

Alexandria Times

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Alexandria's only independent hometown newspaper.

DECEMBER 26, 2019

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW



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A LOOK BACK ON 2019

As we prepare to leap into a new decade on Jan. 1, 2020, it's worth taking stock of both the year and the decade that are drawing to a close.

The 2010s may be best remembered for the disturbing erosion of trust between our citizenry and government, both nationally and locally. This withering of the bonds between those governing and those governed is not new, but the rancor was worse in 2019 both in Alexandria and across the Potomac River.

Trust once eroded is not easily recaptured. This is true in personal relationships, and it's also true of our institutions.

Nationally, many people in the non-coastal regions of the United States felt so alienated from their government that they fueled the improbable election of Donald Trump as president in 2016.

Locally, as this year-in-review issue of the Alexandria Times shows, there were numerous controversial local topics that boiled into anger and, in some cases, lawsuits against the city. Four 2019 topics in particular stand out for their controversy:

•**Electric scooters:** The city implemented a pilot e-scooter program in 2019 that resulted in numerous abuses, particularly scooters being ridden and left sprawling on sidewalks and unsafe riding. Old Town residents in particular complained about

scooters' invasiveness. But scooters were also popular, with more than 230,000 rides taken during 2019. City council ultimately made changes to the program and agreed to give scooters another 12-month trial.

•**Seminary Road:** When city council voted 4-3 to implement a narrowing of a .9 mile stretch of Seminary Road from four to two driving lanes with a center turning lane, there was an eruption of anger from nearby residents. Disgruntled residents created a Facebook page that now has more than 1,000 members. Councilor Amy Jackson recently made a motion to rescind the decision, and it is expected to be reconsidered at a future council legislative meeting.

•**The Halal butchery:** After city council voted to allow the only live animal butcher shop inside the beltway to open near numerous businesses that provide services for animals, a group of business owners and residents sued the city. The suit was ultimately dismissed for lack of standing by the plaintiffs, but many residents and business owners in the Duke Street corridor region remain angry.

•**The Potomac Yard Metro Station:** This issue's long history predates 2019 and includes a FOIA request by residents and city council's vote to build the station on the site

that allowed maximum commercial development, but was also the most environmentally destructive location. Four acres of wetlands will either be permanently or temporarily destroyed by construction. A groundbreaking ceremony for the new station was held on Dec. 19.

These four issues touch on Alexandria's eastern, middle and western sections. It's not one small, localized group of residents disgruntled by the decisions of city leaders, but rather large swaths of the city.

We see no easy path forward that leads to reconciliation. But we will continue to play our role as the "Fourth Estate" in 2020, by providing thorough, on-going coverage of these and other topics that significantly impact life in Alexandria.

In 2019, we did an eight-part series on scooters, accompanied by several editorials and columns, and we provided a forum for community members to present their views on our editorial pages. We also wrote multiple stories on Seminary Road, the Potomac Yard Metro, the Halal Butchery and other topics such as the citywide, summer-long Metro shutdown.

Other significant news coverage included the sea change on both Alexandria's city council and school board, as both received an influx of new, first-time

elected officeholders. The newcomers constituted the majority on both bodies.

This change perhaps most profoundly impacted the school board, where the five new members forced consideration of a second high school as a potential solution to Alexandria's school overcrowding problem. While that option ultimately was not chosen, its consideration was the result of new officeholders listening to their constituents.

In 2019, the Times also continued to provide feature profiles about fascinating Alexandrians. We profiled Renee Adams, the poetry lady of Del Ray. We wrote about Lisa Maddox, a former CIA employee who founded an ancestry research company.

We wrote about Carletha West, who celebrated her 107th birthday in 2019, and about Fred and Cathy Sachs, Old Town residents who run an organic grain farm on Virginia's Northern Neck. We also told the story of local realtor Sally Z. Harper, whose father starred for the Washington Senators in the 1924 World Series.

We are excited about several new offerings in our pages during 2019 and look forward to their continued growth in 2020. Foremost was Port City Flavor, our new, expanded food section. As Alexandria has become a noted foodie destination in

recent years, the Times has worked to capture the excitement around this new scene.

In 2019, we profiled numerous chefs and their new restaurants, and have welcomed the participation of many of Alexandria's leading restaurateurs on the pages of Port City Flavor, including Cheesetique's Jill Erber, Virtue Feed and Grain's Tom Gale, Brabo's Sebastien Rondier, Jackson 20's Peter McCall and others.

Other sections that debuted in the Times in 2019 were Health & Wellness, Finance and Better With Age – a section devoted to seniors.

Stay tuned for new Times offerings in 2020, including podcast interviews with interesting Alexandrians, which will launch in January.

Finally, we thank our many advertisers, without whom local news would not be possible, and who continue to see their businesses benefit from the exposure they receive on our print pages and from our digital products.

And of course, we thank our loyal readers, who care so deeply about Alexandria that they stay abreast of local issues, write letters to the editor, serve on boards and commissions and contribute to this wonderful community in countless ways.

We wish you a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous 2020!

- The Times Staff


 JANUARY

New mayor, council sworn in



PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN

Mayor Justin Wilson and incoming council members are sworn in at T.C. Williams High School on Jan. 2

Change was in the air of the T.C. Williams High School auditorium on the evening of Jan. 2 as new Mayor Justin Wilson and the incoming city council were sworn in on stage.

It was a night of firsts for both Alexandria as a city and the individuals on stage. Four of the six incoming councilors, Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Canek Aguirre, Amy Jackson and Mo Seifeldin, are first-time elected officials and join re-elected coun-

cilors John Chapman and Del Pepper on city council.

In a first for city council, all seven elected officials took an ethics pledge, administered by Clerk of the Circuit Court Edward Semonian, promising to serve the public with “integrity, impartiality and transparency.”

School capacity, city infrastructure and affordable housing were topics of conversation throughout the night, along with continued development in the West End.

Other notable events:

- Former City Councilor George Cook dies at 85.
- Local businesses step up to help out-of-work federal employees during government shutdown.
- Del Ray's Bombay Curry Company closes.
- Julius Campell, 1971 T.C. Williams football captain, dies at 65

New Patrick Henry School opens

After 18 months of construction, the new Patrick Henry School and Patrick Henry Neighborhood Recreation Center opened to students and the community on Jan. 22.

The project, which broke ground on June 22, 2017, expanded Patrick Henry from a 650-student, pre-K through fifth grade school into a 900-student, kindergarten through eighth grade school. The project cost \$62.8 million, \$52.3 million for the school and \$10.5 million for the rec center, Senior Project Manager Paul May said.

The new three-story school has expanded parking, a new Tot Lot, a cafetorium, a black box theater for performances and a gymnasium. The school shares several of those spaces – the black box theater, gym-



PHOTO/ACPS

Students enter the new Patrick Henry School for the first time on Jan 22.

nasium and a multipurpose room – with the rec center. The shared spaces are restricted to school use until 4:30 p.m., after which they are available to community members through the rec center.

The recreation center fea-

tures an indoor track, a flex court for basketball, volleyball and pickleball and new fields – including one made of synthetic turf. It also has multipurpose rooms for community classes on everything from programming to arts and crafts.

Hammond evacuated after bomb threat

Francis C. Hammond Middle School students were rerouted to T.C. Williams High School on their way to school the morning of Jan. 8 in response to a bomb threat, according to a news re-

lease.

At 11:37 a.m., about three hours after the initial evacuation, the Alexandria Police Department reported that it had finished checking the school

and determined it was safe for students to return. Hammond students were transported back to the school after being fed lunch at T.C., according to another release.

Civil Rights in Alexandria: The day two sisters proved T.C. Williams wrong

Sixty years ago, the namesake of Alexandria's only public high school – former superintendent Thomas Chambliss “T.C.” Williams – appeared in a federal courtroom to defend the policies that preserved segregation in the city's public schools.

Unreported at the time, the school's chief, in his initial denial of the students' application to attend all-white schools, deemed the prospect of black and white students sitting in class together “a very questionable situation.” Williams later refused to say under oath whether he personally agreed with segregation one way or another.

Ultimately, a federal judge denied the school system's bid to reject the applications

of nine out of 14 black students seeking to attend white schools during the 1958-59 school year. On the day of that decision, Feb. 10, 1959 – more than four years after the Supreme Court's “Brown v. Board of Education” ruling – racial barriers in Alexandria public schools quietly fell. There were no riots. There were no massive demonstrations. Except for reporters and police, few citizens bothered to show up when school opened that day.

Read the full story – with personal accounts from Kathryn Turner and Sandra Turner Bond, two of the first black students to integrate Alexandria schools – at www.alexandria.com/2019/01/turner-sisters.

Boozy Taco Bell spices up Old Town

After almost a year of anticipation, the new Taco Bell Cantina opened at 417 King St., serving up all of the Taco Bell fan favorites plus new shareable items. The hallmark of the Cantina menu, though, is its beer, wine and alcoholic Twisted Freezes.

The new urban concepts mark a shift in the Taco Bell brand, as it has been historically focused on suburban locations with drive-thru lanes. Not having a drive-thru is one commonality across Cantina restaurants, in addition to featuring open kitchen concepts.

The Alexandria Cantina has 72 total seats, 52 indoor and 20 outdoor, according to its special use permit application. It operates from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily, with outdoor dining ending at 11 p.m.

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FEBRUARY

Judge rules for city in Karig lawsuit

Judge Lisa Kemler brought an end to the Karig Estates debate at a hearing on Feb. 6 when she ruled in favor of the City of Alexandria.

The Karig Estates development involves the construction of four single-family homes at 3832 and 3834 Seminary Road. In November 2017, the planning commission approved changes to the proposed site plan. City council subsequently passed the measure by a 6-1 vote.

Residents filed a lawsuit in spring 2018 alleging that the

planning commission and city council did not have sufficient evidence regarding the environmental effects of the project.

Kemler said that the record was sufficient enough for the planning commission and city council to make their decisions.

"The fact that the petitioners pointed to evidence supporting their position does not mean that there's a lack of substantial evidence," Kemler said. "It just means that there is conflicting evidence or conflicting opinions."

BAR approves extensive changes to Justice Hugo Black house



COURTESY PHOTO

The historic home at 619 S. Lee St. has been owned by former Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black.

It's not often that Alexandria's various historic preservation organizations band together to oppose a project, but one family's home improvement request united the masses.

In early February, the Old and Historic Alexandria Board of Architectural Review approved a request to renovate the historic property at 619 S. Lee St. known as the Vowell-Snowden-Black House. With the approval, owners Lori and Nigel Morris

plan to demolish pieces of the house and put on several additions. The project also involves restoring certain historic features that have deteriorated over time.

The property is a designated Virginia landmark, according to the Historic Alexandria Foundation. Because of the house's historic status, the renovation project attracted significant public attention and opposition from various local and regional organizations.

LaBoy shooter rearrested

Kashif Bashir, who was arrested for shooting Alexandria Police Officer Peter LaBoy in 2013, was arrested again in early February and charged with arson and illegal possession of firearms.

In the LaBoy case, Bashir was found not guilty by reason of insanity by Alexandria Circuit Court Judge James C. Clark in 2014.

After receiving treatment for his paranoid schizophrenia in a mental institution for five years, Bashir was determined by Clark to be competent in June 2018 and was released.

Bashir's cases have raised concerns that the Virginia court system does not allow a guilty but mentally ill verdict.



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FEBRUARY

Common Plate Hospitality opens Urbano 116 on King Street



PHOTO/ @SHOOTJOEC

Urbano 116 features a bar top with views of King Street and a walk-up churro window.

Years in the making, the highly anticipated Urbano 116 opened in early 2019. The 160-seat, authentic Mexican restaurant is owned by Common Plate Hospitality, a

fast-growing restaurant group. "What we wanted to create was the opposite of what Old Town is known for," Chad Sparrow, a member of Common Plate Hospitality, said. "We wanted some-

thing where you walk in, and you don't feel like you're in Old Town. You feel like you're in New York or Miami or D.C., just somewhere that has a more urban vibe, a more hip, trendy vibe."

Council approves live poultry butcher shop

City council approved a special use permit for a live poultry butcher shop at 3225 Colvin St. on March 26.

Council granted the SUP for the Halal butchery by a vote of 5-2, with Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker and Councilor Amy Jackson voting against the permit.

With the vote, council gave DC Poultry Market Corporation, a company also known as Saba



PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN

Live Poultry that operates 14 locations nationwide, permission to house and butcher live poultry at the Colvin Street location.

The butcher shop was intensely opposed by numerous nearby businesses and residents. The shop will be in close proximity to various pet businesses, including Frolick Dogs, Dogtopia, Pinnacle Pet Spa & More and Wholistic Hound Academy. Colvin Street is also the location of the city's Love Your Pet Day, an annual block party at which Alexandrians celebrate their animals.

Council makes Old Town parking pilot permanent

Council voted unanimously to make a pay-by-phone parking pilot permanent at its public hearing on March 16.

The pilot program, which has been controversial since its inception in 2016, allows residents in Old Town to petition for their block to have pay-by-phone parking. Since 2016,

the program has been implemented on 13 blocks. Vehicles without residential parking stickers must pay for parking on these blocks through a mobile app.

To become a pay-by-phone block, residents must submit a petition signed by occupants of more than 50 percent of the

residential properties abutting the block, according to a staff report. Eligible blocks must either have existing metered spaces, be adjacent to an existing metered block or be adjacent to a block where a residential pay-by-phone parking fee has already been approved.

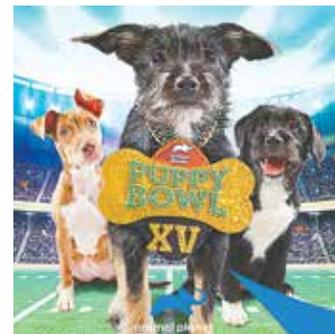
Alexandria dog takes the field for Puppy Bowl XV

Arrrr you ready for some football?

Local pup Pirate, an alumnus of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, took the field with Team Ruff in Puppy Bowl XV on Feb. 3.

Just hours before the Rams and the Patriots went head-to-head in the biggest football game of the year, Team Ruff and Team Fluff went nose-to-nose in the cutest football game of the year.

Each year, the Puppy Bowl features adoptable puppies from shelters and rescues across the country, and since its inception, 100 percent of the animals who have participated in the event have been adopted, according to



PHOTO/ ANIMAL PLANET

Pirate, right, was chosen to be featured in Animal Planet's Puppy Bowl XV poster.

Animal Planet's website.

Pirate was adopted days after filming the Puppy Bowl in October 2018.

Other notable events:

- Old Town Books launches community-centric, independent bookstore.
- Virginia General Assembly approves funding for combined sewer outfall remediation.
- Alexandria pastor sentenced for investment fraud.

MARCH

High tech public art shines in Waterfront Park



PHOTO/ CODY MELLO-KLEIN

Mirror Mirror, a new public art project, opened at Waterfront Park in late March.

Pier restaurants earn council approval

City council voted unanimously to approve three new restaurant spaces at the former Robinson Terminal South site on the waterfront at its March public hearing.

Alexandria Restaurant Part-

ners plans to open the pier restaurant, as well as a smaller café restaurant on shore that will also serve as the prep kitchen for the pier. The 10 Duke St. restaurant will be run by Murray Bonitt of Bonitt Builders.

MARCH

Clerk of Court Ed Semonian retires after 40 years

When Ed Semonian first ran for the circuit court clerk's office in 1979, he did so reluctantly. He had retired after working for years as a lawyer and legal counsel. The plan, if he won, was to serve two eight-year terms. That plan was only off by 24 years.

At the end of 2019, Semonian will finally retire - after 40 years as Alexandria's clerk of the court.

For Alexandria's lawyers, ministers, law enforcement officials and residents, Semonian, 86, has been a quiet, constant

presence in a city that has changed dramatically during his tenure. Alexandria's population has expanded, urban renewal efforts have changed the city's landscape and Semonian's office even moved from city hall to the courthouse. Semonian has seen it all, but he is now ready to move on with the same clear-headed practicality he brought to the job.

"If I had to do it all over again, I would," Semonian said. "I look upon it as a function, and I did it the best I could."



PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN
Alexandria Clerk of Court Ed Semonian.

SSSAS boys' basketball team wins state championship

The St. Stephen's and St. Agnes boys' varsity basketball team hit a historic high on March 2, ending its impressive 27-3 season with a 67-58 win against crosstown rival Epis-

copal High School to win the Virginia Independent Schools Athletic Association state tournament. It is the first time SSSAS has won the tournament since 1990.

Other notable events:

- Alexandria family raises organic grain in Westmoreland County.
- Episcopal and Monumental Theater partnership spotlights process behind plays.
- Four moms lead rec basketball team to victory.
- Drybar opens in Old Town.

APRIL

T.C. lights case heads to trial

Loudoun Circuit Court Judge Thomas D. Horne ruled on April 17 to send the long-debated controversy over lights at the T.C. Williams High School football stadium to trial.

The case is about whether Alexandria City Public Schools can legally add lights to Parker-Gray Stadium at T.C. Williams High School. The mostly African American residents whose homes border the stadium allege that ACPS can't add lights because it would be breaking

a promise the school division made to those residents and their ancestors in the 1960s.

The defendants - the City of Alexandria and the Alexandria City School Board - attempted to have the case dismissed, but Horne's denial of those demurrers signifies that the case will go to trial.

Following Horne's order overruling 11 arguments and denying demurrers, there will be a hearing in the near future to determine a trial date.

Landmark Mall plan advances

Landmark Mall, Alexandria's major West End development project, took a significant step forward, as city council approved a revised master plan for the long-gestating site during its April public hearing.

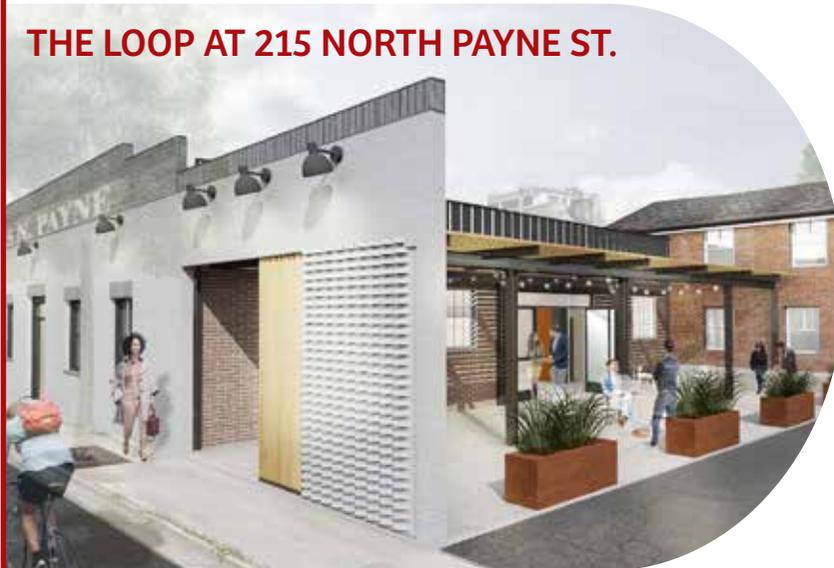
According to a Department of Planning and Zoning staff report, the new master plan,

deemed a "refinement" of the 2009 master plan, features a transportation hub to connect the Landmark Mall area with the rest of the West End transit corridor, a revised plan for the site's Duke Street crossing to improve safety, an emphasis on affordable housing and open space for the West End community.



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APRIL

Patrick Henry swing space plan advances

A preliminary plan to use the old Patrick Henry School building as a swing space while Douglas MacArthur Elementary School is rebuilt was approved by the school board on April 4. The decision is projected to delay opening of new athletic fields at Patrick Henry by about four years, until fall 2023.

The plan, which the community learned about just two weeks prior to the vote, was intensely opposed by residents near Patrick Henry. Despite approving the measure by an 8-1 vote, school board members expressed concern at the meeting about a range of factors, including equity, safety, the compressed timeframe for the decision and lack of

details before the vote.

The new Patrick Henry School opened on Jan. 22, and the old building was slated for demolition in March to create new fields and open play spaces for Patrick Henry students and community members.

However, shortly before completion of the new building, ACPS began exploring the possibility of using it as a swing space while Douglas MacArthur Elementary School is torn down and rebuilt. The open space at MacArthur was deemed inadequate to hold enough temporary trailers or the new school building, meaning the existing building must be torn down to accommodate the rebuild.

WMATA extends summer shutdown

After promising that the summer shutdown of all Alexandria Metro stations would be complete by Labor Day, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority announced on April 18 that construction had been extended by six days.

The construction involved extensive platform maintenance at the Braddock Road, King Street and Eisenhower Avenue Metro stations and caused all six stations south of Reagan National Airport to be

simultaneously closed. WMATA announced the summer closure in May 2018, along with a timeline stating all work would be completed between May 25, 2019 and Sept. 2, 2019.

Just a month before work was set to begin, the transit authority extended the project through Sept. 8. The six additional days were set aside to address long-standing design issues at the Braddock Road Station, according to a WMATA news release.

Alexandria celebrates new poet laureate KaNikki Jakarta

The Office of the Arts and the Alexandria Library hosted an induction reception for Alexandria's newly appointed poet laureate, award-winning poet KaNikki Jakarta, in April.

Jakarta will serve as the city's poet laureate for a three-year term. The Office of the Arts re-established the Alexandria Poet Laureate program in 2007, according to a news release.

Jakarta is a performance poet who has toured throughout the United States and United Kingdom and brings more than 26



COURTESY PHOTO

KaNikkia Jakarta.

years' worth of experience to Alexandria, according to the release.

Other notable events:

- Renée Adams celebrates 10 years of her poetry fence.
- New toast, juice bar Toastique opens.
- Alexandria Times wins 21 Virginia Press Association awards.

MAY

Budget passes without tax rate hike

Council unanimously adopted the fiscal year 2020 operating budget on May 1, maintaining the real estate tax rate for the second year in a row.

This year's general fund budget was \$761.5 million, an increase of 1.75 percent over FY2019. This is the second year in a row council

has voted to maintain the real estate tax rate at \$1.13 per \$100 of assessed value. While the tax rate remained steady, there was an increase in property tax revenue year over year because property values rose.

The budget approved by council included \$231.7 million

in operating funds for Alexandria City Public Schools, a 3.5 percent increase over FY2019 funding. Council also approved the 10-year capital improvement program for FY2020 to FY2029, which includes \$1.62 billion of capital investment over the next 10 years.

Metro shutdown arrives

After a year of apprehension, the Metro shutdown officially commenced on May 27, disrupting the commutes and travel routines of thousands of Alexandria residents and visitors.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority announced in May 2018 that all stations south of Reagan National Airport would be closed during summer 2019 from Memorial Day to Labor Day for platform maintenance. WMATA later extended the shutdown by six days to Sept. 8, 2019.

Working with WMATA, local businesses and the state, the city put together a mitigation



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station.

strategy that included free WMATA shuttle buses, expanded DASH services, HOV lane modifications and other temporary traffic changes.

Man who killed his grandfather sentenced to 66 years

Alexandria resident Dallas Jermaine Smith, 32, was sentenced to 66 years and six months in prison by an Alexandria jury on May 23 for murder in the first degree and the use of a firearm in the commission of murder, according to a news release. The victim was Dallas' 84-year-old grandfather, Jerry Scott.

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MAY

Black house renovation advances

The Hugo Black house controversy came to a peak in the crowded city council chambers on May 14, when council unanimously voted to allow the renovation project to move forward.

Council voted to affirm the Board of Architectural Review's Feb. 6 decision to approve partial demolition, additions and alterations at 619 S. Lee St. The Historic Alexandria Foundation, Inc. had appealed the decision.

The project attracted opposition from several historic preservation organizations in Alexandria, including HAF, that claimed the proposed alterations to the home violate a historic preservation easement on the property.

After the testimony of almost 30 speakers, several councilors cited the division of duties between local bodies and the easement holder as their reasoning behind denying the appeal.

Former T.C. football coach Bill Yoast dies at 94

Bill Yoast, the former T.C. Williams High School football coach whose key role in the team's integration was memorialized in the movie "Remember the Titans," died May 23 at an assisted living facility in Springfield, Virginia. He was 94.

Under his guidance, the defense recorded shutouts in nine of their 13 games in 1971 – topped off with a 27-0 victory in the state title game. While the Titans were never again able to replicate that dominant 1971 campaign, Yoast remained as a coach until 1996.



PHOTO/ACPS
Herman Boone and Bill Yoast at the 2014 ACPS' Inaugural Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony.

Other notable events:

- DASH drivers vote for strike authorization.
- Alexandria man charged in Woodbridge murder.
- SSSAS lax dominates states.
- Lost Boy Cider finds its home.

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JUNE

School board adopts FY2020 budget

School board members voted unanimously to approve Superintendent Dr. Gregory Hutchings' fiscal year 2020 combined funds budget and FY2020-2029 Capital Improvement Program budget on June 6.

The FY2020 combined funds budget, also known as the operating budget, totals \$286,415,016, an increase

of \$10,991,952, or 3.9 percent, from FY2019.

After community uproar around Hutchings' proposal to outsource 30 custodial positions, Hutchings' revised plan was adopted, retaining 20 of the positions and outsourcing the jobs of 10 workers with five years of experience or less.

Joe Sestak announces presidential run

City resident Joe Sestak, a former Democratic congressman from Pennsylvania, announced that he was running for president.

Sestak joined a crowded field, becoming the 25th major Democratic candidate vying to unseat President Trump in the 2020 election.

Greg Parks wins Democratic clerk of court nomination



COURTESY PHOTO

Greg Parks.

Greg Parks won Alexandria's Democratic clerk of court nomination during the primary on June 11 by 894 votes, according to the Virginia Department of Elections.

With all 31 precincts reporting, Parks took 4,192 votes – 55.97 percent – while his opponent Ben Ortiz took 3,298 votes – 44.03 percent of the vote.

Parks came into the race with experience working as an attorney at the federal level, while Ortiz came in with 15 years of experience in the clerk's office. Parks emphasized three central ideas throughout his campaign: technological modernization, customer service and access to justice.

VT Innovation Campus relocates

The Virginia Tech Innovation Campus coming to Alexandria will be located on a much larger site than the one announced last fall, Virginia Tech President Tim Sands announced on June 10.

The campus will now be located

in Potomac Yard on the east side of Route 1, adjacent to the planned Potomac Yard Metro Station. As part of a 65-acre mixed-use development district, it will be twice the size of the original parcel of land.

Traffic and Parking Board votes on Seminary Road



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

The intersection of Seminary Road and Greenwood Place.

The Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board voted 3-2 on June 24 to recommend that Seminary Road remain a four-lane street, with the addition of two new traffic lights.

City staff's recommendation to the board involved removing a vehicular lane from a stretch of the road spanning from Saint Stephens Road to Zabriskie Drive. That lane would be re-

placed by a new median, and a crosswalk would be added.

Community members showed up en force to express concerns. Some argued in favor of a "road diet," which would remove a lane entirely, citing safety concerns. Others argued in favor maintaining four lanes and expressed concerns regarding heavy traffic with reduced lanes.

Other notable events

- City receives draft permit to fill Potomac Yard Metro wetlands.
- Alexandria Little League team heads to states.
- Fire Chief Robert Dube retires.
- Friends of Guest House expands to South Payne Street.



The Good Life

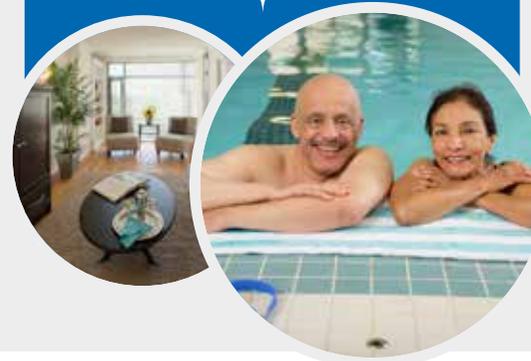
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Scooters in Alexandria

Between the imminent arrival of Amazon and Virginia Tech and the Seminary Road controversy, there was no shortage of news this year. But above all, 2019 was the year of the scooter. Since launching in January, the city's e-scooter pilot program has drawn a lot of eyes – and feet – to a new form of mobility.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

A migrating flock comes to Alexandria

In summer 2018, as birds were chirping and flowers were in full bloom, a new kind of flock came to Alexandria and the region: e-scooters. Companies rolled out fleets of dockless electric scooters without permits, and cities were forced

to respond.

Local municipalities worked to control the flood of e-scooters; state legislators rushed to craft a bill to regulate the devices. The bill passed through the Virginia General Assembly on Feb. 21, and Gov. Ralph Northam signed

the bill in late March.

City council approved its pilot program on Nov. 13, 2018 and the first approved scooters began appearing in January 2019. By the end of 2019, seven companies had signed memorandums of understanding with the city.

Anatomy of the scooter pilot

The city's e-scooter pilot launched in January and outlined regulations for companies and, to a lesser extent, riders.

In order to operate in the city, companies had to pay a \$5,000 surety bond, \$5,000 permit fee and sign a memorandum of understanding with the city. As of December 2019, Lime, Lyft, Bird, Bolt, Skip, Spin and Jump had signed MOUs to operate in the city.

Companies were required to respond to reports or complaints within two hours, and each company was limited to a maximum of 200 deployable scooters.

Scooters spark concern

Old Town and Del Ray were hot spots for scooters – companies deployed about 60 percent of their fleets in Old Town – and the sheer number of scooters at the beginning of the program drew intense opposition from residents who were tired of seeing toppled heaps of scooters in front of their doors and blocking sidewalks.

And while the city's memorandum of understanding was designed to keep companies in check, it did not control rider behavior, which remained a concern for many residents throughout the pilot.

Riders find scooters useful, fun

While a chorus of outrage echoed across Alexandria over the presence of e-scooters, many residents – mostly younger commuters – flocked to the disruptive technology for its convenience and accessibility.

Some used the scooters for weekend joyrides, while others used the devices to close the last mile gap in a commute.

By October, there were, on average, about 15,000 riders per month who had taken 230,000 total trips over the course of the pilot, according to the city, averaging out to about 26,000 trips per month.

Pilot raises safety, enforcement concerns

Five months into the nine-month long e-scooter pilot program, and the initial swell of public concern had somewhat died down. However, safety remained a point of concern both for pedestrians and riders.

Rider behavior, as well as state laws that require only those under the age of 14 to wear helmets, left residents expecting the worst and the Alexandria Po-

lice Department struggling in the wake of a new form of mobility.

Residents reported riders operating on sidewalks, which was prohibited, running stop signs and going down the wrong side of the street. As the pilot neared its conclusion, the city clamped down on sidewalk riding, but both safety and enforcement remained question marks in the minds of many residents.

Councilor Mo Seifeldein calls for suspension of scooter pilot

Councilor Mo Seifeldein called for the temporary suspension of the city's e-scooter pilot program due to concerns around safety, equity and environmental sustainability on June 20.

Seifeldein said he called for

the temporary suspension in order to talk with staff, community members and the local law community about how the city could address these concerns, regulate scooters and evaluate potential ways forward for the program.

State scooter bill passed to regulate scooters

Parts of a state bill passed by the Virginia General Assembly in February and signed by Gov. Ralph Northam in March took effect in July in order to regulate e-scooters. Other aspects of the state bill will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

The bill defined motorized scooters in state code, outlined

regulations for rider behavior and impacted local governments' ability to regulate scooters in significant ways.

The simple act of defining scooters under the new state code granted city government the power to pursue more serious scooter regulation, especially as it pertained to sidewalk riding.

Four scooter crashes occur by August

The city's fourth reported scooter crash occurred on Aug. 3. The incident occurred at the intersection of Main Line Boulevard and Potomac Avenue and the rider was sent to a local hospital. No other vehicle was involved in the crash.

This was the fourth reported scooter crash in the city. The first occurred in April when a rider was hit by a car and sustained only "minor scrapes," according to a memo from city staff.

The second incident occurred in May, quickly followed by a third in July. The latter resulted in a minor head injury for the rider and a trip to George Washington University Hospital. Both the second and third crashes involved a rider but no other moving vehicle.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

Mid-pilot changes aim to improve the program

Staff made changes to the pilot over the summer in an attempt to address specific safety concerns.

Department of Transportation and Environmental Services staff installed temporary variable message boards to educate riders about sidewalk riding.

In July, staff implemented

geofencing, a GPS-based technology that prohibits riders from starting or ending a trip in a specific area.

Geofenced areas included the waterfront, Market Square and some Metro stops. In August, staff painted designated parking corrals for scooters in Old Town.

City staff extends the pilot to the end of the year

In an Aug. 23 memo, city staff announced its decision to extend the nine-month e-scooter pilot program until the end of the year.

The city's memorandum of understanding included language that permitted staff to extend the program, in order to analyze data,

collect community input and craft a recommendation for city council.

City staff decided to extend the pilot until the end of 2019 in order to leave time for any necessary changes that had to be made based on the results of city council's vote in November.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

City council approves a phase two scooter pilot

City council voted unanimously to approve a phase II dockless e-scooter pilot program during a public hearing on Dec. 14, extending the program for another year.

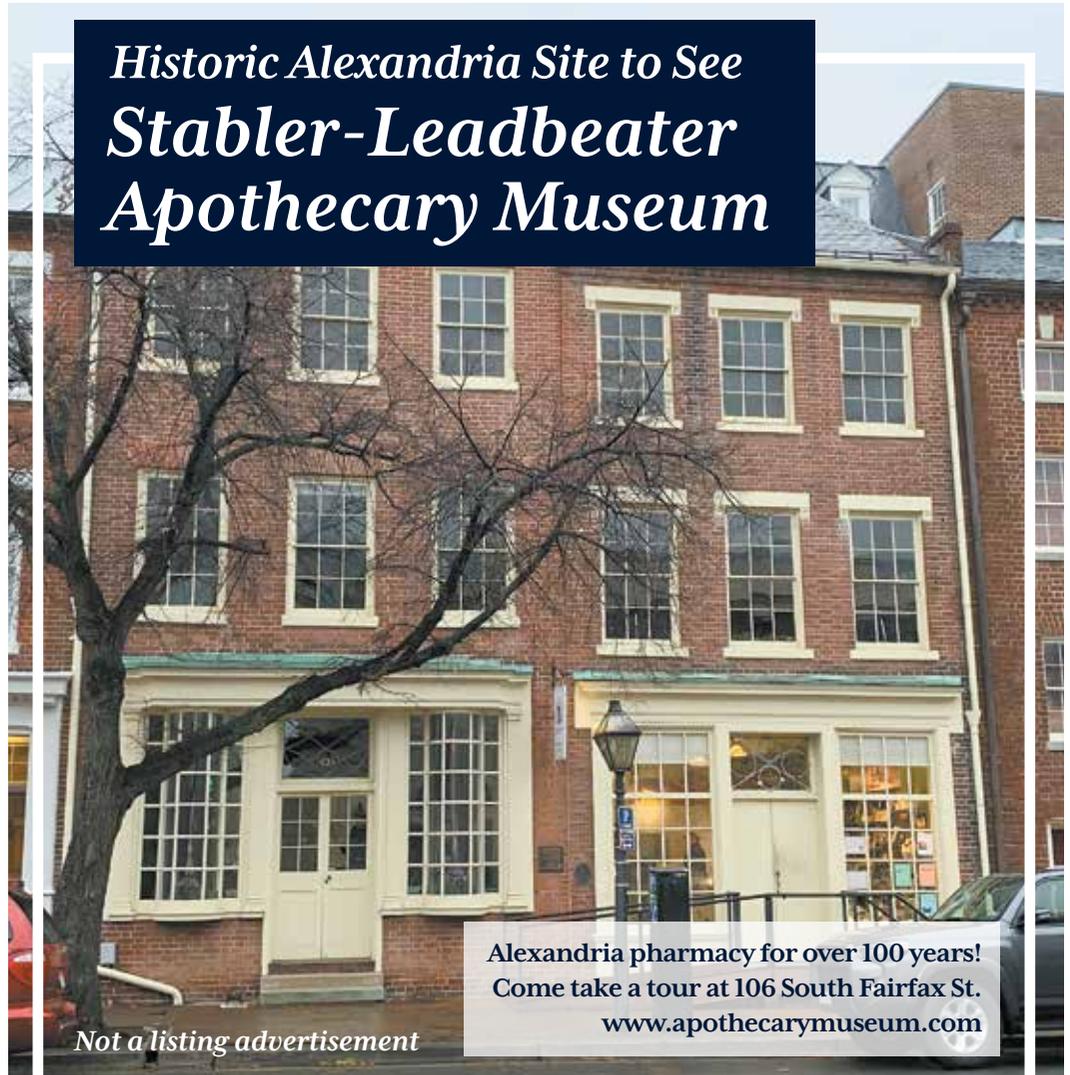
The phase II pilot, which will last from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 2020, will feature several changes introduced by staff in November. A key change council added in December is a city-wide sidewalk ban for e-scooters.

The final approved phase II

pilot also requires the permitted scooter companies to deploy a certain amount of devices in areas of the city that haven't had as much deployment.

As part of the vote, council also approved an ordinance that defined micromobility and certain regulations in city code and a resolution to create an ad hoc scooter task force composed of community members, business owners and local organizations.

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JULY

Flash flooding hits the city

Alexandria and the larger DMV area faced a flash flood emergency on July 8, as four inches of rain fell in about an hour.

Heavy rains cut short morning commutes, as road closures brought traffic to a standstill, flooded roadways prevented travel and DASH bus service was suspended. Between the flooding and limited Metro access due to the summer Metro shutdown, some commuters found themselves temporarily stranded at Reagan National Airport. Hundreds of vehicles were stuck on the George Washington Parkway north of the city.

In Alexandria, the rapid, sudden storm filled streets even outside known flood areas, such as the lower end of King Street.

In the wake of the July 8 storm, city council voted unanimously to declare a local emergency on July 22.

Flood damage to city property totaled around \$3.4 million,



PHOTO/ CAROLE GOEAS

Upper King Street had intense flooding during a July 8 storm.

with damage to the Holmes Run Trail accounting for a large portion of the total.

Seventy-three homeowners reported minor damage and 78 reported "affected damage," while children's bookstore Hooray for Books! was damaged by two-feet of standing water.

T.C. football readies for unusual season

Alexandria City Public Schools announced on July 19 that the T.C. Williams varsity football team would play all of its 2019 home games under Friday night lights at The St. James indoor sports complex in Springfield.

To prepare for a controversial

construction project that was slated to begin at Parker Gray Memorial Stadium in October, the division worked out a deal with The St. James so that the team had somewhere to play while its home field was out of commission.

Tall Ship Providence arrives



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

Tall Ship Providence is docked at the Alexandria Marina.

The Tall Ship Providence, a replica of a Revolutionary War era ship, sailed from Maine to its new permanent home at Alexandria's waterfront.

The ship will serve as a self-sustaining, for-profit attraction, offering a variety of tours,

cruises and education opportunities. In 2020, the Tall Ship Providence Foundation plans to relocate to a permanent visitor's center at the foot of King Street, where the city has set aside funding to build a floating dock for Providence.

Metro shutdown hits the one-month mark

The first few weeks of the Metro shutdown were a challenge for the city. Commuters faced extended travel time, residents and visitors had to adapt to new rules of the road and some business owners, especially those on upper King Street, saw the effects of the shutdown hit their storefronts.

The majority of people who would normally use Metro in Alexandria ended up using WMATA's free shuttle buses, while others found use for the Potomac Riverboat Company's extended hours and commuter passes.

Although residents found the city was slow to respond to some issues, the city made some adjustments when deemed necessary.

"Werewolf murder" defendant found not guilty by reason of insanity

The Alexandria Circuit Court found Pankaj Bhasin, a New Jersey resident arrested for the murder of Alexandrian Bradford Jackson, not guilty by reason of insanity of first-degree murder on July 1.

During a trial in March 2019, Bhasin's defense attorney Peter Greenspun argued that the defendant's mental illness made him incapable of understanding his actions. Bhasin allegedly believed Jackson to be

a werewolf. At the trial, multiple mental health professionals testified that Bhasin suffered from bipolar disorder with "mood-congruent psychotic features," according to a news release.

Woman dies in home fire

An elderly woman was found dead in a townhouse fire on South Pitt Street the morning of July 11.

After extinguishing the fire, firefighters rescued a male resident, a dog and a cat. They found a second resident dead in a second-floor bedroom.

An AFD and fire marshal investigation found that the cause of the fire was an electrical cord touching a mattress and other combustibles.

Man hospitalized in Alexandria scooter accident

A man was hospitalized after crashing an electric scooter near the intersection of Gibbon and South Royal streets on the evening of July 18.

Police found the 54-year-old man at the scene with a minor head injury. Emergency services staff transported the man to

George Washington University Hospital.

An investigation indicated that the man had been riding an electric scooter and that alcohol may have played a role in the injury. The investigation did not determine if any other vehicles or pedestrians were involved.

Other notable events

- "Remember the Titans" fullback Petey Jones dies at 65.
- Paul Smedberg is named WMATA chair.
- Stephanie Landrum is named 2019 Business Leader of the Year.
- Three new murals add color to Old Town businesses.

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AUGUST

Council considers making lower King Street pedestrian-only zone



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

The 200 block of King Street.

Mayor Justin Wilson and Councilor John Chapman requested that city staff look into closing the unit block, 100 block and 200 block of King Street to vehicle traffic in order to create a pedestrian-only plaza.

The potential pedestrian-only zone drew mixed reviews from

King Street businesses and nearby residents. Some were in favor of a trial period, while others had concerns about traffic on through streets, limiting parking in Old Town and the potential impact on disabled or handicapped patrons of businesses.

SOL results provide a mixed bag

There was good news and bad news for Alexandria City Public Schools in the Standards of Learning test results for the 2018-2019 school year.

The results revealed a significant, division-wide increase in math paired with slight decreases

in all other subject areas. Alexandria City Public Schools continues to lag behind state averages in every subject.

Some of the changes were the result of a division-wide emphasis on math as well as statewide changes to testing.

Alexandria and Arlington named nation's most competitive housing markets

Amazon's impending arrival to Northern Virginia was already impacting the housing market in Alexandria and Arlington, according to a report from Redfin, a Seattle-based real estate site.

Alexandria and Arlington – and Grand Rapids, Michigan –

buyers faced the most competition of anywhere in the country.

Both Northern Virginia cities, adjacent to the site of Amazon's incoming second headquarters, experienced an intense decrease in the amount of time homes stay on the market.



From left to right: Melody Abella, Lyssa Seward, Anita Edwards, and Brittanie DeChino

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AUGUST

Man convicted for assault and hate crime against police officer

A jury convicted Robert Vaughn, 34, an Alexandria resident, for assault and battery of a law enforcement officer, assault and battery on the basis of race and petit larceny on Aug. 19.

After police confronted Vaughn for eating food that he hadn't paid for at a convenience store, Vaughn started uttering

racial slurs, aimed at one of the officers. Vaughn was arrested and put into the back of a police cruiser, where he continued shouting racial slurs and kicked a police officer twice in the chest.

The jury recommended that Vaughn be incarcerated for two years.

Commonwealth's attorney announces marijuana diversion program

The Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney implemented a new diversion program for misdemeanor possession of marijuana offenses, Commonwealth's Attorney Bryan Porter announced on Aug. 28.

Through the new program, people charged with misdemeanor possession of marijuana have the opportunity to have their charges dismissed if they successfully complete the diversion program.

Other notable events

- Police investigate fourth scooter crash.
- Alexandria Harmonizers head to Scotland.
- Potomac Yard Metro construction drags.
- Alexandria man killed in D.C. stabbing.

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SEPTEMBER

Council approves Seminary 'road diet'

Following one of the longest and most contentious public hearings in recent memory, city council narrowly voted to implement a "road diet" on a stretch of Seminary Road between North Quaker Lane and North Howard Street on Sept. 14.

The road diet reduced the heavily traveled .9-mile stretch of road from four to two driving lanes, with a turn lane at intersections and barriers and medi-

ans at other points in the middle lane.

The 4-3 vote came after representatives of 13 civic associations, bicycle enthusiasts and many individual residents were among 110 speakers at the meeting. Mayor Justin Wilson, Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker and councilors Canek Aguirre and Del Pepper voted for the road diet, while councilors John Chapman, Amy

Jackson and Mo Seifeldein voted against the change.

Speakers in favor of the road narrowing cited the need for greater safety for bicyclists and pedestrians. Those opposed to the road diet expressed concern about increased traffic congestion and commuting times and the ability of ambulances to reach Inova Alexandria Hospital, which is located off that stretch of Seminary Road.

Whitaker's Bumblebee birthday surprise

Leading up to his fourth birthday, childhood cancer survivor Whitaker Weinburger told his parents he wanted "millions of people and millions of Bumblebees." On Sept. 11, his parents made that dream come true.

At 7 a.m., yellow cars, taxis, moving trucks and school buses lined the streets surrounding the Weinburgers' house so that Whitaker could see "millions of Bumblebees" – his favorite character from the "Transformers" movies – on his walk to school.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

Whitaker Weinburger and his family walk down a street lined with yellow cars.

School board approves one connected high school

Alexandria's school board voted 6-3 in favor of a one high school design in conjunction with the already approved connected high school network at its meeting on Sept. 26.

The school board also voted to use land at T.C. Williams High School's Minnie Howard campus to build a 1,600-student satellite campus as part of the connected high school network. High school enrollment is esti-

mated to reach 5,000 students by 2025, and conversations about new high school options had been swirling for years.

Given the weight of the decision before the school board, the meeting drew a sizable crowd of students, parents and community members. Students who spoke at the meeting were uniformly in favor of a one high school solution, while many parents of Alexandria City Public Schools children ex-

pressed support for the two high school option.

School board members voting in the majority for the one high school solution were Board Chair Cindy Anderson, Veronica Nolan, Margaret Lorber, Ramee Gentry, Chris Suarez and Jacinta Greene. The other three members – Meagan Alderton, Michelle Rief and Heather Thornton – favored building a second high school.

All ACPS schools reach full accreditation

For the first time in 20 years, all of Alexandria's public schools were fully accredited. The accreditation results for the 2019-2020 school year were released by the Virginia

Department of Education on Sept. 30.

Last year, 14 of the 17 Alexandria City Public Schools were accredited. Ninety-two percent of schools across the

state were fully accredited for the 2019-2020 school year, according to a VDOE news release. That number remained unchanged from the 2018-2019 school year.

SEPTEMBER

Studio named after local icon

The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association dedicated studio 311 in the Torpedo Factory building to Marian Van Landingham, the founder of the TFAA and first director of the art center, on Sept. 12. In addition to her role at the Torpedo Factory, Van Landingham for many years represented Alexandria in the Virginia House of Delegates.



PHOTO/MARGARET STEVENS
Marian Van Landingham.

Metro stations open on time



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

The renovated King Street Metro Station.

After a three-month-long shutdown of all Metro stations south of Reagan National Airport, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority reopened the stations on Sept. 9, as scheduled.

City tourism spending hits new high

Visitor spending in Alexandria hit an all-time high during fiscal year 2019, Visit Alexandria announced at its annual meeting on Sept. 23.

Revenue in FY2019 rose to a record \$859 million, a \$33 million increase over last year, according to data released by the Virginia Tourism Corporation. The increase was part of a larger trend in the city, as Alexandria's tourism economy has grown steadily during the past six years, according to the release.

Alexandria man convicted in murder of girlfriend

On Sept. 23, a jury convicted Daniel Kankam, 44, an Alexandria business owner, of killing his girlfriend, according to a news release from the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney.

Kankam was convicted of murdering Somaya Hussein Ahmed, 35 - an "intimate partner" according to the release - in her South Van Dorn Street apartment on Jan. 11.



Daniel Kankam

Other notable events:

- Alexandria student died in Labor Day weekend crash.
- Torpedo Factory celebrated its centennial.
- The Del Ray Farmers' Market celebrated its 25th anniversary.
- A suspect was injured in an officer-involved shooting on Sept. 13.
- Maryland man pleaded guilty to murder of 20-year-old Alexandria resident.

OCTOBER

Bank manager pleads guilty to stealing \$500k

Fetehi Mohammad, a branch manager at an Alexandria Wells Fargo Bank, pleaded guilty to stealing more than \$500,000 from senior customers, according to a Washington Post article. Mohammad has been a man-

ager at the Wells Fargo Bank near the intersection of Quaker Lane and King Street since 2015, according to the Post. He was charged Aug. 30 and accused of beginning the scheme in February 2017.

Mohammad faces a sentence of 41 to 51 months, a fine of up to \$150,000 and \$509,849.95 in restitution payments. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Jan. 8, 2020.

City council declares climate emergency

City council declared a climate emergency in a non-binding resolution at its Oct. 22 legislative meeting.

The resolution acknowledged the catastrophic effects of global warming, its ongoing and future impacts on the world and the city and what the city must do to reduce its environmental impact.

"I note that the energy awareness proclamation we passed earlier this month did include language referencing a climate emergency, and while we appreciated that language, we felt that the magnitude of the problems we're facing were worthy of their own resolution to clarify the urgent nature that both we as a city and a government and residents need to act, and businesses as well," Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker said at the meeting.

Saint Mary School celebrates 150 years



COURTESY PHOTO

A statue of Mary in front of the Basilica School of Saint Mary.

The Basilica School of Saint Mary celebrated its 150th anniversary in October.

Two Sisters of the Holy Cross founded Saint Mary's Catholic School in 1869 as a free school for all parish children. The school began as two classrooms in St. Mary's Hall, a building on the corner of Royal and Wolfe streets that is now a parking lot, according to the school's website.

Now a pre-k through eighth grade school serving 719 students, the Basilica School of Saint Mary continues to operate by the Catholic teachings and traditions on which it was built, according to several alumni.

The school's alumni association hosted several events to celebrate the anniversary, highlighted by an afternoon alumni picnic and evening dinner on Oct. 19.

Second city homicide

The second homicide of 2019 in Alexandria took place the night of Oct. 9, according to a news release.

Alexandria Police Department officers found De'shon Jenkins, a 21-year-old Alexandria resident, suffering an upper body injury in the 300 block of South Reynolds Street just before midnight on Oct. 9, according to the release. Jenkins was transported to a local hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries on Oct. 11.

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OCTOBER

Former public official Robert C. Odle dies



PHOTO/ MICHAEL EVANS

Rob Odle in 1983.

Robert C. Odle Jr., a lawyer, White House staffer and assistant secretary of the Department of energy, died from cancer on Oct. 2. He was 75.

Odle, a long-time Alexandria resident, began his career working at President Richard Nixon's campaign offices in New York while still in law school. Upon graduation, Odle joined the staff

of the White House director of communications. He served as director of administration for Nixon's Committee to Re-Elect the President from 1971 to 1973.

Because of his role in the re-election campaign, Odle was the first witness to testify at the Watergate hearings, where he was asked to describe the organization of the committee.

Alexandria Choral Society celebrates 50 years

The Alexandria Choral Society fall season opener, "The Spheres" on Oct. 19 marked the organization's 50th year. The ACS is one of the oldest choral societ-

ies in the region, Maurisa Potts, a public relations representative for ACS, said. This year's lineup is the largest the group has ever had, with more than 100 singers.

An Alexandrian's special link to World Series history



COURTESY PHOTOS

Left: Sally Zachary, age 3, with her father, retired baseball star Tom Zachary, in a Greensboro Daily News story.

Right: Tom Zachary, gentleman farmer.

As Alexandria, along with the entire D.C. metro area, reveled in the Washington Nationals' World Series victory over the Houston Astros, long-time city resident Sally Z. Harper celebrated a special link to Washington baseball history.

Harper's father, Tom Zachary, won games two and six of the 1924 World Series for the Washington Senators, just as Stephen Strasburg won games two and six of this year's Fall

Classic in October. Those are the only two World Series championships in Washington baseball history.

Zachary, who hailed from and retired to North Carolina, was a "gentleman farmer" according to Harper, a prominent real estate agent for McEneaney Associates in Alexandria.

Zachary was best known for his three World Series victories, his 12 wins without a loss in the 1929 season – which is still a

major league record – and for surrendering Babe Ruth's record-setting 60th home run during the 1927 season. He won 186 games during his 18-year big league career.

Zachary was one of the few players to ever go straight to the major leagues upon signing, without ever pitching in the minor leagues.

A Quaker, Zachary served in the Red Cross during World War I.

Council votes to close Virginia Paving Company

City council voted unanimously at the Oct. 19 public hearing to close the Virginia Paving Company's Eisenhower West asphalt plant in 2027.

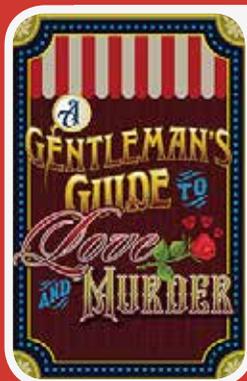
The decision was part of a

city-led review of VPC's previously approved special use permit for the plant on Courtney Avenue. Although the ultimate decision was supported by the planning commission, many in

the community and company, the process involved considerable public debate and negotiation, including how long the plant could continue operating before shuttering.

Other notable events

- Father Robert Malm retired after 30 years of ministry at Grace Episcopal Church.
- Andy Melendez, 26, of Alexandria was sentenced to 25 years in prison for his involvement in an armed home invasion robbery and burglary.
- Alexandria resident and folk music legend Tom Paxton performed at The Birchmere.
- A Virginia Railway Express train struck a vehicle on Oct. 23, causing delays but no injuries.
- Superintendent Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings Jr. received a humanitarian award for his efforts to close the achievement gap in Alexandria City Public Schools.



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NOVEMBER

Potomac Yard Metro proceeds on wetlands site

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a Clean Water Act permit to the City of Alexandria for the new Potomac Yard Metro Station on Nov. 15.

The USACE permit was the last major approval the city needed to move forward with the project. The city was issued

a permit from the Virginia State Water Control Board in September. Both permits were part of a Joint Permit Application submitted in February.

Because of wetlands located on the future Metro station's site, the pending permit application has attracted oppo-

sition from environmentalists throughout the planning phases of the project.

Building the Metro on the site dubbed Alternative B will permanently destroy 1.56 acres of wetlands and will temporarily impact another 2.01 acres of wetlands.

Titans win first football playoff game in 29 years

T.C. Williams' varsity football team won its first playoff game in almost 30 years on Nov. 15, defeating West Springfield 21-20 and advancing to the district semifinals.

While the Titans have gone to the playoffs as recently as 2017, this was the team's first playoff win since 1990, according to athletic director James Parker.

The Titans finished the regular season with a 7-3 record and were seeded fifth in the Gunston District, Division 6A playoff rankings. They lost to powerhouse South County, 34-0, in the district semifinals on Nov. 22.



PHOTO/ ANNA JAEGER PHOTOGRAPHY

T.C. Williams placeholder Cade Linehan and kicker Nicolas Gutierrez during the Titans' playoff win.

Slaughterhouse lawsuit dismissed

Alexandria Circuit Court Judge Lisa Kemler ruled on Nov. 27 to dismiss a lawsuit filed against city council's decision to approve a live poultry butcher shop at 3225 Colvin St.

The hearing was in response to a complaint filed by 10 plaintiffs who own property or operate businesses near the slaughterhouse and the city's motion to dismiss the complaint based

on standing. Kemler ruled to dismiss the case, concluding that the alleged harms were "too speculative," according to the plaintiffs' attorney, Elizabeth Seltzer.

School board may reduce size

The Alexandria City School Board is considering decreasing the number of members on the board and increasing the length of the terms they serve. A majority of school board members said they were in favor of these

changes at a school board work session on Nov. 14.

Alexandria's school board has nine members, while more than two-thirds of school boards in the state have fewer members. However, most of the localities

with fewer members are less densely populated and are counties. Alexandria is one of the six largest cities in Virginia, and four out of the six have nine or more school board members.

Democrats take state legislature

All five of Alexandria's incumbent state officeholders for the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates were reelected on Nov. 5. In addition, Greg Parks was elected as Alexandria's clerk of court.

The five incumbents who were reelected to the state legislature - State Sen. George L. Barker (S-39), State Sen. Adam Ebbin (S-30), State Sen. Dick Saslaw (S-35), Delegate Mark Levine (H-45) and Delegate Charniele Herring (H-46) - are

Democrats. The results were part of a statewide trend, in which Democrats flipped both the House and Senate, making it the first time since 1993 that the state has had a blue House, Senate and governor.

Locally, four of the elected Democratic legislators were running unopposed. Four Republican write-in candidates ran against the unopposed Democrats, although they did so without the sponsorship of the local Republican Party.

City considers closing Juvenile Detention Center

Alexandria is one of three jurisdictions that are funding a study to look into changes to the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center, including potentially shuttering the facility. If this happens, the youth would be detained in another center in Northern Virginia, according to the City of Alexandria website.

The Detention Center is a 70-bed youth correctional facility located near Landmark Mall. The center serves the City of Alexandria, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

The Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center is located at 200 S. Whiting St.

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NOVEMBER

Patrick Henry swing space approved

City council unanimously approved plans to use the old Patrick Henry School building as an interim swing space for Douglas MacArthur Elementary School students while their school is rebuilt.

Alexandria City Public Schools and the city began working together about five years ago on a plan to transform Patrick Henry from a 650-student, pre-K through fifth grade school into a 900-student kindergarten through eighth grade school and

recreation center.

The new Patrick Henry School and Recreation Center was built on the same property as the old school building. The new facility opened on Jan. 22 after 18 months of construction, during which students continued to attend classes in the old building.

While the old building was originally slated for demolition in March, the school board voted on April 4 to use the old building as a swing space during a Douglas MacArthur rebuild.

Local historian William Seale dies

William Seale, an Alexandria historian, author and resident, died Nov. 21 in Washington D.C. following a long illness. He was 80.

Originally from Texas, Seale became interested in architecture and antiques at an early age. Seale's first book, written in 1971, was a history of the state

capitols, which sparked his interest in public buildings.

In the early 1970s, Seale worked briefly as a curator at the Smithsonian Institution before he began work as an independent contractor with the White House Historical Association, contributing to its publications for more than 40 years.

Alexandria holds largest local film festival

During Alexandria's three-day film festival in early November, audiences had the opportunity to watch more than 50 films spanning a variety of genres and forms. More than 1,000 cinephiles went to the Charles Beatley Library and AMC Hoffman Center 22 for the 13th annual Alexandria Film Festival.



COURTESY PHOTO

A scene from the short film "Daddio."

Other notable events

- Code Ninjas computer science center opens on King Street.
- Virginia Tech Innovation Campus design advances.
- Pedestrian John Thompson was killed on Nov. 16 after being struck by a motor vehicle while crossing Duke Street.

DECEMBER

Herman Boone, coach of 'Remember the Titans' team, dies at 84

Herman Boone, the legendary football coach who led T.C. Williams High School's football team to the 1971 state championship victory depicted in the film "Remember the Titans," died on Dec. 18, according to Alexandria City Public Schools. He was 84.

Boone served as head coach for T.C. Williams' football team in 1971, after the integration of the school and during a period of intense racial tension in the city and high school.

Boone and his defensive coordinator Bill Yoast, who was white, worked together to unite the team, leading it to an undefeated season and to the Virginia state championship. The events of that season were later depicted in the film "Remember the Titans," in which Denzel



PHOTO/WAYNE HULEHAN

Herman Boone.

Washington portrayed Boone.

"He was one of those people that could be very inspirational, whether it be in the locker room at half time of a football game or whether it be in a P.E. classroom when kids are saying, 'I don't wanna do that,'" Former T.C. Wil-

liams Principal John Porter said.

In 2019, T.C. Williams lost four members of the legendary 1971 Titans, including Boone. Julius Campbell, 65, captain of the team, died on Jan. 25; Yoast, 94, died on May 23; and Petey Jones, 65, fullback, died on July 1.

ALIVE! and Community Services Board each honored for 50 years

ALIVE!, which stands for Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically!, was honored with a proclamation by city council in recognition of its 50th anniversary.

Founded in 1969 by a handful of church members, the organization is now supported by 42 faith communities.

ALIVE! runs a food pantry and food distribution program, a transitional shelter for women and families and furniture and housewares distribution programs.

The Community Services Board celebrated 50 years of providing essential safety net

services to residents on Dec. 10. The CSB helps provide supports to those with mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance abuse disorders, according to a news release. As of 2019, the CSB has more than 25 programs serving more than 4,300 residents.

Councilor Amy Jackson calls for road diet reversal

City councilor Amy Jackson made a surprise motion during the Dec. 10 legislative meeting to rescind council's approval of the controversial Seminary Road project, commonly called a "road diet."

Council voted 4-3 on Sept. 14 to reduce a 0.9-mile section of Seminary Road from four to two driving lanes with a center turning lane. The decision was the culmination of a year-long

process that pitted neighbor against neighbor and most of the city's Civic Associations against bicycle advocacy groups.

Jackson, who voted against the road diet at the Sept. 14 public hearing, made her motion late in the Dec. 10 legislative meeting during council's oral reports. After considerable discussion, Jackson agreed to raise the measure at a future legislative meeting and withdrew her motion.



PHOTO/MISSY SCHROTT

Councilor Amy Jackson in the 2019 George Washington Birthday Parade.

T.C. Williams teacher named ACTE Teacher of the Year



PHOTO/ ACPS

T.C. Williams teacher Kimberly Wilson.

T.C. Williams High School teacher Kimberly Wilson was named the Association for Career and Technical Education's National Teacher of the Year.

The award recognizes the finest career and technical education teachers at the middle and secondary school level who have demonstrated innovation in the classroom, commitment to their students and dedication to CTE in their institutions and communities.

City breaks ground on Potomac Yard Metro Station



PHOTO/ CODY MELLO-KLEIN

The city held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new Potomac Yard Metro Station on Dec. 19. Past and present city and state leaders attended the event to celebrate the major milestone, including Gov. Ralph Northam, Mayor Justin Wilson and city council, City Manager Mark Jinks and former mayors Allison Silberberg and Bill Euille.

Transurban, VDOT explore conversion of I-395 HOV ramp

A potential change to Interstate 395's High Occupancy Vehicle ramp onto Seminary Road could add more cars to an already congested major city roadway.

The proposed change, which is under consideration by Transurban and the Virginia Department of Transportation, would involve converting the south-facing ramp from I-395 to Seminary Road from an HOV exit to a High Occupancy Toll exit.

Essentially, vehicles could pay to exit onto Seminary Road, regardless of how many

passengers are in the vehicle, which could increase traffic on Seminary Road.

There was a community meeting in Alexandria detailing the findings of a traffic report on Dec. 9. The public input period is open through Dec. 31. To submit comments, email 395expresslanes@VDOT.virginia.gov.

Regardless of the city's stance and resident input, the state has the final say. The Commonwealth Transportation Board will vote on the project after the public comment period closes.

Other notable events

- City council passes changes to residential parking in Old Town.
- Council includes gender identity in human rights code.
- Smallcakes cupcake shop opens in Del Ray.



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LEGAL NOTICE



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPEAL OF A DECISION OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION JANUARY 2020

The item described below will be heard by the City Council on the date and time listed below. For further information call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.746.4666 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/dockets to access dockets, applications, staff reports and meeting webcasts.

ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING
SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020
9:30 AM, CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
301 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
22314

Public Hearing and consideration of an appeal of the Planning Commission's November 7, 2019 decision to approve a Development Site Plan (DSP#2018-0021) to construct a new church with surface parking at 1300, 1302, 1310, & 1320 West Braddock Road, 2300 & 2310 Scroggins Road, and 1303, 1305, & 1307 Roosevelt Street.

Applicant: Alexandria Presbyterian Church, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney
Appellants: Richard Weiblinger and Andrew Anderson
Tax Assessment Map Numbers: 032.02-05-09, 032.02-05-08, 032.02-05-07, 032.02-05-06, 032.02-05-11, 032.02-05-10, 032.02-05-12, 032.02-05-13, and 032.02-05-14.

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Graciela. Moreno@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3808, Virginia Relay 711.

LEGAL NOTICE



ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION & CITY COUNCIL JANUARY 2020

The items described below will be heard by the Planning Commission and the City Council on the dates and times listed below. NOTICE: Some of the items listed below may be placed on a consent calendar. A consent item will be approved at the beginning of the meeting without discussion unless someone asks that it be taken off the consent calendar and considered separately. The Planning Commission reserves the right to recess and continue the public hearing to a future date. For further information, call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.746.4666 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/dockets.

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2020
7:00 PM, CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
301 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

22314

ALEXANDRIA CITY COUNCIL
SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 2020
9:30 AM, CITY HALL
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
301 KING STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA
22314

Discussion Item: Draft FY 2021 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2019-00004
1315 Duke Street and 225A South Payne Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for Planning Commission to review whether the proposed purchase of property by the City of Alexandria is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter.
Applicant: City of Alexandria

Special Use Permit #2019-00093
109 South Alfred Street - Mount Purrnon Cat Cafe
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to operate a restaurant and animal care facility with overnight accommodation; zoned: CD/Commercial downtown.
Applicant: Kristin Cowan

Special Use Permit #2019-00094
3202 Old Dominion Boulevard - Substandard Lot
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit for the development of a single-family dwelling on a developed substandard lot; zoned: R-8/Single-family
Applicant: Karina Vera-Lopez, represented by Frank Durkin, designer

Encroachment #2019-00007
219 King Street - Two Nineteen Restaurant Encroachment
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an Encroachment into the public right-of-way at the rear of the restaurant for the enclosure of a trash storage area, restaurant equipment and stairs; zoned: KR/King Street urban retail.

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CALENDAR

Applicant: Yupaporn Charoen-tra, represented by Paul Solon, architect

Text Amendment #2019-00007 Increased Density for Public School Sites

(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend Section 7-2100 to allow for an increase in density for public school use.

Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Text Amendment #2019-00008 Wireless Facilities

(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to Sections 6-403 and 7-1200 of the Zoning Ordinance to amend provisions relating to telecommunications and wireless facility regulations.

Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004

Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Amendment

(A) Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of an amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan, to replace the chapter approved in 2003.

Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Graciela. Moreno@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3808, Virginia Relay 711.

To place a classified ad, call Margaret Stevens at (703) 739-0001

DECEMBER 26

ICE AND LIGHTS: THE WINTER VILLAGE AT CAMERON RUN

Glide across the ice at Ice and Lights, the Winter Village at Cameron Run. New this year, the waterpark will be transformed through February into a winter wonderland with an ice rink, beautifully lit photo ops, music and more. Snap a photo in the 100' photo arc, roast a marshmallow at the fire pit, walk through a dazzling Christmas tree and warm up in a toasted igloo. The Winter Village will remain up until Feb. 29, 2020.

Time: Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Cameron Run Regional Park, 4001 Eisenhower Ave.

Information: www.novaparks.com/events/ice-lights

DECEMBER 27

CHARLES ESTEN AT THE BIRCHMERE

See Charles Esten on tour with Taylor Noelle this fall at The Birchmere. Esten is an American actor, singer and comedian, best known for his role as Deacon Claybourne on the TV series "Nashville." He previously appeared on the improvisation show "Whose Line Is It Anyway?" regularly between 1999 and 2005.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Location: 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave.

Information: www.birchmere.com

DECEMBER 31

NEW YEAR'S EVE AT CAFÉ 44

Ring in 2020 at Cafe 44's Annual New Year's Eve Party. The Great Gatsby-themed celebration will be in full swing with a live streaming of the ball drop, champagne toast and fireworks over the Potomac at midnight.

Time: 9 p.m. to 12:30 a.m.

Location: 44 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 401

Information: www.cafe44.com

OLDE YEAR'S DAY Celebrate the close of 2019 with the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Find hands-on activities for every member of the family. Meet working artists in their studios and get inspired for 2020. Also, get tickets for First Night Alexandria. Admission is free.

Time: 1 to 5 p.m.

Location: Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St.

Information: www.torpedofactory.org

SHIP BISCUIT ORNAMENT

MAKING An almost completely intact ship's biscuit from the 18th century was found in Alexandria. To commemorate the discovery and the city's



PHOTO/S. STANTON FOR VISIT ALEXANDRIA.

DECEMBER 31

25TH ANNUAL FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA

Celebrating 25 years, First Night Alexandria, an annual New Year's Eve live music and performing arts festival and the largest New Year's Eve party in the D.C. region that is safe and fun for the entire family, returns to Old Town. Enjoy music ranging from country to Caribbean, rock to reggae, jazz to swing, folk to a capella or comedy and magic shows. Then, gather with family and friends and enjoy a fantastic fireworks finale over the Potomac River at midnight.

Time: 6 p.m. to 1 a.m.

Location: Old Town

Information: www.firstnightalexandria.org

waterfront history, visitors are invited to make their own ship's biscuit during First Night Alexandria. Each biscuit will be stamped with the year and then baked at home to track its preservation. No registration is required.

Time: 2 to 5 p.m.

Location: Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St.

Information: www.alexandriava.gov/Archaeology

ROARING 2020S NEW YEAR'S

EVE PARTY Dress to impress this New Year's Eve at Village Brauhaus. Show off flapper dresses and suits and rock out to Nick, Ian and the Machine. There are three ticket options, one for everyone. Village Brauhaus will be serving diners' favorite Haus appetizers all night. Ticket prices range from \$30 to \$100.

Time: 9 p.m.

Location: Village Brauhaus, 710 King St.

Information: www.villagebrauhaus.com

com

JANUARY 4

STORY TIME FOR LITTLE HISTORIANS

Bring little learners to the Alexandria Black History Museum for cultural stories and creative craft activities that introduce world history and folklore. Explore the museum exhibits afterwards to learn about local Black history. All ages are welcome, but the event is most suitable for children 3 to 6 years old.

Time: 11 a.m. to noon

Location: Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St.

Information: alexandriava.gov/shop

JANUARY 10

DEL RAY ARTISANS' TANGERINE ART EXHIBIT

Join Del Ray Artisans for Tangerine, an art exhibit exploring the color and all it represents. Like most other orange

hues, tangerine is associated with energy, youth and happiness. It has also been the love interest in popular songs and is said to stimulate the joyful energy of the inner child. This juried exhibit features art from local area artists and is guaranteed to bring warmth and brightness to the wintry days of January. The exhibit runs through Feb. 2, 2020.

Time: Thursdays and Sundays noon to 6 p.m., Friday and Saturdays noon to 9 p.m.

Location: 2704 Mt. Vernon Ave.

Information: www.delrayartisans.org

JANUARY 12

FILM SCREENING OF "OUR ALEXANDRIA"

In the film "Our Alexandria," directed by Robin Hamilton, two artists from Alexandria revisit the city's segregated past and tell the story of family, friendship, loss and love through their historical dollhouses. Robin Hamilton is an Emmy-award winning journalist, television host, moderator and writer.

Time: 3 to 5 p.m.

Location: Lyceum, 201 S. Washington St.

Information: www.alexandriava.gov/Lyceum

JANUARY 18

"A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE AND MURDER"

A distant heir to a family fortune sets out to speed up the line of succession by using a great deal of charm – and a dash of murder. This Tony Award-winning musical comedy is a murderous romp filled with unforgettable music, non-stop laughs and show-stopping performances. Shows run through Feb. 8.

Time: Wednesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 3 p.m.

Location: Little Theatre of Alexandria, 600 Wolfe St.

Information: www.thelittletheatre.com

JANUARY 19

APOTHECARY MUSEUM GEEK TOUR: BEHIND THE SCENES

If the regular 30-minute tour of the Apothecary Museum just isn't enough, this tour should be perfect. Spend more time touring the museum with an expert guide, including the rarely open basement and third floor of the historic pharmacy. The tour is recommended for adults only. Advance purchase is recommended due to limited space.

Time: 11 a.m. to noon

Location: Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105 S. Fairfax St.

Information: apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar

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