

Alexandria Gazette Packet

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JUNE 18, 2026

Celebration of Freedom

City commemorates Juneteenth with a full day of events.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
GAZETTE PACKET

Alexandria is a city filled with history. Founded in 1749 as a port city along the Potomac River, Alexandria grew into one of the busiest commercial centers in early America. Its location made it a critical hub for trade, which tragically included the buying and selling of enslaved people of all ages.

As June 19th approaches, the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, finally learned they were free more than two years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the Juneteenth holiday in Alexandria is more than a celebration. It is a powerful act of remembrance.

"We have put together a great program," said Juneteenth committee member and noted historian Char McCargo Bah. "Highlights of this year's events will include visits to Douglass Cemetery, the Alexandria Black History Museum, and Freedom House, which was a former slave pen during the Civil War. Shiloh Baptist Church, which was founded during the Civil War, will also host a special Juneteenth program. An evening festival will



PHOTO BY MATTHEW BRADY

The slave pen at 1315 Duke Street was the site of Alexandria's bustling slave trade in the 1800s. It is now the Freedom House Museum and will be open as part of the city's Juneteenth day of events.

conclude the festivities at Charles Houston Recreation Center."

Alexandria in the 1820s and 1830s had become a major center

of the domestic slave trade, which expanded after the international slave trade was banned in 1808. During this period, enslaved men,

women and children were forcibly transported from the Chesapeake region to plantation economies in the Deep South.

Enslaved individuals were often held in local jails and private "slave pens" before being sold or

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Juneteenth Schedule Of Events

10 – 11:15 a.m.
Memorial at Douglass Cemetery

1421 Wilkes Street

Free

1 – 3 p.m.

Washington Revels

Voices Jubilee Concert

Shiloh Baptist Church

1401 Jamieson Ave.

Free

4 – 8 p.m.

Juneteenth Festival

Charles Houston

Recreation Center

901 Wythe Street

11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Freedom House Museum

1315 Duke Street

Admission charged/free

to Alexandria residents

11 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Alexandria Black

History Museum

902 Wythe Street

Admission charged/free

to Alexandria residents

Alexandriava.gov/Juneteenth
❖ Juneteenth is a holiday so there will be no metered parking fees



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Juneteenth committee member Michael Johnson stands at the entrance to the historic Douglass Cemetery on Wilkes Street. The cemetery kicks off the city's Juneteenth day of events with a memorial program at 10 a.m.



PHOTO/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Abolitionist Frederick Douglass spoke at Alexandria's Emancipation Day ceremony on Sept. 21, 1894.



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Now known as Freedom House, 1315 Duke Street is shown in 1861 as it appeared during the Civil War when the building was being used by the Union army as a jail.

Congratulations

We are extremely proud of the
5th grade graduating class of 2026!



Our graduates will attend the following schools in the fall:

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George Washington Middle School
Holy Trinity School
Immanuel Christian School

St. Anselm's Abbey School
St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School
St. Thomas More Cathedral School
The Langley School



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Episcopal
School

GraceSchoolAlex.org 703-549-5067
3601 Russell Road, Alexandria, VA 22305

Independent School in Alexandria
Preschool Ages 3 through Grade Five



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

The historic Douglass cemetery dates back to the 1800s and is the site of more than 2,000 burials of free and enslaved African Americans.

Celebration of Freedom

FROM PAGE 1

transported. Some were marched in chains overland in groups called coffles, while others were shipped from Alexandria's busy waterfront to cities such as New Orleans.

When the Civil War began, Alexandria was quickly occupied by Union forces in 1861. This transformed the city into a refuge for enslaved people escaping bondage.

“Understanding what African Americans contributed to the city should give all of us a sense of pride regardless of race, creed or color.”

— Juneteenth committee member
Michael Johnson

Thousands of formerly enslaved individuals often called “contrabands” came to Alexandria seeking safety and freedom. The city’s economy and social structure began to shift as these individuals found new opportunities, established communities and helped support the Union war effort.

Even former slave-trading sites were repurposed during this period. The building

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at 1315 Duke Street, once used to imprison enslaved people, later served as a Union military prison and a hospital for Black soldiers.

Today, Alexandria’s Juneteenth observance connects these historical sites to present-day celebration and reflection.

Juneteenth in Alexandria will begin at the historic Douglass Memorial Cemetery. Established in 1895 as a segregated African American burial ground, it honors generations of Black Alexandrians and remains a site of remembrance today.

“Understanding what African Americans contributed to the city should give all of us a sense of pride regardless of race, creed or color,” said Michael Johnson, who is spearheading the restoration of Douglass Cemetery. “It is acknowledging and correcting some of the wrongs that occurred before many of us were

even born.”

Johnson said that noted historian and Howard University professor Elizabeth Lewis, a co-contributor of research to the Alex Haley Roots mini-series, will be the mistress of ceremonies at the Douglass Cemetery ceremony.

In the afternoon, the Washington Revs Jubilee Voices concert at Shiloh Baptist

Church brings history to life through African American spirituals, storytelling and cultural traditions, many of which originated during slavery as expressions of hope and resistance.

“Four churches were founded during the Civil War,” Bah said. “Beulah Baptist Church, Shiloh Baptist Church, Third Baptist Church, and Zion Baptist Church. Please do not forget these historic churches. They were there for so many Black Alexandrians’ ancestors during the Civil War and still hold Sunday services.”

The celebration culminates in a vibrant festival at the Charles Houston Recreation Center, featuring live music rooted in Black cultural traditions, youth activities and performances and educational exhibits highlighting local history.

The festival opens with “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” often called the Black national anthem as a reminder of both historical struggle and enduring aspiration.

The city will open The Freedom House Museum and Black History Museum on Juneteenth. The Freedom House Museum, located at 1315 Duke Street, was once the headquarters of Franklin & Armfield, one of the largest slave-trading firms in the United States.

Today, the Freedom House Museum stands as one of the most important landmarks in Alexandria, preserving the stories of those

[COMMUNICATED.]
Emancipation Day.
Arrangements have been nearly completed for the 31st anniversary of the Emancipation edict, which was issued by Mr. Lincoln, Sept. 22, 1863. The colored people of this city have usually observed the day by an evening demonstration, but this year they will have a day street parade. Monday, Sept. 24, is the day set apart for the celebration in this city. The Chief Marshal will be Dandridge Smith, from Gum Springs, Fairfax county. A number of Washington military clubs, etc., will be present. In the southwestern portion of the city, the L'Overture Guards, Capt. W. H. Whiting, and the white shirt clubs are drilling nightly, and in the western portion the Industrial Guards, laboring men's union, hod carriers, and Portner's men, under Capt. James Washington, are busy with their preparations. Magnus L. Robinson is chairman of the executive committee. It is said that 500 men will be in line, with a chariot containing 44 girls representing the 44 States. Several bands of music with the Alexandria Boys Drum Corps will be in line. Speakers will be Frederick Douglass, Rev. R. H. Robinson, of Cumberland, Md., (an old Alexandrian), Dr. R. C. C. Benjamin and Professor Edw. D. Herve, of Fauquier. Rev. Alfred Young, of Roberts Chapel, will act as chaplain, Dr. Alfred Johnson will read the edict. The Washington division will arrive at 10 o'clock. The line will be formed at 12:30 p. m., right resting corner of Alfred and Wolfe streets. The procession will move at 1:30 p. m. over the following route: Up Alfred to Duke, to West, to Cameron, to Payne, to Queen, to Patrick, to Princess, to Alfred, to Oronoco, to Royal, to Princess, to Fairfax, to King, to Royal, to Prince, to Fairfax, to Wolfe, to Royal, to Gibbon, to Washington, to Prince, to Patrick, to King, to Opera House, where the speaking will take place. At night a reception will be held at Odd Fellows' Hall. Among prominent white guests invited are Congressman E. E. Meredith, Hon. P. H. McCaull, and Prof. Robert Nourse. The chairman says the emancipation is not to be made a political anniversary, but an anniversary of great rejoicing

ALEXANDRIA GAZETTE ARCHIVES

The Sept. 21, 1894, Alexandria Gazette promoted Emancipation Day events with noted abolitionist Frederick Douglass as a featured speaker

individuals and confronting the city’s role in slavery. Exhibits highlight both the brutality of the slave trade and the resilience of African Americans who endured and resisted it.

The city’s landmarks, from the Freedom House Museum to Douglass Cemetery, serve as reminders of a painful past while also honoring the strength and contributions of African Americans across generations.

“There are so many Juneteenth events happening in Alexandria,” said committee member Gwen Day Fuller. “It’s important to remember that a people had to wait two additional years to learn that they were free and celebrating holidays like this is one way of keeping that history alive.”

Added Bah, “I cannot say enough to all the people who helped plan this event to ensure that the remembrance of this Freedom rings on.”



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Retirement Day

Ben George and wife Jennifer and Liz Magyar and husband Tom walk out of police headquarters on their retirement day as Chief Tarrick McGuire and colleagues look on. Alexandria Police Department posted: “33 years of service. Two careers. One lasting impact. Lieutenant Liz Magyar and Detective Ben George retired today after more than three decades with APD. Thank you for your service to Alexandria and the legacy you leave behind.”



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT

Scholarship Winners

Jack Fannon, president of Rotary Club of Alexandria stands with Rotary scholarship awardees (from left) Jackson Dundon, Khamille A. Muhammad and Victoria P. Hoggard, on June 9 at Belle Haven Country Club.



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PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

From left, Vice-mayor Sarah Bagley, stands with Ambassador of Croatia to the United States Pjer Simunovic (center) and Zoran Civavelic at the Flavors & Sounds of Croatia – Alexandria on Saturday, June 5.

Welcoming the Croatian National Football Team for the World Cup

The Croatian National Football Team selected the City Alexandria as their official home base during the World Cup. “Flavors & Sounds of Croatia – Alexandria” on Saturday, June 6, at Waterfront Park was free and open to the public and served as the City's welcome to the Croatian National Football Team. It also recognized Alexandria's partnership with the Croatian Embassy and the Croatian National Football Team. The celebration included Croatian culture, music and food.

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Dartmouth College ♦ Duquesne University ♦ Emory & Henry University ♦ Fordham University ♦ George Washington University (2) ♦ Georgetown University
Howard University (3) ♦ Indiana University (3) ♦ James Madison University (5) ♦ Lehigh University ♦ Louisiana State University ♦ Loyola University (Md.) (2)
Marymount University ♦ Mercer University ♦ Miami University (Ohio) (2) ♦ Morehouse College ♦ Morgan State University ♦ New York University
North Carolina State University ♦ Northeastern University ♦ Penn State University ♦ Penn West California (Pa.) ♦ Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (3)
Rollins College ♦ Springfield College ♦ Stevenson University ♦ Syracuse University (3) ♦ The George Washington University ♦ Towson University
Trinity College (Conn.) ♦ Tuskegee University ♦ University of California-Davis ♦ University of Chicago ♦ University of Cincinnati
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University of Miami (Fla.) (2) ♦ University of Michigan (4) ♦ University of Mississippi (2) ♦ University of North Carolina-Greensboro ♦ University of Notre Dame (2)
University of Pennsylvania (2) ♦ University of Pittsburgh (2) ♦ University of Richmond (2) ♦ University of South Carolina (2) ♦ University of Tampa (2)
University of Tennessee ♦ University of Virginia (4) ♦ University of Wisconsin-Madison ♦ Villanova University ♦ Virginia Tech (3)
Wake Forest University (2) ♦ Yale University

OBITUARY

Jacquelyn Rita Goldhagen

March 11, 1962
– June 6, 2026

Jacquelyn Rita Goldhagen, affectionately known as “Jacque,” died unexpectedly on June 6, 2026, at her home in Pike Road, Ala. She was 64.

Born on March 11, 1962, in Phoenix, Ariz., Jacque was the youngest of four children born to Rita and Franklyn Caruso. Her childhood was filled with adventure, curiosity, and the opportunity to experience different parts of the world. She lived in Phoenix, Ariz., Derwood, Md. and Trumbull, Conn., before her family relocated to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1978. There, she graduated from the American School of Rio de Janeiro in 1980 and formed memories and friendships that she carried with her throughout her life.

After returning to the United States, Jacque earned a degree in Business from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Conn. In April 1990, she married Dr. Marc Goldhagen. Together they raised two sons, Craig and David, while embracing the adventures of military



Jacquelyn Goldhagen

life in Tampa, Fla., Vandenberg Air Force Base in California, and San Antonio, Texas. Following her divorce, Jacque made homes in Cobb Island, Md. and North Fort Myers, Fla., before settling in Pike Road, Ala., where she cherished being close to her son David and daughter-in-law, Kyley.

Jacque was a gifted jewelry designer whose creativity and attention to detail brought beauty to countless weddings, celebrations and special moments. She had a lifelong love of music, studying piano and performing in many ensembles on both flute and French horn during her school years. She also found great joy in nature, whether walking outdoors, admiring wildlife, or simply enjoying the peace and reflection that came from time spent outside.

More than anything, Jacque loved deeply. She treasured her family, cherished lifelong friendships and had a special place in her heart for animals. She was creative, thoughtful and generous with her love and encouragement. Whether through a handcrafted piece of jewelry, a thoughtful conversation, or simply being present for those she cared about, Jacque had a way of making people feel

special. Her warmth, kindness, and loving spirit will be remembered always by those fortunate enough to have known her.

Jacque is survived by her sons, Dr. Craig Goldhagen (Jordan) of San Antonio, Texas, and David Goldhagen (Kyley) of Pike Road, Ala. She is also survived by her beloved mother, Rita Caruso of Morris Plains, N.J.; her siblings, Paul Caruso (Claire) of Morris Plains, N.J., Jeanne Theismann (John Bordner) of Alexandria, Va., and Joanne Zaccaro (Thomas) of Beverly Hills, Calif.; her closest and lifelong friend, Lori Levine Esposito; and many cherished nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, cousins, and dear friends.

She was preceded in death by her father, Franklyn Caruso.

A visitation will be held on June 20, 2026, at 10 a.m. at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 156 East Main Street, Amsterdam, N.Y., followed by a Funeral Mass at 11 a.m. Interment will follow at St. Michael the Archangel Cemetery in Amsterdam, N.Y.

Arrangements are through Betz, Rossi Bellinger and Stewart Family Funeral Home, 171 Guy Park Ave., Amsterdam, NY 12010. www.brbsfuneral.com

SENIOR LIVING

A Life of Reinvention

From the Adriatic Coast to Arlington, Vesna Gjaja embraces life with curiosity and optimism.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

The first thing she remembers about America is the snow.

Not just snow, but an abundance of it.

Raised in Split on Croatia's Dalmatian coast, where the climate is Mediterranean and the city rises from the Adriatic with centuries of history behind it, Vesna Gjaja arrived in upstate New York at 19 as a newlywed and found herself staring at a landscape that felt entirely foreign.

“There was so much snow,” she recalled with a laugh. “And everything seemed like a village.”

Back home, Gjaja had grown up in a bustling city where women routinely pursued careers as doctors, scientists and professionals. In America, she was surprised to meet many young wives who stayed home while their husbands worked.

“I always thought I should work,” she said.

She had hoped to become a journalist, but life had other plans. After marrying her husband, a Bosnian scientist who worked for General Electric, Gjaja left her homeland and eventually enrolled at the State University of New York at Albany.

With no journalism major available, she earned a degree in Italian and comparative literature.

Those years were anything but

easy.

While she and her husband pursued their studies, they were also raising two small boys. With no family nearby and no childcare to rely on, she remembers the challenge vividly.

Looking back now, she said simply, “I was very young and I didn't know any better.”

That determination would define much of her life as she weathered both successes and setbacks.

Over decades, she built a career that took unexpected turns. After years of volunteer work, she spent eight years in public relations at Macy's before opening her own clothing store. The business closed during the Great Recession.

SEE A LIFE OG, PAGE 10



PHOTO COURTESY OF VESNA GJAJA

Born on what is now Croatia's Dalmatian coast, Vesna Gjaja has built a life marked by family, hard work and courage.



PHOTO BY JANET BARNETT/GAZETTE PACKET

Play Ball!

Alexandria Police Chief Tarrick McGuire throws the first pitch at the Alexandria Aces game on June 11 at Frank Mann Field. <https://alexandriaaces.org/>



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
Loudoun	11235	663	DOWNEY MILL ROAD	TRIB. CATOCTIN CREEK	5/27/2026
Smyth	17619	639N	SULPHUR SPRINGS ROAD	BRANCH	5/13/2026
Grayson	8733	58	HIGHLANDS PARKWAY	CABIN CREEK	5/6/2026

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.

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

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Celebrating Gardening, Conservation and More



Mary and Roger Bowers co-chaired the gala and helped raise funds for the new tent.



PHOTOS BY GLENDA BOOTH

The lawn reception featured flower-themed tablecloths.

Basking in the glow of saving River Farm forever.

magazine, American Gardener. The organization's mission is "to inspire a culture of gardening and horticultural practices that creates and sustains healthy, beautiful communities and a livable plan-

SEE CELEBRATING, PAGE 15

BY GLENDA C. BOOTH
MOUNT VERNON GAZETTE

American Horticultural Society celebrates honored heroes, heroines, gardening, a new event tent and saving the organization's headquarters when they gathered on a warm June 6 evening at River Farm, overlooking the Potomac River on East Boulevard Drive in Mount Vernon.

Given the 90-plus-degree day, folding hand fans were almost as popular as plants during the outdoor reception and during the dinner. The welcome table offered a basketful of pinkish fans. Guests in colorful, flower-patterned garb stood out among the 255 attendees.

"Gardens make life better. They inspire curiosity and connection with the natural world," said Rochelle Greayer, editor of AHS's



Virginia Delegate Gretchen Bulova, Secretary of Historic and Natural Resources David Bulova and Scott Plein discussed state policies.



Given the 90-plus-degree day, fans were popular.



Many flowers were in bloom, including Belladonna lilies.



The salad had a pansy, an edible flower.



Sada Dahouk and Ben Zeko with Burke and Herbert Bank enjoyed the event.

City of Alexandria Voters Head Back to the Ballot Box

Early voting begins Thursday, June 18; quick guide to the Aug. 4 dual primary election.

BY MERCIA HOBSON
THE GAZETTE

The Virginia Department of Elections has called a primary election to nominate Democratic and Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate, the U.S. House of Representatives and local offices. Because Virginia holds open primaries, voters may choose either a Democratic or a Republican ballot, but not both.

Early in-person voting for the Aug. 4 dual primary begins Thursday, June 18, advancing by one day statewide due to the observance of the Juneteenth holiday on Friday, June 19. Voters must present a Virginia driver's license, U.S. passport or another acceptable form of identification, or be prepared to sign an ID confirmation statement.

The City of Alexandria is located entirely within Virginia's 8th Congressional District.

Key Dates, Locations and Deadlines

Early in-person voting runs June 18 through Aug. 1. The primary location is the Office of Voter Registration & Elections, 132 N. Royal St., Suite 100. A satellite location will also open at the Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library, 5005 Duke St.

Voting dates and times vary by location:

The Royal Street Office: Open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. The office will be closed June 19 and July 3.

Extended and Weekend Hours (Royal Street): Sunday, July 19, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, July 25, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, July 26, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Tuesday, July 28, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Thursday, July 30, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Saturday, Aug. 1, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library (5005 Duke St.): Open for four select dates only: Sunday, July 19, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Saturday, July 25, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, July 26, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Saturday, Aug. 1, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The deadline to register to vote or request a mail-in ballot is July 24 at 5 p.m. Same-day provisional registration is available after this date.



PHOTO BY MERCIA HOBSON/ THE CONNECTION

Multilingual early voting sign marks the start of in-person early voting on Thursday, June 18 for the Aug. 4 dual primary election.

Location on Election Day, Aug. 4:

Voters must vote at their assigned precinct polling place, which will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.

What is on the Ballot?

Only offices with more than one candidate will appear on the primary ballots. Voters can verify their registration status and find their assigned polling place online at elections.virginia.gov.

U.S. House of Representatives (8th District): The Democratic primary features a five-way race among incumbent Donald S. Beyer Jr., Mo Seifeldin, Michael Christian Duffin, Adam M. Dunigan and Lorena Thorne Bruner. The Republican Party is not holding a primary for this seat.

U.S. Senate (Statewide): The Republican ballot features a three-way statewide race among Bert

Mizusawa, Kim Farington and David E. Williams. The Democratic Party is not holding a primary for this seat.

Voting by Mail

Any registered voter may request a mail-in ballot. However, the application must specify a party choice for ballot processing. The deadline to request a mail ballot is 5 p.m. July 24.

Returned ballots must be post-marked by Aug. 4 and received by noon Aug. 7.

Secure drop boxes are available 24 hours a day outside the Office of Voter Registration & Elections, at early voting sites during voting hours, and at all polling places on Election Day before 7 p.m.

Voters can find the official voting information, tracking options, and drop box locations on the City of Alexandria Elections Page. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Elections>

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Rotary Club of Alexandria, Flags for Heroes 2026 Display

Hundreds of American flags honoring local heroes overlooking the Potomac River will create one of Northern Virginia's most inspiring patriotic displays during America 250 celebrations.

The Rotary Club of Alexandria will present the 9th Annual Flags for Heroes 2026, a community

tribute honoring veterans, first responders, active-duty military personnel, teachers, healthcare workers, and other local heroes. The display will feature 300 American flags sponsored by individuals, families, and local businesses in recognition of those who serve and strengthen our nation and community.

In 2026, the event comes as we celebrate the 250th anniversary of the United States. Located near George Washington's historic Mount Vernon, the display will connect the nation's founding ideals with the service and sacrifice of today's heroes. Visitors are invited to read about each hero being honored on cards attached to each flag.

The striking field of American flags overlooking the Potomac River will offer beautiful, patriotic photo opportunities during the America 250 commemoration.

WHEN:

Flag display setup work: June 27, 8 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Flags on display: June 27, 1 p.m.

through July 10

Opening Ceremony Luncheon: June 30, 11:30 AM

WHERE:

Flag display and ceremonies are all located at:

Cedar Knoll Restaurant, 9030 Lucia Lane, Alexandria, VA 22308

<https://alexandriarotary.org/ffh2026-signup-webpage.php>

Alexandria Police Foundation's 2026 Karaoke with Cops

The community is invited to join the Alexandria Police Foundation for Karaoke with Cops on Saturday June 27 from 12noon -3pm in Old Town Alexandria.

This year Karaoke with Cops is being held near the City's water-

front at Cooper Mill Restaurant at 10 Duke Street.

Karaoke with Cops is a fundraiser organized by the Alexandria Police Foundation in order to provide resources to the Alexandria Police Department to foster morale, strengthen police-community rela-

tionships through programs with youth, and to ensure the care and well-being of its active and retired K-9s.

"We thank event supporters, including presenting sponsor GREENHILL COMPANIES," says Charlotte Hall, Chair of the Alex-

andria Police Foundation Board of Directors.

Hall continues, "At Karaoke with Cops we award prizes in the form of gift cards donated by area restaurants and retailers with a \$300 value for the top prize."

This year's emcee is Julie Don-

aldson of Fox5 News, previously a member of the Washington Commanders' broadcast team.

For more information on the APF 2026 Karaoke with Cops contact Lorie Green at (703) 898-5437.

Lyceum Chamber Music Series for July

The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic Association is proud to present its 36th annual Lyceum Chamber Music Series. Each concert is held on Sunday at 3 pm at the Lyceum in Old Town Alexandria. Tickets are not required (suggested donation of \$25). The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314

The month of July has four concerts planned, featuring the Main Street Players on July 5; Music to Celebrate America @ 250 on July

12; Keith Wright & Sam Runolfson on July 19; and Maxim Pakhomov on July 26.

View the full schedule at wmpmusic.org/lyceum.

LIVE at the Lyceum: Main Street Players Sunday, July 5, 3 pm The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314

Main Street Chamber Players features Laura Kobayashi on violin, Stephanie Knutsen on viola, Kenneth Law on cello, Barbara Fitz-

gerald on double bass, and Kent McWilliams on piano. Program includes Piano Quartet in A Minor by Josef Suk, Morpheus for Viola & Piano by Rebecca Clarke, and Quintet for Violin, Viola, Cello, Contrabass, & Piano by Ellen Taaffe Zwilich.

LIVE at the Lyceum: Music to Celebrate America @ 250 Sunday, July 12, 3 pm, The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314

Music to Celebrate America @ 250 features Crystal Lee on flute,

Brittany Pemberton on clarinet, and Elizabeth Hill on piano. Program includes works by Price, Muczynski, and Peterson.

LIVE at the Lyceum: Keith Wright & Sam Runolfson Concert Sunday, July 19, 3 pm, The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314 This performance features Keith Wright on flute and Sam Runolfson on cello.

LIVE at the Lyceum: Maxim Pa-

khomov Piano Concert Sunday, July 26, 3 pm, The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria, VA 22314

Join us and listen to the amazing Maxim Pakhomov perform on piano. Program includes Sonata No. 31 in A-flat Major by Ludwig van Beethoven, Scherzo (Op. 54) by Frederic Chopin, Annes De Pelérinage, Sonetto 104 del Petracca, and Etude Trancendental in F Minor by Ferenc Liszt, and Bachianas Brasileiras No. 4 by Heitor Villa-Lobos.

A Life of Reinvention

FROM PAGE 6

"I had to lick my wounds and get up," she said.

A lower-paying position with a sports marketing firm which introduced her to work with companies including Coca-Cola, Campbell Soup and Kellogg's. Later came positions in higher education, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Washington National Opera, and eventually the Smithsonian, where she helped lead the transition of Smithsonian Associates programs to online audiences

Through every reinvention, she said, curiosity and optimism carried her forward.

"I believe in people until they disappoint me," she said.

Travel became another passion. She has explored much of the world and counts Botswana among her favorite destinations.

Antarctica remains on her bucket list. Lately, she has become fascinated by artificial intelligence and enjoys learning about emerging technologies.

At The Jefferson in Arlington, where she lives, she stays active through the politics and issues group, an Italian conversation club, trivia competitions, gardening and service on the residents' marketing committee.

Retirement, she discovered, did not bring endless free time.

"I thought I would have more," she said. "But somehow I don't."

Perhaps the biggest adjustment came five months ago, when her husband of 59 years passed away.

Now 79, she finds herself learning how to think not for two people, but for one.

"It's an adjustment," she said quietly.

Still, she remains grateful for her two sons, her three grandchildren and a daughter-in-law she describes as being like a daughter.

Asked what she hopes younger generations understand, her answer comes without hesitation.

"Don't wait for things to come to you," she said. "Go after what you want. Work hard. Earn it. That's where the satisfaction comes."

And perhaps that spirit, the willingness to say yes to opportunity, to begin again, and to remain curious about the world is what carried a young bride from the Adriatic coast to a life rich with family, friendship and new chapters still waiting to be written.

Police Review Board Public Hearing June 29

The Independent Community Policing Review Board has scheduled a public hearing for the independent review of the investigation into the in-custody death of Allan Tucker. The public hearing will be held on Monday, June 29, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Del Pepper Community Resource Center City Council Chamber.

The hearing follows the completion and receipt of the administrative investigation conducted by the Office of the Independent Policing Auditor.

The Auditor's report will be released publicly on June 22, 2026.

The purpose of the public hearing is to provide the Board with an opportunity to receive the Auditor's presentation, hear public comments, and engage in public discussion regarding the investigation and findings. Members of the public may attend and provide pub-

lic comment in person or virtually.

This hearing is intended for public comment only. There will not be a live question-and-answer period during the hearing. Each participant will have three minutes to deliver their feedback. All participants must adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Board's Public Hearing Rules and Procedures.

The Board may take action at the public hearing or schedule a follow-up meeting at a later date.

Questions and concerns regarding attendance, registration, and participation in the public hearing may be directed to policeoversight@alexandriava.gov. Individuals who are unable to attend but wish to submit written public comment for consideration may also submit comments to policeoversight@alexandriava.gov with the subject line: "Public Comment - In-Custody Death."



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

E-bikes can resemble motorcycles a little bit.

E-Bikes Are Here

E-bikes are popular, can be dangerous.

By MIKE SALMON
GAZETTE PACKET

In the bicycle scene in Alexandria, e-bikes are popular on the city trails providing they follow the city rules and common-sense guidelines to prevent accidents.

There was an accident though, outside Alexandria that drew some attention to e-biking. In late May, the Fairfax County Police Department was on the scene of a crash involving a vehicle and an e-bike at Cedar Lane and Electric Avenue in Dunn Loring. The adult male cyclist was taken to a local hospital in life-threatening condition, the police reported.

At Strictly E-Bikes on Washington Street, they say the city has a 28-MPH limit on any e-bikes operating on city streets. One of their most popular models is the “Segway MUXI” that comes with a basket up front and a rack in the back for carrying clothes to the office and a briefcase, for those bike commuters on the Alexandria streets. In the warm weather there are plenty of them.

On the Strictly E-Bikes blog, it lists “5 Mental Health Perks of Spring E-Biking,” which includes movement that feels like freedom, breaking the scroll cycle on the computer, benefits of sunlight, riding together changes everything, and the brain craving newness. “The brain thrives on discovery and e-bikes expand your world just enough to make that easy,” it says.

Handy Bikes in Alexandria has a wide selection of e-bikes as well as regular bicycles, and they have a webpage on safety that includes a section on e-bike safety. There’s a focus on traffic and pedestrians, while the “Take Care With Speed,” section reminds riders of the new speeds associated with e-bikes. “Caution is key,” it says.

Russell Cestone at Handy Bikes knows the speeds of e-bikes are an issue and when the cyclists aren’t following the rules, it can “give a bad name to e-bikes,” he said.

Fairfax County is aware that the speedy e-bikes are out there and recently posted a set of rules and recommendations titled “E-Bikes Gain Speed — Here’s What to Know Sharing the Road.” There are more e-bikes out on the roads and trails these days, so their rules focus on speeds, yielding, and sharing the spaces. In Virginia, there are three classes of e-bike and for Class 3, the pedal assisted e-bike that goes up to 28 miles per hour, the rider must be at least 14 years old and must wear a helmet.

The county says that e-bikes are generally allowed anywhere traditional bikes are permitted unless signs say otherwise. In most areas, that includes sidewalks.

FABB

The Fairfax Alliance for Better Cycling recently published a blog post “Safe Trails for All: Responsible E-Bike Use Matters,” that offers safety recommendations. They focus on reports of reckless operation of high-speed e-bikes on local trails and shared-use paths.

FABB credits e-bikes for replacing car trips for some riders and enabling a wider range of people to ride that may be limited on a regular bike because of age or physical limitations.

But e-bikes are linked to an increase in injuries too. According to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeon Brian R. Waterman, MD, “the risk of fractures, dislocations and head trauma increases as e-bike usage becomes more popular. The best protection starts with awareness, proper protection and responsible riding,” he wrote.

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ALEXANDRIA YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2026

The **Alexandria Youth Leadership Conference** empowers emerging young leaders by providing training opportunities and connecting them to resources in their community. Registration is open to all rising 9th-12th grade students in Alexandria.

	Tuesday, August 11 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Wednesday, August 12 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.	Thursday, August 13 11a.m. to 5 p.m.
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For questions or reasonable disability accommodation, contact felicia.parks@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.3303, Virginia Relay 711.



DEPARTMENT OF **COMMUNITY & HUMAN SERVICES**

Opposition to Construction of 'Triumphal Arch'

To the National Park Service:

We, the undersigned members of the Virginia General Assembly, write to register our firm opposition to the proposed construction of a 250-foot "Triumphal Arch" at Memorial Circle, at the western terminus of the Arlington Memorial Bridge within the George Washington Memorial Parkway. We submit these comments during the public comment period for the Assessment of Effects prepared under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 54 U.S.C. § 306108. We respectfully urge the National Park Service ("NPS") to find that the undertaking would have an adverse effect on historic properties and to decline to approve it.

Our districts encompass the Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, Fairfax, Manassas, and Manassas Park, and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William — the Northern Virginia communities most directly affected by this project.

The arch would be erected on Virginia soil, at the gateway between the Commonwealth and the District of Columbia, on land that our constituents traverse daily and that frames the approach to Arlington National Cemetery. We have a direct and substantial interest in this undertaking, and our constituents deserve to have their voices heard.

The Commonwealth's interest in this decision is not abstract. The proposed structure sits within Virginia, within the viewshed of Arlington House and Arlington National Cemetery, and astride one of the most heavily used commuter corridors connecting our region to the federal capital. For the reasons set forth below, the proposal is incompatible with the historic character of this landscape, with sound transportation and public-safety planning, and with the deliberative process the National Historic Preservation Act requires.

Grounds for Opposition

1. The arch would destroy the historic axis the Memorial Bridge was built to create. The Arlington Memorial Bridge, completed in 1932 and conceived under the McMillan Plan, was deliberately designed with a low, horizontal profile to preserve an uninterrupted ceremonial sightline from the Lincoln Memorial across the Potomac to Arlington House and Arlington National Cemetery. That

axis, symbolizing national reunification after the Civil War, is among the most significant designed vistas in the United States. A 250-foot monument placed at Memorial Circle would sever this protected viewshed and permanently alter a landscape composition that has been carefully safeguarded for nearly a century.

2. The scale of the structure is incompatible with its surroundings. At 250 feet, the proposed arch would stand more than two and a half times the height of the Lincoln Memorial, which rises 99 feet, and would dominate every historic property in the Area of Potential Effects, including the Memorial Avenue Corridor and the National Mall. A structure of this magnitude does not complement the commemorative landscape; it overwhelms and diminishes its significance.

3. The proposal disrespects the solemn gateway to Arlington National Cemetery. Memorial Avenue and Memorial Circle form the dignified, contemplative approach to our nation's preeminent military cemetery, where service members and their families come to mourn and to honor the fallen. It erases the perpetual reminder as viewed from our nation's capital of those who sacrificed to achieve and preserve its greatness. Imposing a monumental arch at this threshold intrudes upon ground that should remain reserved for solemn remembrance, and it does so over the documented objections of veterans and Gold Star families.

4. The project threatens an already strained regional transportation corridor.

Memorial Circle and the George Washington Memorial Parkway carry an enormous volume of daily commuter and commercial traffic between Northern Virginia and the District. The associated plaza development, utility work, circulation changes, and construction staging identified in the planning materials would degrade mobility on this critical corridor during construction and, through permanent changes to traffic circulation, for years to come. The effects would fall disproportionately on our constituents.

5. The location raises serious aviation-safety questions. The site lies beneath the complex and heavily trafficked approach and departure paths serving Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. The introduction of a 250-foot structure into this airspace warrants

rigorous, independent review of its impact on aviation safety before any approval is contemplated. These concerns should be fully resolved, not deferred.

6. The Section 106 process here has been truncated and inadequate. A public comment window of roughly ten days is plainly insufficient for a federal undertaking of this magnitude and sensitivity. Meaningful consultation under Section 106 requires good-faith engagement with the Virginia State Historic Preservation Officer (the Department of Historic Resources), with affected local governments, and with the public. We urge NPS to extend the comment period, to formally invite the affected Virginia localities and the Commonwealth as consulting parties, and to ensure that the Assessment of Effects fully evaluates the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects on all historic properties within the Area of Potential Effects.

7. The proposal circumvents the longstanding planning process that governs National Park Service land in the capital. Since 1986, the Commemorative Works Act has required that any memorial placed on federal land in the District of Columbia and its environs proceed through a deliberate, multi-step framework, beginning with specific authorization by Congress and proceeding through site and design review by the National Capital Planning Commission and the Commission of Fine Arts, in consultation with the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission. The National Park Service and NCPC have long administered this review as a structured, multi-stage process, with heightened scrutiny for sites in the most sensitive areas of the monumental core. That framework exists precisely to prevent ad hoc, individually driven projects from being imposed on the nation's ceremonial landscape. Here, the undertaking has been advanced on an extraordinarily compressed schedule — without the congressional authorization the Act requires and ahead of the completed environmental, historic-preservation, and design reviews the law contemplates. Substituting executive expediency for this established process disregards both the governing law and the careful, century-long planning tradition, rooted in the McMillan Plans, that has shaped this landscape.

8. The undertaking is an im-

proper use of protected public parkland. This land is held in trust by NPS for the benefit of the public and for the preservation of nationally significant resources. Permanently encumbering it with a monument of this scale — along with the attendant maintenance, security, and infrastructure obligations borne by taxpayers — is contrary to the stewardship responsibilities that govern these grounds.

For the foregoing reasons, the undersigned respectfully request that the National Park Service: (1) find that the proposed undertaking would have an adverse effect on historic properties; (2) decline to approve construction of the Triumphal Arch at Memorial Circle; (3) extend the public comment period and conduct full and meaningful Section 106 consultation that includes the Commonwealth of Virginia and the affected Northern Virginia localities as consulting parties; and (4) give genuine consideration to a no-build alternative and to less intrusive means of commemorating the nation's 250th anniversary that do not compromise this irreplaceable historic landscape.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and ask that this letter be made part of the administrative record for this undertaking.

Respectfully submitted,

Sen. Scott A. Surovell,
Majority Leader Senate of Virginia, 34th District
Sen. Barbara A. Favola,
Senate of Virginia, 40th District
Del. Adele Y. McClure,
Virginia House of Delegates, 2nd District
Sen. Jeremy S. McPike,
Sen. Danica Roem,
Sen. Russet W. Perry,
Sen. Kannan Srinivasan,
Sen. Jennifer D. Carroll Foy,
Sen. David W. Marsden,
Sen. Stella G. Pekarsky,
Sen. Saddam Azlan Salim,
Sen. Jennifer B. Boysko,
Sen. Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker,
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Del. Kirk McPike,
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Del. Holly M. Seibold,
Del. Marcus B. Simon,
Del. Vivian E. Watts,
Del. Paul E. Krizek,
Del. Garrett McGuire,
Del. Elizabeth R. Guzman,
Del. Marty Martinez,
Del. John C. McAuliff

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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.

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:

- ❖ 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: 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.



Enjoy Fourth of July fireworks on July 3-4, 2026 at George Washington's Mount Vernon.

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.

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.

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.

NOW THRU JUNE 28

"Catching the Light" 2026 Art Exhibition and Sale. At Green Spring Gardens Horticultural Center, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Artists Reception - Sunday, May 17 from 1-3 p.m. Potomac Valley Watercolorists presents "Catching the Light," the 2026 edition of their annual nature-focused Art Exhibition and Sale. Green Spring Gardens "Art in The Garden Program" sponsored by the Friends of Green Spring invites visitors to enjoy this local, creative event. This annual fine art



Juneteenth events will be held Friday, June 19, 2026 in Alexandria.

show spotlights many of our region's most highly-skilled and well-known water media artists, and features more than 100 original framed works on display and available for purchase. Visit www.potomacvalleywatercolorists.org

JUNE 5-28

The "USA at 250" art exhibit celebrates our country's 250th birthday and captures the spirit of our nation, its past, present, and future, with artworks that highlight the splendor of our landscapes, people and history. View at Del Ray Artisans Gallery, 2704 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria VA. Hours are Thursdays 12-6 p.m., Fridays 12-9 p.m., Saturdays & Sundays 12-6 p.m. Details at DelRayArtisans.org/exhibits

NOW THRU JULY 26

Story Cloths and the Book: Work by New Image Artists. At the Athenaeum, Alexandria. Artists' Reception: Sunday, June 14, 4 - 6 p.m. In Story Cloths and the Book, New Image Artists explore their relationship with

reading, writing, meaning and process by pairing narrative textiles and mixed media with unique artist's books. A story cloth is a textile that contains a narrative that is community oriented, personal or historical in nature. The history of narrative textiles predates the invention of the printing press and books as we think of them today. The broad range of subjects interpreted in this exhibition includes an author of a classic mystery series, individual identity, family histories, the joy of summer and memories of well-loved books.

SUNDAY/JUNE 21

LIVE at the Lyceum: Luke Ratcliffe Piano Concert. 3 p.m. At The Lyceum, 201 S Washington St, Alexandria. Witness Luke Ratcliffe perform two classic Romantic composers live! Program includes Prelude in C-sharp Minor, Fantasy in F Minor, Nocturne in F-sharp Major, Barcarolle in F-sharp Major, Berceuse in D-flat Major, and Ballade No. 3 in A-flat Major by Frederic Chopin, as well as Piano Sonata in F Minor by Robert Schumann.

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Legals

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA BOARD OF EQUALIZATION HEARINGS

Pursuant to Section 58.1-3378 of the Code of Virginia, the Board of Equalization and Assessment Review for the City of Alexandria will convene on the following days to hear complaints of inequalities wherein the property owners allege a lack of equity or uniformity in assessment, errors in fact in such real estate assessments, or that the real property assessment is not assessed at fair market value. Upon hearing such complaints, the Board is legally authorized to INCREASE, DECREASE OR AFFIRM such real estate assessments. Participants can attend via Zoom Webinar or in person in suite 301, 100 N Pitt St., Alexandria, VA. Notification of any meeting cancellations will be posted at alexandriava.gov/realestate. The 2025-2026 hearing dates currently scheduled are:

Month	Date and Time
June	June 30, 2026 – 10:00 am
July	July 7, 2026 – 10:00 am

The deadline for filing an appeal was June 2, 2025; however, this appeal deadline is not applicable to appeals of assessments for real estate that was newly constructed pursuant to Virginia Code 59.1-3292.

Dockets for each hearing can be obtained by contacting the Office of Real Estate Assessments, 100 N Pitt Street, Suite 225, Alexandria, VA 22314 (by appointment only) between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Dockets can also be obtained via e-mail realestate@alexandriava.gov or by calling 703.746.4646.

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Gerald "Jerry" M. and Joanne M. O'Donnell.

In Loving Memory of Gerald "Jerry" M. and Joanne M. O'Donnell

Gerald M. O'Donnell Oct. 27, 1930 – May 25, 2026 (Age 95)
Joanne M. O'Donnell Jan. 19, 1935 – April 22, 2026 (Age 91)

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of Gerald M. O'Donnell and Joanne M. O'Donnell. Joanne passed away peacefully on April 22, 2026, at the age of 91. Just over a month later, Jerry followed his beloved wife on May 25, 2026, at the age of 95.

Born in Grafton, West Virginia, to George and Lelia O'Donnell, Jerry was raised in the Washington, D.C. area, spending fond childhood summers with his Aunt Eleonore and Uncle Earl in Clarksburg, West Virginia. A proud graduate of St. John's College High School, he went on to serve his country during the Korean War as a captain in the U.S. Army combat engineers. Upon his return, Jerry furthered his education, graduating from Georgetown University and The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law.

Jerry practiced law for over 45 years in Alexandria. A dedicated professional, he was appointed the first Chapter 13 Bankruptcy Trustee in the Alexandria Division of the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. He served in this capacity with distinction for over 33 years before retiring.

Joanne was born in Alexandria, Virginia, to Wilbur and Helen May, the eldest of ten children, she attended St. Mary's Grade School and graduated from St. Mary's Academy. In addition to being the loving heart of the O'Donnell home and dedicated caretaker of their five boys, Joanne worked side-by-

SEE OBITUARY, PAGE 15

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The new tent helped create a festive event.

Celebrating Gardening, Conservation and More

FROM PAGE 8

et.” And indeed, many commented on the beautiful setting with guests surrounded by gardens.

Jennifer Jewel, host of the public radio program, Cultivating Place, said that we all worry a lot about climate change, war and pollution, for example. “We should never look away from caring and see all that connects us with the land, sky and plant kingdom,” she challenged.

Suzanne Laporte, AHS President and Chief Executive Officer, told attendees that the gala, in part, was “special because of the new tent.” Under a clear heavy plastic tent offering views of the sky, gala-goers enjoyed a three-course dinner by Occasion Caterers which included elderflower-infused melon, sugar snap peas and a fresh pansy topping the trifle dessert.

Laporte commended outgoing Board of Directors Chair Scott Plein for negotiating and finalizing the property’s conservation easement with the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust, noting that his “knowledge of how it works is enormous.” She applauded his success in securing \$2 million from the Virginia General Assembly to help fund new accessi-

ble restrooms. Attendees toasted Plein for preserving River Farm forever. He served four years as chair and will continue as treasurer.

Awardees

Laporte presented the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award for lifetime achievement in horticulture to Dr. John Dole who chuckled that he started loving plants as a 4Her and as a youngster learned how to root roses from his neighbor. He is a horticultural science professor and researcher at North Carolina State University.

For helping save River Farm, Laporte gave the AHS Meritorious Service Award to “the faithful three,” Tim Conlon, Laura Dowling and Holly Shimizu. Shimizu remarked, “We regrouped. We began again. We’ve had a fresh start. This land is conserved forever.”

Conlon, head of Conlon Construction, echoed Shimizu’s comments, saying, “AHS is firmly planted at River Farm.

Jane Josoff read Dowling’s remarks, who wrote, “I could not imagine massive commercial development here and that I let it happen. That conviction was my north star.” Dowling was Chief Floral Designer at the White House from 2009 to 2015. Shimizu

is a Maryland horticulturalist and educator.

The dinner’s co-chairs were Roger and Mary Bowers who live nearby.

The Threat

River Farm is a 25-acre site on the Potomac River, one of George Washington’s original five farms. In 2020, the AHS Board of Directors announced plans to sell it, prime waterfront property. Many locals and elected officials objected and launched a campaign to save the property and retain public access. Eventually, some board members resigned. Others re-organized and reversed the sale plan.

On May 1, officials hosted a ribbon cutting to announce a conservation easement to protect the property forever. The Northern Virginia Conservation Trust holds the easement which among other provisions prevents subdividing the property, blocks inappropriate development, protects the forests and shoreline and provides public access.

Founded in 1922, American Horticultural Society is a member-based, national non-profit organization of over 22,000 gardeners, plant enthusiasts, horticultural professionals and partner organizations.

Visit www.ahsgardening.org.

Burton Won't Be "Worsen"



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Nearly three and a half years since his birth, Burton is finally learnin'. After two-plus months of misbehaven' we finally hired a dog trainer to get us and Burton back on track. Certainly, after three dogs, we knew not just the basics, but the intermediates, maybe even some of the advanced. Nevertheless, his obstinate behavior made it quite clear that Burton was in control. However, since he would "Sit," usually "Stay," sometimes "Come," once-in-a-while "Shake" non-stop with alternating front paws, and walk on a leash (but rarely "Heal,"), we thought we were in control. We weren't. He was. Although we didn't realize until it manifested in the following behaviors: he did struggle with "Down," regularly jumped and growled at moving cars and always was a "nosy parker," needing to check out everything he saw or heard in our neighborhood; it all seemed relatively normal/familiar - to us; growing pains you might say. But worst of all, and what precipitated our call/need for help; while returning home from any and all walks, Burton would stop and fall/lay down (it's called the "pancake flop" - as seen on the internet) and refuse to get up until he was good and ready. It was not good and he was never ready. Despite our coaxing and/or pulling on his leash/collar - while encouraging (I use that term loosely, yelling actually), Burton would just give me the side eye while continuing to lay on his side, barely moving a muscle. Walking our way home, Burton would flop at least a half-a-dozen times with each flop causing a 5 - 15-minute delay. And what was his absolute worst behavior, once we finally made it back to our house, Burton would refuse to go inside leading to an inevitable tug-of-war which we would lose and resulted in yet another delay. As such, walks with Burton became increasingly frustrating and terribly unpleasant. We were at a loss as to how to survive the ordeal.

As it happened, I needed to pick up some syringes at the vet's office for one of our cats, Andrew, who needs daily steroid injections. After a 10-minute or so drive, I arrived, parked my car and walked inside. As I was standing against their front counter, waiting my turn, I noticed a business card holder in plain sight to my left. I picked up one of the cards. It was for a dog trainer - "35 years' experience." That's a coincidence, I thought, we need a dog trainer, desperately, so I put a card in my wallet to take home and discuss with Dina.

Having already considered changing Burton's dog collar and leash, getting him a full exam, visiting a dog behaviorist and even consulting a pet psychic - which we did over the phone, we decided it made sense to call this dog trainer and hear what he had to say. When we spoke, he sounded very reasonable as he laid out his methodology/philosophy: "Dogs are a pack animal and need a leader." And from what dog misbehavior I was describing, Burton, he said, was "definitely disrespecting me/my authority and treating me like just another member of the pack." Not the kind of relationship I should be having with me dog, apparently. Since we agreed with most of what he was saying, we decided to hire him/give him a chance to change our pack dynamic.

It's been five weeks since the training visits began. Burton's behavior has done an about face. Our joke has been: "who stole our dog and what happened to Burton?" With the help of an "e-collar," and transmitter, Burton has not only turned the corner, he's on the straight and narrow to leash-less living. He is a completely different - and now responsive/obedient, dog. It's amazing. His behavior has evolved from recalcitrant to compliant almost. No more "pancake flops," no more stick eating, no more rock swallowing, no more grass grazing and no more battles to get him in the house. He has become an amazing and wonderful dog. And he comes running when we call his name. Unbelievable. From our perspective, he looks happy. Smiling almost. He has been transformed and per his training, so have we.

Now if I can only find an e-collar for my wife.

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

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of Gerald "Jerry" M. and Joanne M. O'Donnell

FROM PAGE 14

side with Jerry as the office manager for his law practice until their retirement. In retirement Joanne and Jerry focused their time and efforts on family and friends, bringing support, joy, and laughter to all those who knew them.

Jerry and Joanne shared an extraordinary love story, celebrating over 70 years of marriage. Together, they built a beautiful life centered around faith, family, and a lifelong love of the beach. Their home in Bethany Beach, Delaware, served as a constant and cherished gathering spot for their ever-growing family.

They are survived by five devoted sons: Kevin, Brian, Philip, Mark, and Keith. Their remarkable legacy of love also lives on in 14 cherished grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren, all of whom brought

them immense joy. Because they were rarely apart in life, it is only fitting we celebrate their lives together. A combined memorial service honoring Jerry and Joanne will be held at Blessed Sacrament Church in Alexandria, Virginia, on June 26, 2026, at 11 a.m.. A reception celebrating their remarkable journey will immediately follow the service at Clyde's of Mark Center.

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