportunities for community members to contribute to helping those in need. To learn more, email info@alnv.org, or visit www.alnv.org.

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 7

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 6

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

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

ALIVE! offers numerous programs that aid low-income families in Alexandria that rely on volunteers: monthly food distributions, furniture, houseware and emergency food deliveries, and community food drives. Individuals, families and groups are encouraged to participate. Students can earn community service hours by participating. Visit www.alive-inc.org/volunteer.htm or contact the Volunteer Coordinator at volunteers@alive-inc.org.

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

RSVP a volunteer network for seniors seeking service opportunities in and around Fairfax County, Arlington County and the City of Alexandria, offers a wide array of opportunities for volunteers 55 and older. RSVP volunteers enjoy flexible schedules, free accident and liability insurance while serving, optional

mileage and meal reimbursement and are invited to volunteer group projects and social gatherings. To sign up for an upcoming orientation, email Carly Hubicki at chubicki@volunteerfairfax.org or call RSVP at 703-403-5360. To learn more about RSVP, visit www.rsvpnova.org.

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

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 9

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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.

Jurisdiction	Fed Struc Id	Route #	Route Name	Crossing	Posted Date
GILES	8513	770	STEELE ACRES ROAD770	SINKING CREEK	2/24/2026
LOUDOUN	11332	722	LINCOLN ROAD	TRIBUTARY OF CROOKED RUN	2/13/2026
LOUDOUN	11379	831	YELLOW SCHOOLHOUSE	BRANCH OF BEAVERDAM CK	2/13/2026
BUCHANAN	29736	2207	RHONDA LESTER BRANCH ROAD	KNOX CREEK	2/11/2026
BUCHANAN	29785	3310	MOTT BRANCH ROAD	TRACE FORK	2/11/2026
AMHERST	1520	674	ROSE'S MILL ROAD	PINEY RIVER	2/5/2026

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 vdot.virginia.gov and navigate to Travel and traffic/For freight operators/Truck restrictions. 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 or the Load Rating Program Manager, Manjil Devkota at 804-786-4064.

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Behind the Garden Gates of Old Town

For those drawn to gardens, architecture or simply the pleasure of discovering places normally hidden from view, the day offers a chance to experience Old Town from a perspective few ever see.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE GAZETTE

Behind Old Town Alexandria's brick walls and wrought-iron gates lie intimate landscapes seldom seen by passersby. For one day this spring, those private worlds will open to the public.

On April 18, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Virginia's annual Historic Garden Week invites visitors to wander through a collection of Old Town residences and their carefully tended gardens. The Alexandria tour offers a rare glimpse into properties whose architecture, plantings and stories reflect generations of stewardship.

"It's a wonderful event that celebrates the history of Old Town Alexandria," said Kim Davis, member and spokesperson for the Garden Club of Alexandria.

Locally, the tour is presented by volunteers from the Hunting Creek Garden Club and the Garden Club of Alexandria. Their work is part of the broader Historic Garden Week in Virginia, a statewide tradition that has showcased private residences and landscapes throughout the Commonwealth for nearly a century.

This year's Alexandria route highlights five homes clustered in the southeastern section of Old Town, allowing guests to explore the neighborhood comfortably on foot. A leisurely stroll between properties reveals shaded sidewalks, historic architecture and pockets of greenery tucked between centuries-old buildings.

Each residence tells a different chapter of Alexandria's past. One house on South Fairfax Street once belonged to former U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry H. Fowler. When the current owners undertook renovations, they uncovered an unusual relic from Fowler's years in government: bundles of wiring from multiple dedicated telephone lines installed to protect confidential conversations.

"Each one of these homes is very different," Davis said, noting that every property reflects its own distinctive heritage and design.

Visitors may step inside the first floor of each residence, where volunteer docents will be stationed throughout the rooms to answer

questions and share details about architecture, renovations and former occupants.

While interiors offer plenty to admire, the outdoor spaces are equally compelling. Courtyard gardens framed by brick pathways, carefully layered plantings and secluded seating areas demonstrate how homeowners balance historic character with contemporary garden design.

Many of these landscapes remain invisible from the street, hidden behind gates and garden walls that have sheltered them for decades.

"Each home's garden reflects the creativity and care of the homeowners who maintain them," Davis said.

Bringing the tour to life requires months of preparation. Homeowners tend beds, refresh plantings and polish interiors, while volunteers coordinate logistics ranging from docent schedules to floral arrangements.

"The garden club ladies who take on the responsibility for organizing the tours spend the better part of a year pulling things together," Davis said.

Beyond the homes themselves, visitors can enjoy several stops throughout the day. Complimentary refreshments will be offered late morning through early afternoon at Saint Paul's Episcopal Church.

Another highlight is the Spring Marketplace boutique at The Athenaeum, where vendors present a curated assortment of artwork, jewelry, clothing, books and handcrafted goods.

Advance tickets cost \$55 per person and may be purchased online. Admission on the day of the tour is \$65. Children under five may attend free with a paying adult, though all other guests require a full-price ticket.

Refreshments: Complimentary light refreshments available at St. Paul's Episcopal Church 228 S. Pitt Street from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (the church will also be open for touring)

Facilities: Alexandria Visitors Center, 221 King Street, The Lyceum - Alexandria's History Museum, 201 S. Washington Street, and

The Athenaeum, 201 Prince Street.

Places of Interest:

Carlyle House Historic Park

121 North Fairfax St. Carlyle House will be conducting garden tours on April 18 from 11am-3pm. Garden tours are free, donations appreciated. The house will be open from 10am-4pm and tours run on the half hour. A discounted ticket is available for purchase for \$5 for anyone with a valid Historic Garden Week ticket or wristband on April 18th. The garden was completely restored from funds raised by Historic Garden Week. carlylehouse.org

The Lee-Fendall House Museum & Garden

614 Oronoco St. The Lee-Fendall House was a continuous private home from 1785 through 1969. Built in 1785 by Philip Fendall on land purchased by Revolutionary War General "Light Horse" Harry Lee, the house was home to many members of the prominent Lee family, served as a Civil War hospital from 1863-65, and was the last private residence of labor leader John L. Lewis. Today, the Lee-Fendall House is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of Alexandria's most popular museum destinations. With a valid Historic Garden Week ticket or wristband on April 18, 2026, visitors will have the chance to explore the first and second floors of the house, stroll through the museum's iconic garden, and view the temporary exhibition *Shall Not Be Denied: Alexandria Women and the Fight for the Ballot* all free of charge. leefendallhouse.org

River Farm

7931 East Boulevard Dr. River Farm, headquarters to the American Horticultural Society, aims to be a national showcase for environmentally responsible gardening and horticultural practices. One of George Washington's original five farms, the 25-acre site overlooking the Potomac River features a blend of formal and naturalistic gardens including a four-acre meadow, an orchard, a children's garden, and a teaching garden. HGW visitors will receive free admission, park-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GARDEN CLUB OF ALEXANDRIA

A historic home on South Fairfax Street in Old Town Alexandria will be among the private residences open to visitors during Historic Garden Week in Virginia.

ing and a tour of the manor house between 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. More details at AHSgardening.org

George Washington's Mount Vernon

Eight miles south of Alexandria on the GW Pkwy and situated on the Potomac River lies the home of George and Martha Washington. From the end of the American Revolution in 1783 to his election to the presidency in 1789, Washington replaced outbuildings, reshaped gardens, created new lawns, planted trees and even realigned roads and lanes. With funding from Historic Garden Week, the Garden Club of Virginia has helped to restore Mount Vernon's bowling green, one of the major landscape features on this vast plantation. Free admission to the grounds only with a valid HGW ticket/wristband on April 18, 2026. The Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, owners. mountvernon.org

Green Spring Gardens

4603 Green Spring Rd. This public garden and historic site include Virginia's only Beatrix Farrand garden, which was recently restored by the Garden Club of Virginia. In 1784, gentleman freeholder John Moss built a brick house on several hundred acres of farmland. In 1942, young power couple Michael and Belinda Straight bought the house and 33 acres and engaged Farrand to design a simple garden room behind the house: a spacious lawn enclosed by a boxwood crescent with a stone retaining wall. The GCV restored the stone wall, rejuvenated the boxwoods, and redesigned a more recently-installed perennial bed to reflect Farrand's signature plant choices. In 1970,

the Straights deeded their house and 18 acres to the Fairfax County Park Authority. fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring

Gunston Hall

15 mi. south of Alexandria, off U.S. Rt. 1 on Rt. 242 This 550-acre National Historic Landmark was the home of George Mason (1725-1792), author of The Virginia Declaration of Rights. The estate consists of a Georgian mansion, c.1755, and reconstructed kitchen, dairy, laundry and schoolhouse. The Potomac River is viewed from the historic boxwood garden. While not a current restoration project of the Garden Club of Virginia, the GCV assisted Gunston Hall with landscaping work from 1949-53. gunstonhall.org

St Paul's Episcopal Church

228 S. Pitt St. St. Paul's Episcopal Church began in 1809 in a small building on South Fairfax Street between Prince and Duke Streets. In 1817, one of the Country's most famous architects, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, was chosen to design the present church. Appointed by President Jefferson in 1803 as surveyor of public buildings in Washington, D.C., Latrobe completed the U.S. Capitol begun by William Thornton, and designed Statuary Hall and the former Supreme Court room. In 1807, he completed the White House, designed both porticos and later restored the building after the War of 1812. An outstanding example of American architecture, inspired by the gothic churches in Europe, the interior of St. Paul's is said to have been modeled after St. James Church, Piccadilly, London. The exterior is said to be modeled after Peterborough Cathedral. stpaulsalexandria.com

One Dead in Mount Vernon Crash

Detectives from FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit (CRU) are investigating a two-vehicle crash that left one man dead in Mount Vernon.

Saturday March 14 at 10:12 a.m., officers responded to a two-vehicle crash at Mount Vernon Memorial Highway and Grist Mills Woods Way in Mount Vernon.

Preliminarily, a 2016 Ford Explorer was traveling eastbound on Mount Vernon Memorial Highway

when the vehicle crossed into the westbound lanes. The Ford Explorer then struck a 2024 Chevrolet Silverado that was traveling westbound.

The driver of the Ford Explorer, David Owens, 79, of Alexandria, was transported to a local hospital and pronounced deceased. The driver of the Chevrolet Silverado, an adult male, was transported to a local hospital with injuries considered to be not life-threatening.

Preliminarily, speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors. Detectives are investigating whether a possible medical emergency may have contributed to the crash.

Detectives would like to speak to anyone who may have information about this case; please call FCPD Crash Reconstruction Unit at 703-280-0543. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS (866-411-8477)

BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 7

The Caregiver Support Group is facilitated by the Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services Division of Aging and Adult Services. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at the Adult Day Services Center, 1108 Jefferson St., 4-5:30 p.m. Participants are full- or part-time caregivers providing care locally or long distance to a family member or friend. Participants share their experiences, provide support for each other and receive resources to assist them with caregiv-

ing. The next Caregiver Support Group meeting is June 7. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Sarisky at 703-746-9999 or email DAAS@alexandriava.gov. FACE Center Support Groups provide parents with a space to share their daily parenting frustrations and triumphs while offering new strategies for helping parents to cope, build positive parent-child relationships and best support their children's learning.

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

munity Lodgings Brookside Center, 614 Four Mile Road. Registration not necessary. A light dinner and childcare services provided free. Contact Krishna Leyva at 703-619-8055 or krishna.leyva@acps.k12.va.us for more.

Divorce Workshop for Women. Second Saturday of each month, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Hilton Alexandria Old Town, 1767 King St. The workshops are designed to provide education on the legal, financial, family and personal issues of divorce

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 14

A TALK ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Healing with joy: Discovering the power of Love

Divine Love, God, frees us from fear, illness, and polarization. This freedom is given impartially to everyone.

Sunday, March 22
at 3:00 p.m.

The Lyceum
201 S. Washington St
Alexandria, Virginia, 22314

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Creativity in Bloom

At The Jefferson, residents find freedom, focus and joy through art and gardening.



Bryna Freyer, a retired art historian, paints a delicate blue rim on a clay vessel during a studio session at The Jefferson.



Wendy Kotler with her painting inspired by nature.



Lynn Barton coordinates seasonal plantings in The Jefferson's community garden.

PHOTOS BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

Carefully and almost meditatively, Bryna Freyer steadies a small clay vessel in one hand and lifts a brush with the other, guiding a thin line of pale blue paint around the rim.

The retired art historian and current resident at The Jefferson, a senior living community, pauses occasionally to study the curve before adding another careful stroke. Nearby, jars of gray, teal, and cream pigments sit open on the table.

"Working with clay in particular is very relaxing," she says. Then she smiles. "With ceramics, I don't obsess about whether mine is good enough anymore. I'm just enjoying it."

Freyer spent much of her career studying museum collections and teaching art history. For years she analyzed great works created by other artists.

Now she is making something of her own.

Around her, residents at The Jefferson gather for a studio session, some sketching still lifes, others mixing watercolor pigments or

shaping clay. The walls display landscapes, flowers and abstract bursts of color, each piece created by someone who lives in the community.

For many residents, creativity here is more than a pastime. It's a way to slow down, concentrate, and lose themselves in the process of making something.

The Quiet Power of Creativity

Wendy Kotler understands that feeling well.

A retired art educator, she worked for public school systems as both a teacher and developer of art curriculum. Kotler still approaches art with the careful eye of someone who spent a career helping students learn to notice the small details all around them, the curve of a leaf, the shift of light across a surface, the subtle changes of color in the sky.

When she paints, she often leans close to the canvas, studying the way light settles on a petal or the subtle shift between shades of purple.

For Kotler, painting often begins with something that others might

overlook. One of her recent paintings was inspired by orange lilies in a bouquet on a table in the home of her sister-in-law.

"When I'm drawing," she explains, "I'm intensely focused on the connection between my eye

"When I'm drawing, I'm focused on the connection between my eye and the subject. Everything else drops away."

— Wendy Kotler

and the subject. Everything else drops away."

In that moment, the outside world recedes, and worries fade.

"If you're anxious or agitated," she says, "once you move into that creative space, it goes away."

Researchers agree. Studies supported by the National Endowment for the Arts suggest that artistic engagement can support cognitive health while reducing depression and anxiety, particularly among older adults.

Kotler traces her own artistic path back to kindergarten.

"We were supposed to draw a person," she recalls. "My teacher leaned over and said, 'Your person has a hand with five fingers. You're really good at this.'"

Encouragement like that, she believes, can shape a life.

"If you talk to people in creative fields," she says, "somewhere along the line someone noticed something and reinforced it."

Creativity Beyond the Studio

At The Jefferson, creativity extends well beyond the art room.

Lynn Barton, chair of the community's garden club, first discovered her love of gardening as a child helping her grandmother in the yard.

Her favorite job was pulling weeds.

"I liked getting rid of the bad things so the good things could grow," Barton says.

Today she helps coordinate plantings around the Jefferson grounds, where residents gather to dig, water, and plan new additions

each season.

"A neighbor once told me the garden is always a work in progress," Barton says. "And that's true."

At The Jefferson, creativity is also woven into daily programming.

Dawn Hamed, activities coordinator for assisted living and memory care, says the key is understanding what residents care about.

"It all starts with building relationships," Hamed says. "We learn what people loved doing before they came here and build activities around those interests."

Sometimes the impact is immediate. Hamed remembers one resident who initially refused to leave his room or attend any activities.

Now he rarely misses one. "He may not follow the instructor exactly," she says. "But he's there doing his own thing. And just being there means he's engaged."

The power of creativity to affect one's mental and emotional wellbeing at any age, appears on studio walls, in garden beds and in the satisfaction of making something by hand.

As Kotler puts it simply: "It's never too late."

'Hay Fever'

ACCT present Noël Coward classic.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

"Hay Fever" is one of celebrated playwright Noël Coward's most enduring comedies, a light, dazzling satire of artistic ego and social chaos that is playing now through March 29 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater.

Set over a single weekend in the country home of the Bliss family, the play follows what happens when each eccentric family member invites a guest without telling the others, resulting in escalating misunderstandings and exquisitely awkward encounters.

"The year 2025 was the 100th anniversary of the show's first performance, which was also Noël Coward's first play to be produced in London's West End and on Broadway," said director Bob Sams.

"It seemed a good chance to revisit it. The play is tremendously funny and in these current times we can use a few laughs."

Coward's genius lies in his dialogue: brittle, fast-paced, and wickedly funny. The Bliss family's self-absorption and theatrical excess are played not for cruelty but for charm, exposing the absurdities of polite society and the performative nature of relationships. Beneath the laughter, "Hay Fever" gently mocks the idea of sophisti-

cation itself, suggesting that civility is often just another role people play.

Starring in the ACCT production are Paul Donahue as Richard Grantham, Jessie Duggan as Myra Arundel, Chi as Simon Bliss, Anne Hillary as Clara, Graham Jewett as Jackie Coryton, Andrew Rappa as Sandy Tyrell, Diane Sams as Judith Bliss, Jen Ware as Sorel Bliss, and Stephen T. Wheeler as David Bliss.

"When Mr. Coward wrote "Hay Fever" in 1924, he based Judith on American actress Laurette Taylor, her very word-game addicted family, and a memorable weekend he spent with that family, said Diane Sams, who plays the central

role of Judith. "Accordingly, Judith is theatrical, self-centered, and likely to disregard manners in favor of the fun of playing parts that her guests know nothing about. The pursuit of adoration from any available male is one of her

favorite games and the weekend encompassed by the play gives her a prime field for her preferred pastime."

The show is co-produced by Marg Soroos and Charles Dragonette.

"Producing Noël Coward's "Hay Fever" is a trip down memory lane for me," Dragonette said. "In 2007 I assisted the set painter for Aldersgate's production directed by Roland Gomez. It was my first experience in community theater

"'Hay Fever' is tremendously funny and in these current times we can use a few laughs."

— Director Bob Sams



PHOTO BY HOWARD SOROOS

The Noël Coward comedy "Hay Fever" is playing now through March 29 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater. Shown in the cast are (standing from left): Jessie Duggan (Myra Arundel), Andrew Rappa (Sandy Tyrell), Anne Hillary (Clara), Paul Donahue (Richard Greatham), and Jen Ware (Jacky Coryton). Seated left to right: Chi (Simon Bliss), Diane Sams (Judith Bliss), Stephen T. Wheeler (David Bliss), and Graham Jewett (Sorel Bliss).

and it feels right to be immersed in the subversive cleverness of this comedy to enter my 20th year at my home stage."

Clara is the family maid and the calm at the center of the whirlwind. Over the top and theatrical in their actions, the Bliss family delights in winding each other up and provoking dramatic reactions from each other. As the weekend wears on, each guest pairs off with the wrong person with comic effects.

Confused and angered by the strange behavior of their hosts, the guests creep out of the house barely noticed by the family oblivious to their own ill-mannered behavior. As Coward himself called it, "A Comedy of Bad Manners."

Effortlessly stylish and still remarkably fresh, "Hay Fever" remains a masterclass in comic timing and character-driven humor, proving why Coward continues to be celebrated as one of the great voices of 20th-century theatre.

Said director Bob Sams, "We hope that the audience will leave with a feeling of being emotionally and mentally refreshed and renewed. And with a feeling of gratitude for the knowledge that they will NEVER have to spend a rainy weekend with the Bliss Family."

"Hay Fever" is playing now through March 29 at Aldersgate Church Community Theater, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria, VA 22308. For tickets or more information visit www.acctonline.org

1916 Roadster Driving for Women's Equality

FROM PAGE 1

The owners of the Golden Flyer II, Mainers Jeryl Schriever and her husband, Alex Huppe, own four Saxons and are on the tour. Schriever authored a book about the 1916 trip, "Driving the Vote for Women: An American Journey for Suffrage."

This year's tour, with Susan Nourse, a former Maine police chief as the driver, started in Manhattan on March 1 and will follow the 1916 route.

The vehicle travels in a yellow

low trailer between stops.

At the event, Jane Barker said, "This is long overdue." Lynn Garvey-Hodge, depicting suffragist Mrs. Robert Walker, remarked, "Women worked so hard drafting the ERA. It's common sense. It should have passed years ago."

ERA advocates may be agitating, the amendment may be in legal limbo, but to quote country singer Loretta Lynn, "We've come a long way baby."



The restored yellow Saxon is an attention-getter traveling around the U.S. today.

PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

ENTERTAINMENT

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 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.

AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY

Starting now through summer 2026, Alexandria will host major events and experiences commemorating America's 250th birthday. Located on the Potomac River just minutes from Washington, D.C. and George Washington's Mount Vernon, Alexandria, Virginia invites families, friends and history-lovers to stay in, explore and commemorate America's 250th birthday in a city older than the United States itself with a dynamic lineup of events and immersive experiences. Learn more and find additional details on these and other events at VisitAlexandria.com/250.
250th Events Itinerary:

- ❖ **March:** A new, major exhibit will open at Mount Vernon. Called *George Washington: A Revolutionary Life*, the exhibit will immerse visitors in Washington's world through recreated spaces, interactive role-playing, lifelike figures and artifacts.
- ❖ **March:** A new exhibit will open at Gadsby's Tavern Museum highlighting Hannah Griffith, who ran a coffeehouse there from 1794-1800. The exhibit will explore her resilience during the Revolutionary War, its impact on families and her ties to Alexandria's modern entrepreneurs.
- ❖ **May-November:** A temporary public art installation from artist Sandy Williams IV will commemorate the signing of the Declaration of Independence as part of the City of Alexandria's Time & Place public art series.
- ❖ **June 12-14:** Alexandria's major signature 250th event, *Sails on the Potomac*, will



Enjoy Breakfast with the Easter Bunny at Alexandria restaurants April 4-5, 2026.

host iconic tall ships as a Sail Virginia 2026 Affiliate Harbor and will feature a weekend packed with activities including Alexandria Jazz Fest performances.

- ❖ **June:** A new exhibit will open at the Alexandria History Museum at The Lyceum. Called *Stories of U.S. Collections Capture our History*, the exhibit will bring out objects from the collection that are seldom seen.
- ❖ **July 3-4:** Enjoy evening Fourth of July fireworks shows at George Washington's Mount Vernon on July 3 and 4, and a daytime fireworks show on July 4.
- ❖ **July 11:** Take part in the City of Alexandria's 277th/USA 250th Birthday Celebration complete with fireworks, music and more at Oronoco Bay Park along Alexandria's waterfront.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

Ambiguity Exhibition by Photographer Alan Sislen. At Multiple Exposures Gallery, Studio 312, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Alexandria. In this new body of work, Sislen explores the "moment when perception pauses"—a fleeting second when the eye recognizes a form, but the mind cannot yet define it. Through reflection, repetition, and abstraction, his images of familiar places unsettle orientation, disrupt our sense of space, and blur the line between what is seen, what is felt, and what is understood.

NOW THRU APRIL 19

What Will Persist: Elizabeth Coffey and Sally Veach exhibition. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Artist's Reception on Sunday, March 22 from 4-6 p.m. Elizabeth Coffey and Sally Veach use layered processes and historically charged materials to examine how meaning accumulates on surfaces. Pattern, fabric, and atmosphere function as both structure and metaphor, allowing traces of earlier marks and histories to remain visible. Veach builds palimpsestic landscapes informed by romantic painting traditions and archival botanical designs. Coffey paints women on lace curtains and expanded textile supports, pairing figuration with language. Seen together, their works present painting as a porous form—one that resists containment and remains open to what persists beneath the surface.

MARCH 6-28

The "Assembly: Together We Grow" art exhibit explores the power of gathering and how it helps us grow, care for one another, and cultivate belonging. From shared meals and family traditions to festivals, and protests, gathering shapes our lives. View the member showcase at Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Gallery hours: Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

City of Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities

From glow parties and jazz on the waterfront to family picnics and fireworks on the Potomac, there is something happening in every corner of our city. Grab your calendar. You are going to want to mark a few dates.

❖ Events are free unless otherwise stated.

Spring Highlights and Special Events

Adopt A Park 2026 Season Kickoff

Wednesday, March 18, 6-7:30 p.m. | 2900 A

Business Center Drive

Meet fellow volunteers, request supplies, and get ready for another season caring for the parks we love. New volunteers are always welcome.

World Water Day

\$5 | Saturday, March 21, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. |

Jerome "Buddie" Ford Nature Center

Discover how the water cycle and our Chesapeake Bay watershed keep our planet thriving. Learn through fun, hands-on activities for the whole family on March 21. Register here!

Nature Walk at Dora Kelley

Saturday, March 21, 12 p.m. | Dora Kelley

Nature Park

Join Natural Resource Managers Raychel Frye and Katrina Napora for a guided walk through the woods. Talk plants, explore the trails, and keep an eye out for special spring blooms as the season comes to life.

Armstrong Spring Tech Refresh

Saturday, April 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Leonard

Armstrong Recreation Center

Clear out unwanted electronics for free and learn about important digital safety topics affecting today's youth. Declutter and learn something new all in one stop.

Le Brunch en Bleu

Saturday, April 25 | 12-4 p.m. | William Ramsay

Recreation Center

Bring blankets, tables, chairs, food, and friends for a relaxed afternoon gathering in Alexandria's West End. All are welcome for connection and community.

RecFest

Saturday, May 2, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. | Patrick Henry

Recreation Center

A celebration of everything RPCA offers. Enjoy demos, meet instructors, explore summer camps, arts, sports, nature programs, and even register on site. It is your one stop shop for fun.

Asian American Pacific Islander

Month Celebration

Saturday, May 30, 3-7 p.m. | Patrick Henry

Recreation Center

Celebrate culture, history, and community through food, live performances, art, youth activities, and storytelling in this vibrant

family-friendly event.

48th Annual ALX Jazz Fest

Friday, June 12, 12-6 p.m.; Saturday, June 13,

12-9 p.m.; Sunday, June 14, 12-6 p.m. |

Waterfront Park

ALX Jazz Fest celebrates its 48th annual event as part of the Sails on the Potomac series honoring the USA's 250th anniversary, featuring three days of music: Americana Roots (Friday), American Jazz and Poetry (Saturday), and Future Sounds of America (Sunday).

Juneteenth Block Party

Friday, June 19, 4-7 p.m. | Charles Houston

Recreation Center

Come and celebrate the people, contributions, traditions and culture of Black Americans who have helped build and shape America. Enjoy food, live music, dance presentations, and recreation programming in celebration of this national holiday.

Alexandria and USA Birthday Celebration

Sunday, July 12 | Oronoco Bay Park

Celebrate Alexandria's 277th birthday and the USA's 250th with live music, food, and a fireworks finale over the Potomac River at 9:30 p.m. A can't-miss summer night.

Kids and Teens

Nerf the Turf

\$19, Ages 7-12

Fridays, April 17 & June 5, 6:30-8:30 p.m. |

Patrick Henry Elementary School

Build teamwork and sportsmanship in this instructor-led foam dart showdown. Bring your gear; we'll provide the ammo.

Dodgeball Fanatics

\$19, Ages 7-12

Fridays, April 24 & May 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m. |

Patrick Henry Elementary School

Duck, dip, dive, and dodge in a safe and structured environment designed for skill building and fun.

Animals in the Park

Saturday, April 25, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. | Windmill

Hill Park

Meet RPCA staff and some of the wildlife from the Jerome "Buddie" Ford Nature Center.

K Pop Hunters Glow Party

\$5, Ages 6-10

Saturday, April 25, 1-3 p.m. | Charles Houston

Recreation Center

Dance to your favorite movie hits, create arts and crafts, and glow under colorful lights with friends.

Alexandria Spring Invitational

Cheer Competition

Price varies, Saturday, April 25, 2 p.m. | Alexandria

City High School

Watch talented cheer squads bring the energy, spirit, and skill to the mat. From high-flying stunts to powerful routines, this exciting competition is packed with teamwork and Alexandria pride.

Mother's Day Spa

\$15, Ages 5 & up

Saturday, May 2, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Mount Vernon

Recreation Center

Moms and daughters can enjoy facials, manicures, food, and quality time together for a memorable Mother's Day celebration.

Parents Night Out

\$25, Ages 5-12

Fridays, May 8 & June 12, 6:30-8:45 p.m. |

Mount Vernon Recreation Center

Enjoy an evening out while your kids enjoy games and activities in a safe and energetic setting.

Charles Houston Kiddie Cabaret

\$6, Ages 1-5

Saturday, June 13, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. | Charles

Houston Recreation Center

Dress up, dance to kiddie favorites, enjoy lunch, and celebrate in style with a parent or guardian.

For Adults

ENTERTAINMENT

Charles Houston Line Dance Social
Ages 18+
Tuesdays, April 14 & May 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. |
Charles Houston Recreation Center
Enjoy an evening of toe-tapping fun. No experience needed. Just bring your enthusiasm.

Live on Top of The Hill Concert Series
Ages 18+
Fridays, June 27 & July 25, 12-3 p.m. | William Ramsay Recreation Center
Relax with live folk, cover, and mariachi music in a welcoming community setting.

Top of The Hill Adult Social
Ages 18+
Friday, July 31, 6:30-9 p.m. | William Ramsay Recreation Center
Connect, unwind, enjoy games and themed nights, and meet new friends in this casual summer gathering.
Explore full details and register at alexandriava.gov/RPCA/Events.

THURSDAY/MARCH 19
The Chamber ALX's 2026 General Assembly Breakfast. 8-10 a.m. At The Hilton Alexandria Old Town, Alexandria. They are welcoming our General Assembly delegation—fresh from the action in Richmond! Join them for a timely and lively conversation as our delegation reflects on the 2026 session, breaks down the legislation that will most impact our community, and offers behind-the-scenes insights into the debates, negotiations, and defining moments that shaped the final outcomes. They'll also look ahead to the opportunities and challenges facing the Commonwealth in the months ahead—and what they mean for our region. Bring your questions and be part of the conversation about where Virginia goes next.

THURSDAY/MARCH 19
Send-Off Concert. 7 p.m. At West Potomac High School, Alexandria. West Potomac Band invites the community to attend the West Potomac Band Music For All Send Off Concert. This is a huge honor for West Potomac's Period 1 Band, because they will be the only band from Virginia to participate in the Music For All Festival in Indianapolis.

MARCH 20-22
Old Town Bloom Together Spring Preview. In Old Town Alexandria. Celebrate spring in Old Town Alexandria, where you can stroll, shop, dine and support local business while having a chance to win big! You are invited to Bloom Together, where you get the first glance at the spring collections from your favorite Old Town boutiques. Grab your passport, shop and stroll Old Town, and enter for a chance to win a \$500 or even \$1,000 gift card to the boutique (or boutiques) of your choice!

Known as a diverse retail district, the Old Town Bloom Together Spring Preview is a neighborhood passport-style shopping event designed to welcome more people into local brick and mortar stores during cherry blossom season for a chance to win a special incentive. This event encourages shoppers to explore Old Town by visiting multiple boutiques over one weekend and support small businesses by creating an opportunity to create foot traffic during one of the busiest times of year.

During the three-day event, shoppers can use a Bloom Together passport to visit participating stores and collect stamps. How it works is the more shops they stop in, the more chances shoppers have to win a gift card. Each participating boutique will be listed on the official passport and be available both in print and online. Shoppers who visit at least half of the boutiques will be entered to win a \$500 gift card to a shop of their choice; while those who visit all locations will be entered for a \$1,000 grand prize gift card to spend at a boutique of their choosing. For more information, visit <https://oldtownboutiquecommunity.com>.

SATURDAY/MARCH 21
Write Like A Woman Networking Workshop.

www.connectionnewspapers.com

1-3 p.m. At The Athenaeum, Alexandria. Founder and Facilitator, KaNikki Jakarta, welcomes you to year 10 of the Write Like a Woman Networking Workshop. This popular workshop invites amateur and professional women writers of all genres ages 18 – 100. Each workshop centers on uplifting and inspiring through writing and allows participants to enhance their writing styles through writing prompts and encouragement. Space is limited, RSVP to greatpublishing@yahoo.com

SATURDAY/MARCH 21
Family Skate and Dance Night. Embrace the spring season with a night out all ages will enjoy at an upcoming Family Skate and Dance Night. Gather the crew, whether it's family or friends, and head out to Franconia Rec Center as its gym transforms for the night into a skate rink. Bring your own skates or your dancing shoes to get moving to music by a guest DJ. Upcoming events set the stage to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the spring season (enchanted forest theme) and the third anniversary Family Skate and Dance Night. Tickets cost \$10 for everyone—purchase online now for these upcoming events:

Saturday, March 21, 6-9 p.m., Family Skate and Dance Night: St. Patrick's Day

Saturday, April 18, 6-9 p.m., Family Skate and Dance Night: Enchanted Forest

Saturday, May 16, 5-9 p.m., Family Skate and Dance Night: Third Anniversary

All ages and abilities are invited to join in and build confidence on wheels at this community event. Food, snacks and drinks are available for purchase (outside food is prohibited). Franconia Rec Center is located at 6601 Telegraph Road in Alexandria. For more information, visit the Franconia Rec Center website or call 703-922-9841.

SATURDAY/MARCH 28
Let's Just Start From The Beginning... 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Join in a two hour co-ed creative development workshop designed and facilitated by 13 of nazareth for the purpose of encouraging experimentation with style, form and tone, and supporting expansion beyond creative comfort zones in order to assist in fine tuning a writer's process. It can be thought of as having artistic reinforcements in the battle to be better on pages and stages.

EASTER DINING – APRIL 4-5
❖ **Breakfast with the Easter Bunny at Joe Theismann's Restaurant**

Saturday, April 4 at 8AM + Sunday, April 5 at 8AM
This Easter weekend, families are invited back for the popular Breakfast with the Easter Bunny at Theismann's Restaurant & Bar. Guests can enjoy two festive mornings filled with family-friendly fun, including opportunities for children to meet and take photos with the Easter Bunny, participate in an Easter egg hunt, and create their own Easter basket.

The family-style breakfast includes a beverage and a mimosa and is priced at \$64.82 for adults. For children ages 2 and older, the experience is \$36.39, which includes breakfast, a beverage, and a photo with the Easter Bunny. Adults may also enhance their celebration with bottomless mimosas, Prosecco, or Bellinis for an additional \$22.20.

Phone: 703.739.0777
Address: 1800 Diagonal Road, Alexandria, VA.

Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/breakfast-with-the-easter-bunny-at-theismanns-restaurant-tickets-1982907822676?aff=oddttdcreator>

Palette 22 – Bottomless Brunch
At Palette 22, Sundays are all about an endlessly creative bottomless brunch experience. For \$32.22 per person, guests can enjoy unlimited selections from the menu, including favorites like French Toast Sticks, P22 Cheeseburger Sliders, brick oven pizzas, and Shrimp + Grits. The experience also features a chef-attended taco and waffle bar, plus dessert to finish on a sweet note. To sip alongside brunch, guests can add Bellinis, Mimosas, or a Create-Your-Own Bloody Mary for just \$4.22 each. <https://arlington.palette22.com/>

Address: 4053 Campbell Ave., Arlington, VA 22206

Ada's on the River
Celebrate Easter Sunday with a refined brunch at Ada's on the River, featuring elegant seasonal dishes alongside its waterfront setting. Highlights include the South African Lobster Benedict, made with butter-poached lobster, poached eggs, crème fraîche, smoked tomatoes, and potato pavé, and a decadent Croque Madame layered with shaved prosciutto cotto, brioche, and a rich pecorino and gruyère béchamel. End on a sweet note with a slice of Carrot Cake topped with cream cheese mousse, candied pecans, and pineapple jam. <https://adasontheriver.com/>
Address: 3 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria, VA 22314

BARCA Pier & Wine Bar
For a lively waterfront Easter celebration, BARCA Pier & Wine Bar will offer Mediterranean-inspired brunch specials on Easter Sunday perfect for sharing. Guests can start with a bright Herbed Yogurt Dip served with warm pita and pickled vegetables, enjoy a savory Jamón Ibérico Benedict with a Portuguese muffin and mojo rojo, or indulge in the Grilled Lamb & Artichoke Kebab, featuring marinated lamb loin with herbs and garlic yogurt. <https://barcaalx.com/>
Address: 2 Pioneer Mill Way, Alexandria, VA 22314

Mia's Italian Kitchen - Bottomless Brunch & New Hours
Brunch at Mia's Italian Kitchen in Alexandria just got even better with new weekend hours from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Guests can indulge in Mia's signature Bottomless Brunch for \$32 per person, featuring unlimited selections from the brunch menu for an endlessly satisfying Italian-style feast. Highlights include the Italian Scramble with pepperoni, roasted peppers, mushrooms, caramelized onions, basil, and rustic garlic toast, Brick Oven Pan Pizza, and house-made pastas like Nonna's Sunday Gravy with rigatoni, sweet Italian sausage, meatballs, braciola, and chicken thighs in slow-simmered tomato sauce. To sip alongside brunch, guests can enjoy specialty cocktails including Mia's Bloody Mary, Mia's Rossini, Lavender Bellini, and Venus Punch. <https://alexandria-va.miasitalian.com/>
Address: 100 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
The Royal

At The Royal, Easter Sunday brunch brings bold, comforting flavors with dishes like the Pot Roast Hash, made with braised beef, sunny eggs, crispy home fries, caramelized onions, feta, and roasted garlic aioli. Another standout is the Vampiro Burrito, packed with house-made chicken chorizo, scrambled eggs, refried beans, crispy cheeses, salsa verde, and cilantro for a hearty holiday bite. <https://royalrestaurantva.com/>
Address: 730 North Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Vola's Dockside Grill
Celebrate Easter Sunday by the waterfront at Vola's Dockside Grill with indulgent brunch and seafood favorites. The Pecan-Crusted French Toast features brioche topped with Bavarian cream, fresh berries, and spiced syrup, while the Lobster & Crab Cannelloni delivers a rich combination of Maine lobster, lump crab, spinach, and Gruyère in a sherry cream sauce. <https://volasdockside.com/>
Address: 101 North Union Street, Old Town Waterfront, Alexandria, VA 22314

SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
Pop-Up Satellite Services for Circuit Court. Fairfax Circuit Court is pleased to announce the launch of pop-up Satellite Circuit Court Services at the Gerry Hyland Government Center, 8350 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Starting April 14, 2026, services will be available on the second Tuesday of every month, from 9 a.m. to noon. This initiative provides select court services to residents in the southern portion of Fairfax County, increasing access and convenience.
Services Offered Include:
Marriage License Issuance
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This program represents a pivotal step in the Fairfax Circuit Court's ongoing efforts to enhance community engagement and service delivery. As the largest trial court in Virginia, the Fairfax Circuit Court (19th Judicial Circuit) remains dedicated to providing resources that meet the needs of Fairfax County and Fairfax City residents. For more information about Fairfax Circuit Court and its services, visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/circuit>.

SATURDAY/APRIL 4
First Saturday 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. Open every day, various hours. Visit <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/friends-of-sherwood-regional> for information on other days and times for the library's ongoing book sale.

APRIL 10-11
2026 Spring Garden Market at River Farm. The American Horticultural Society (AHS), the national nonprofit promoting the beauty and benefits of plants, is excited to announce Christin Geall as the special guest speaker at the 2026 Spring Garden Market at River Farm. The popular garden market will take place April 10-11, 2026 at River Farm, AHS' headquarters in Alexandria, VA.

A writer and floral designer whose work explores the rich intersections of design, nature, culture, and horticulture, Christin brings a thoughtful and creative lens to the world of flowers. Her new book, *Flora Culture: How Flowers Shape Our World*, explores our love of flowers and our relationships with plants, gardens, and design. Christin will share her expertise during two sessions at our 2026 Spring Garden Market:

Creating a Cutting Garden | Friday, April 10, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

Developing Floral Arrangements | Saturday, April 11, 2026 at 10:00 a.m.

Featuring native plants, herbs, seeds, original art, gardening tools, and specialty finds, the much-anticipated Spring Garden Market at River Farm kicks off the gardening season in Northern Virginia. Attendees can browse the garden marketplace, seek advice from horticultural experts, enjoy delicious food, and tour River Farm's beautiful gardens and manor house. With more than 2,000 attendees, this signature spring event is one of the largest fundraisers for River Farm, a historic and horticultural treasure.

SATURDAY/APRIL 18
Historic Garden Week Old Town Alexandria House and Garden Walking Tour. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All properties are located in Old Town Alexandria. Tours benefit the restoration of historic gardens and landmarks in Virginia. The event is hosted by the Hunting Creek Garden Club and the Garden Club of Alexandria. Co-chairs are Betsy Regnell and Maureen Bates. Tickets are on sale for \$55 per person. If tickets are purchased the day of the tour, they are \$65. If purchasing tickets on the day of the tour, visit the Alexandria Visitors Center, at 221 King St. Tour tickets are not sold at the homes on the tour. A full-priced ticket is required for all tour attendees. Children under five are free when accompanied by a paying adult. Complimentary light refreshments will be available at St. Paul's Episcopal Church from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (the church will also be open for touring). Specialty boutique vendors will be featured at the Marketplace at the Athenaeum, from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. 201 Prince St. Bartlett Tree Experts will have an educational table and free tree saplings while they last from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visit VaGardenWeek.org for a complete listing of tours, suggested itineraries, maps and to purchase tickets. What's on the tour:

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Obituary

Obituary



Marcella M. (Marcie) McCarthy Corbett died peacefully at home March 12, 2026, after a short illness, surrounded by family. A longtime Alexandria resident and active community volunteer with Inova Hospital Auxiliary, Catholic Charities, Twig, The Washington Regional Transplant Consortium and was a Realtor with McEneaney Associates. She was predeceased by her husband, Bernard R. Corbett (d. 2011), daughter-in-law Milagro Corbett, grandson Joseph McKenna, and her parents and several siblings.

She is survived by her children Kim Peele (Buzz), Kasey Corbett, Kevin Corbett (Colleen), Karen Corbett Sanders (Daniel), Kelly Olafsson (Erik), and Kerry Corbett (Toni McKenna); 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren; and siblings Kevin McCarthy and Bitsy Bullock.

A Catholic Funeral Mass will be held April 20, 2026, at 10:30 a.m. at Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Alexandria, with a reception to follow. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to So Others Might Eat: <https://give.some.org/campaign/637397/donate>. For more info visit Legacy.com.

Legals

Legals

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF VOLUNTARY REMEDIATION

Pursuant to the Virginia Voluntary Remediation Regulations, Virginia Administrative Code section 9VAC20-160-120, DCMI Mid-Atlantic Inc., PO Box 338, The Plains, Virginia 20198, hereby provides notice of voluntary remediation at the following site:

Pear Tree Village Center
8800-8819 Pear Tree Village Court, Alexandria, Virginia 22309
VRP Number VRP00552

Environmental investigation has detected chlorinated solvents in soil, groundwater, and soil vapor at levels that could pose a risk to human health or the environment. The contamination is likely the result of former dry-cleaning operations at the site. To address the potential risk, DCMI Mid-Atlantic Inc. applied to and was deemed eligible to participate in the Voluntary Remediation Program. A Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was reviewed and accepted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ). The RAP includes implementing restrictions on the use of groundwater beneath the site for environmental monitoring or dewatering purposes only and the continued operation of a sub-slab depressurization system (SSDS) in the vicinity of the former dry-cleaning operation. Additionally, the RAP requires that the site be maintained with an engineered cover (e.g. concrete, asphalt, 2+ feet of clean fill, etc.), with any disturbed areas restored following ground disturbance, and mandates that all earth-moving activities be conducted in accordance with a site-specific Health and Safety Plan (HASP).

Persons wishing to comment on the voluntary remedial action or request additional information should contact the following who is familiar with the site:

Cameron Funke
Terracon Consultants Inc.
19955 Highland Vista Drive, Suite 170, Ashburn VA, 20147
703-726-8030
cameron.funke@terracon.com

Written comments will be accepted until April 4, 2026.

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BULLETIN

FROM PAGE 9

in a logical, yet compassionate way. The workshop fee is \$25. Visit www.novasecondsaturday.com for more.

ONGOING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SEE BULLETIN, PAGE 15

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

March Is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Don't wait: 45 is the recommended age for first colonoscopies for people with average risk.

BY EDEN BROWN
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

After an Arlington man in his 80s died of colon cancer, undiagnosed until his intestines were blocked completely, his widow got his genetic testing done and he tested positive for two variants on the chromosome that can increase susceptibility to colon cancer.

An email went out to his six adult children: get a colonoscopy. They did, except for one. Two (in their thirties) had polyps; three had nothing, and the last of the six children did not get a colonoscopy. He said he was okay because he used a test that measures blood in the stool. And he had no symptoms.

There was always some reason for not doing it — Covid, or insurance issues, or his belief that he was okay because of the non-invasive test results.

Finally, 9 years after his father died of the disease, he got a colonoscopy. Result? Stage 3 colon cancer. He now tells people: "Don't wait."

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. MedStar Health recently conducted a national survey to learn what people know about colon health:

- ❖ 77% do not know the correct age for when to get your first colonoscopy (45 is the recommended age for colonoscopies for people with average risk)

- ❖ 75% do not know how often to get a colonoscopy (every 10 years for people with average risk)

- ❖ 47% believe you need a colonoscopy every 5 years

- ❖ Just 13% can identify all symptoms of colorectal cancer

- ❖ 36% of adults who are 45+ have not had a colonoscopy

- ❖ The most common reason for delaying a colonoscopy is because they have no family history (40%).

Nikiya Asamoah, MD, a board-certified gastroenterologist affiliated with MedStar Washington Hospital Center responded to questions about colonoscopies and colorectal health:

Q.: Arlington Connection (AC): Isn't it correct that you should have a colonoscopy every five years?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Not necessarily. The frequency of colonoscopy is based on your own risk factors, such as family history of cancers

or personal history of inflammatory bowel conditions as well as how many polyps were found on your colonoscopy. Some people require colonoscopy every 1-3 years, while others can go 10 years if they have no risk factors or polyps.

Q.: What is the updated guidance on colonoscopy prep?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: The new guidelines for bowel prep recommend that patients can eat a light meal for breakfast 1 day prior to colonoscopy, which eliminates the long fasting period. Additionally, they suggest that patients should be offered low volume (2L) bowel prep instead of the standard 4L prep.

Q.: Is it the processed food that people eat, the microplastics in our environment, or our more sedentary lifestyle that is causing all this colon cancer?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Likely all of the above. Many environmental factors and genetics contribute to the risk of colon cancer. It is recommended that people eat a well balanced diet with regular fruits/vegetables, lean proteins and a healthy lifestyle with regular aerobic exercise.

Q.: Is the Cologuard test good enough to detect colon cancer?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: The Cologuard test is a great screening test for colon cancer with a >90% sensitivity for picking up cancer if it is there.

Q.: Is a family history of polyps enough to schedule more frequent colonoscopies?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: No. Your family history often dictates when you should start getting colonoscopies.

Future colonoscopies are based on the findings of your own colonoscopy or if you have family history of colon cancer or cancer syndrome.

Q.: People say age 40 is the new age for a first colonoscopy. Is that wrong?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Yes, it is wrong. 45 is the recommended age for first colonoscopy for individuals that are NOT high risk for colon cancer.

Q.: What is the single most frequent reason people say they delayed getting a

colonoscopy?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Concerns about the bowel prep or concerns about having anesthesia.

Q.: Is colon cancer more frequently diagnosed among African Americans and why is that?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: Yes, it is true that African Americans have a higher incidence of colorectal cancer than most other racial and ethnic groups. There are multiple factors that contribute including health and socioeconomic disparities.

Q.: Any other ethnic group where it is more frequent or less frequent?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: American Indian and Alaskan Native people have the highest incidence while Asian/Pacific Islanders have the lowest incidence according to American Cancer Society 2025 estimates.

Q.: Is it true that just taking fiber gummies won't really give you the right kind of fiber to provide colon health?

A.: Dr. Asamoah: That is true. Fiber gummies often have excess sugar or sweeteners and not a significant amount of fiber. Fruits and green leafy vegetables are the best sources of soluble and insoluble fiber.

March became Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in the year 2000. In addition to the above guidance, spreading the word about preventing colorectal cancer by asking friends and relatives if they have had their colonoscopy, and following this guidance about alcohol, smoking and symptom awareness will also go a long way to bringing down the alarming rise in colorectal cancer diagnoses.

- ❖ **Healthy Habits:** Reduce risks by eating a high-fiber diet with fruits/vegetables, limiting red/processed meats, limiting alcohol, and avoiding smoking.

- ❖ **Watch for Symptoms:** Consult a doctor if you experience persistent changes in bowel habits, blood in stool, unexplained weight loss, or abdominal pain.

- ❖ **Wear Blue:** Support the Colorectal Cancer Alliance and wear blue to raise awareness.

For more information about colorectal health, see: Colorectal Cancer Alliance <https://colorectalcaner.org/>

BULLETION BOARD

FROM PAGE 14

Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Patrons may also reach the service at 703-746-1760.

Digital Magazines. Patrons of Alexandria Library will have unlimited access to read digital magazines, which can be viewed on most Internet-enabled devices inside or outside of the library. Accessible through www.rbdigital.com/alexan-

driava/zinio.

Eligible low income households can now use their SNAP benefits to buy local foods at the Old Town Farmers' Market. SNAP customers are able to use their electronic benefits transfer cards to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and other eligible food products at the market. The Old Town Farmer's Market is located at 301 King St., and is open on Saturdays, year round from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Penny for Your Thoughts



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Not anymore. As of Nov. 12, 2025, the U.S. Mint has stopped printing/making pennies. From that date onward to the present - and future, the American exact-changer cash payer will be on his/her own. No longer will the penny reserve of the rolls of pennies so regularly broken across cash-register draws be in play. According to the Mint, they're just too expensive. The penny costs more to produce than it does to pay. And so, as a direct consequence, I've already seen signs at miscellaneous businesses - who still collect cash, requesting "Exact change" from their in-store customers. In other cash exchanges, I've received a rounded-up nickel to compensate for the pennies printing demise. In summary, pennies don't make sense anymore. Who would have thought?

It's taken over 250 years for Benjamin Franklin's advisory: "A penny saved is a penny earned" to lose its relevance in history. In fact, for those of you who have saved your pennies in a receptacle at home, it may be time to do your patriotic duty and help your fellow consumer as well as your local brick and mortar store by cashing in your pennies. It's not exactly a rainy day. However, for cash customers and commercial establishments, there will not be pennies from heaven anymore - and certainly none from the U.S. Mint. Perhaps that's a non-buying opportunity. Since pennies might be a disappearing commodity, holding on to your pennies now might actually be penny wise and but pound foolish - for once. Their numismatic value might go up once their availability goes down.

Or perhaps pennies will end up in "the trash bin of history" along with the one-dollar coin and the two-dollar bill (the \$500, \$1,000 and \$10,000 denominations are not in circulation for another reason). Gone but not forgotten, they shall be," to invoke Yoda from "Star Wars." Good riddance, others might say, as our economy grows more online than in person, the penny becomes, especially given its upside-down cost to produce relative to its street value, an unnecessary appendage, so to speak.

Speaking of street value/formerly everyday/common uses of the penny, there's no more obvious example of the penny's outdatedness than "Penny candy." Given what you pay for the "Penny candy," these days, its name should be changed to "Quarter candy." It will be particularly difficult to continue calling it "penny candy" when there are no more pennies. It's more a figure of speech now anyway. Moreover, the fewer pennies there are in circulation/customer pockets, the less appealing these "penny" enticements will be. Otherwise, this is the use of a penny that will be dreadful. Misleading customers generally doesn't result to long-term success.

If there is going to be a present/future without pennies, what might the impact be to those who are named "Penny" (one of my neighbors in fact), will she be asked the origin of such a unique/unfamiliar given name? Will she have to change her name to "Nickel" to keep up with the times - and inflation? When an increase is characterized as "Pennies on the dollar," will an explanation be required (as in "What's a penny?")

Will the expression "For two cents I'd punch you right in the nose" disappear from our jargon (mine anyway)?

I certainly don't know the answers to any of these questions; nevertheless, I thought I'd write you my two-cents worth.

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



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