**Historic marker placed at GW**

**Wording of plaque for former whites-only high school draws ire**

*By Olivia Anderson*

Last Saturday, the George Washington High School Alumni Association dedicated a Virginia Historic Marker on the front campus of George Washington Middle School, commemorating the historical significance of the former high school.

The outdoor ceremony took place near the old front entrance on the grounds facing Mount Vernon Avenue; approximately 50 people attended the unveiling, including Vice Mayor Amy Jackson and several past graduates from as early as 1941.

The plaque reads in full, “The City of Alexandria purchased 15.5 acres here in 1933 and opened George Washington High School in 1935. For two decades this was the city’s only public high school for white students. The Art Deco-style building was constructed with funding from the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works, a New Deal agency that helped modernize the nation’s infrastructure during the Great Depression. Later expanded, the school served as an important community gathering place for the arts and athletics. Alexandria’s school system was desegregated in 1965. The school served as an important community gathering place for the arts and athletics. Alexandria’s school system was desegregated in 1965. This campus, which closed as a four-year high school in 1971 and later became a middle school, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.”

According to alumnus and

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**Athletic field lights saga continues**

**Proposal prompts community backlash**

*By Liana Hardy*

Alexandria’s Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed a proposal to install lights at six athletic fields after a contentious public hearing held July 21 at Patrick Henry Recreation Center.

The proposal, created by the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, would add lighting to two out of three prioritized locations – Francis C. Hammond Middle School, George Washington Middle School and Jefferson Houston K-8 School – within the 2023 fiscal year. The city’s highest priority is Hammond, followed by George Washington, according to RPCA Deputy Director Jack Browand.

RPCA also hopes to add lights to the field at Patrick Henry K-8 School and Recreation Center in fiscal year 2024 and to two fields at Eugene Simpson Stadium Park in fiscal year 2025.

The lights would be programmed to stay on until 10 p.m. for any sporting events or recreational activities per...
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Man attempts to bring loaded firearm

TSA agents at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA) stopped an Alexandria man from attempting to bring a handgun loaded with nine bullets through a security checkpoint on Monday, according to a news release. The man had told authorities that he had gone to the firing range days earlier and he forgot the loaded handgun was in his laptop bag, according to the release.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority police confiscated the man’s gun and bullets and cited him on a weapons charge, according to the release.

SBDC introduces website program

The Alexandria Small Business Development Center will open applications for its new website design program on 9 a.m. Friday in an effort to help small businesses create basic websites for free.

The ALX Small Biz Website Program will provide a basic WordPress website to selected small businesses in Alexandria, with a preference for disadvantaged and minority-owned businesses. The SBDC hopes to increase visibility of Alexandria small businesses with the new websites.

“An online presence is vital for small businesses to increase their connections with existing and potential customers, and it provides small business legitimacy and increased exposure,” according to the SBDC website.

In order to be eligible for the program, businesses must reside in the City of Alexandria, be registered to conduct business in Virginia, have an Alexandria Business License and be a client of the SBDC. Applicants must be for-profit small businesses with 100 or fewer employees and no current business website. Businesses who apply cannot be currently involved in bankruptcy proceedings and must be in good standing with the City of Alexandria.

Applications for the program will close at 5 p.m. on Aug. 12. Applicants can contact help@alexandriasbdc.org or call 703-778-1392 with any questions regarding the application.

Heyday Skincare opens in Old Town

Facial spa Heyday Skincare will open its second DMV location at 815 King St. on July 29.

The skincare shop provides 50-minute customizable facials by Heyday’s Skin Therapists, all licensed estheticians, and has been deemed “best facial” by New York Magazine. Founded in 2015, the New York-based brand currently has 11 locations throughout the United States, including a location in Bethesda Row, Maryland which it opened in August 2021. Heyday plans to open more than 300 shops by 2026, including additional locations in the DMV.

Heyday will provide opening offers and sales for first-time facials, membership and facial enhancements.

Meet Matey!

18-month-old Matey is having a wonderful summer. Matey loves splashing in the puppy pool with his buddies at the Shelter after a wrestling match on the grass. He is house hunting for a home this autumn. Matey would love a sibling-pet and hopes for a human who loves walking dogs. He is 45 pounds and loves his daily exercise.
GWHSAA event organizer Bud Mayo, the ceremony went smoothly. He opened with some words about the alumni association and overall process of procuring the marker, followed by a speech by Roxanne Patrick, the current GWHSAA president.

"It was very nice. We kept it brief and it went well," Mayo said. "I've been getting lots of emails and telephone calls thanking the alumni association from people all over that have seen it or read about it on the computer and different periodicals."

However, some community members are upset with part of the text on the historic marker. Some argue the line stating that the city’s school system desegregation occurred in 1965 is factually inaccurate, as nine Black students entered three of Alexandria’s then all-white schools in 1959 after prevailing in a joint lawsuit with the NAACP seeking to integrate city schools.

"Jim McElhatton, a freelance journalist who profiled James Lomax, the Turner sisters and Blois Hundley – a Black parent – in a series of articles about desegregation for the Times, said that while he supported the placement of a historical marker, it should have indicated that desegregation began in 1959."

"I don't understand how anybody can make the point that it wasn't 1959," McElhatton said, noting that Arlington County – the first jurisdiction in Virginia to integrate – recently celebrated its integration anniversary based on the year 1959. "It's just historically not accurate. These kids were the first in 1959, and they did so at great personal sacrifice, and their families too."

According to McElhatton, the term “soft integration” has been tossed around to describe the nine students who integrated in 1959. But he also said that in talking to former students who physically lived through that process, their experiences were much more harsh.

"What I learned is that there is nothing soft about being spit upon, ridiculed, taunted and teased. There's nothing soft about having the Associated Press take pictures of you as you walk into a school building with your sister and your mother and your grandmother," McElhatton said.

Kassy Benson, a 1962 graduate of Francis Hammond High School.
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School and fifth generation Alexandrian, contended that desegregation took place in 1959 and that the marker should indicate as much.

“This is the date that should be on the marker and I am saddened by the decision to ignore that critical event. Facts matter,” Benson said.

However, others assert that the date is as accurate as possible and would have been weeded out long ago if it wasn’t. Mayo – who came up with the idea and spearheaded the effort – said the process began more than two years ago and was laborious and thorough.

In order to obtain the historical marker, GWHSAA was first required to get approval from the city. Then they had to send a preliminary text to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources in Richmond, which reviewed the text through several different committees and sent back any requested changes.

“Everything that’s on the sign was validated by the city and by the state,” Mayo said. “You can’t have a Virginia Historical Marker unless the vetting process is done. In terms of content, believe me, they do not approve anything without having the vetting process be complete.”

According to Stephanie Williams, deputy director of VDHR, space constraints on the plaque played a role in the ultimate decision to dub 1965 the year of desegregation. Plus, she noted, the students who did integrate in 1959 did so at other district schools, such as Ficklin and Ramsay elementary schools and Frances Hammond.

“Given the space constraints on the marker and given that our focus was specifically on George Washington High School – which did not receive any African American students in 1959 – we did not have room to describe each step in the school system’s desegregation process,” Williams said. “We consulted the Office of Historic Alexandria while the text was being developed, and they agreed that 1965 was the best date to use.”

For some, the issue is sticky and comes with valid points on both sides. Daniel Lee, the city’s historian, called the situation complex.

“I would say that desegregation began in 1959. I would say that desegregation was completed in 1965. It was a long process, and there is not enough room on the plaque to explain that process,” Lee said.

Regardless of the controversy surrounding the historic marker, most community members agree that the plaque itself is warranted and symbolizes a monumental time in city history.

Mayo, who later earned degrees from the University of Tennessee and the University of Virginia, is as proud of his George Washington High School degree as he is of his college diplomas. So were the other attendees.

“Pride was the thing that permeated that whole crowd,” he said. “I can’t tell you how many people came up to me afterwards who personally thanked me for coordinating the process. It’s a great feeling to have people that you don’t even know come up and just tell you how proud they are of going to GW and thanking the alumni association for taking on this task.”

For Lee, the historical marker is a way to tip one’s proverbial hat to the school’s indelible impact on past, present and future generations.

“[It honors] the people that went to school there and the effect that it had there,” Lee said. “[It represents a different time of Alexandria pre-1971 and represents a repurposing of the building that continues to have an impact on education in Alexandria today].”

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It’s just historically not accurate. These kids were the first in 1959, and they did so at great personal sacrifice, and their families too,”

–Jim McElhatton, journalist

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mitted by the RPCA, allowing for more community use of the city’s limited field space, according to Browand. The lighting proposal would also adhere to the Dark Sky Initiative, an international campaign to reduce light pollution.

“We are pretty much at capacity now, and we know that the programs are continuing to grow both from the community level and the ACPS level,” Browand said. “For the fields, we expect to get approximately three hours of additional use per day on average, which if you reach this potential, could be an additional 1,100 hours of additional use.”

However, the proposal prompted significant backlash from several community members who live near the fields. Many opponents to the new lights spoke out about how adding lighting could exacerbate problems the neighborhoods already face, such as trash, excessive noise, illegal parking and inappropriate activity on or near the fields.

“I and a hundred other people are negatively impacted by one of these fields that you guys are looking at,” Susan Nelson, who lives across from Francis Hammond, said at the meeting. “I have pictures, if anyone wants to see, of feces, trash; my one neighbor has witnessed guys the other night peeing on the side of the school multiple times … It is out of control.”

Jim Richardson, who lives on LaSalle Avenue near Francis Hammond, said that the proposal would create more late night hangout spots for young adults who already frequent the field after dark and disturb neighbors with trash and noise.

“Unfortunately, I think it will only get worse if we have events going on at Hammond until 10 o’clock every night and it won’t stop when the lights go out,” Richardson said. “The people most likely to use those fields in the late hours are older adults. I don’t even know if they’re citizens or residents of Alexandria.”

In response, the Parks and Recreation Commission voted to issue a separate recommendation to the city to increase security and maintenance at the public fields. Both RPCA and the Alexandria Police Department have recently suffered staff shortages, according to Browand, which has made responding to neighborhood complaints more difficult.

“I am not an enforcement agent. APD is the enforcement agency within the city. Anybody that’s on our fields after the posted hours, you know, unfortunately, due to their staff resources, they may or may not consider that a high priority,” Browand said. Complaints against installing athletic lights are not new for Alexandria. Following a years-long legal battle with community members, the city settled four separate lawsuits filed against them in an agreement reached in November 2020, which allowed the city to install field lights at Alexandria City High School, then known as T.C. Williams High School.

Mimi Goff, one of the 15 plaintiffs who sued the city for the lighting proposal, spoke out at the July 21 meeting about issues that continue to outrage neighbors of the high

SEE LIGHTS
school, which has had lights for about a year.

“There are bathrooms at T.C., or A.C., but the players do not use the bathroom, and it’s mostly the visitors. They pull their pants down – right in my yard I can watch them go to the bathroom. It’s terrible,” Goff, who lives behind Alexandria City High School, said. “The excessive noise is unbelievable. Because it’s quiet at night, there’s not a lot of traffic, so the only thing you hear is the echoing of what’s going on in the field.”

Field lights at ACHS are managed by Alexandria City Public Schools rather than the city, according to Browand, which makes the lighting at ACHS separate from the city’s proposed field lighting.

Other community members, however, expressed their support for the new field lights, including several middle school and high school-aged youth who showed up to the meeting in their “Alexandria Soccer Association” uniforms.

“I think that the lights added to all these fields would be very beneficial for the Alexandria Soccer Association and all our sports and it would allow us to have much more practices each week, especially during the winter when it becomes dark much earlier,” Simon Redstock, an ASA youth soccer player, said.

The field lights would allow ASA and other local sports leagues to provide more after school programming for youth who desperately need outlets for recreation and opportunities for development, according to ASA staff member Thomas Park. After ASA had to limit participants due to resource shortages, Park said the organization saw many former soccer players resort to other channels, such as crime, when they couldn’t join a team.

“Many of the fields these participants don’t have access to. So instead, our free after school program at the high school played in a parking lot,” Park said. “We’ve seen at the high school some of the violence – those are ASA soccer players that did not participate this last year on the team. They didn’t have access to a team. There’s real consequences to not having the capacity to support that.”

Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission, who unanimously voted in favor of the proposal, also noted the financial benefits of adding field lights and increasing community programming. The estimated cost for the project is $402,000 for each field, with the City Council approving a $804,000 budget to light two fields in fiscal year 2023.

Additional lights would maximize community use of field space and reduce the impact of the city’s density issues, as well as save money for taxpayers who are already paying for the fields.

“Fields are shutting down, it costs a lot of money to build a new field. We don’t have a lot of land, don’t really have a lot of money. This is an extraordinary cost efficient way to better utilize the resources that we as a city are already investing a lot of money into,” Parks and Recreation Commission member Philip Voorhees said.

Parks and Recreation Commission Chair Steve Beggs said he believed that many of the community’s concerns were issues separate from the proposal – problems that would occur with or without lighting – and that the commission would push the city to tackle complaints about field maintenance and security.

“I fully respect the concerns ... I think there’s other city resources that should be brought to bear to this conversation about how do you manage some of these concerns,” Beggs said. “But to me, it comes down to that the folks who will largely benefit shouldn’t fall to the wayside because of inappropriate and oftentimes illegal behavior of the field.”

RPCA has rotating staff depending on programming and also has stationed staff at some of the locations in the proposal to help with recreational events, according to Browand.

RPCA will further discuss the proposal at a Planning Commission public hearing on Oct. 4 and a City Council public hearing on Oct. 15.

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Obituary

Virginia Paige Peters

In loving memory of Virginia Paige Peters, who passed away July 17 at age 88, surrounded by family at her home in Belington, West Virginia. Born in Sperryville, Virginia on April 9, 1934, Paige was the last surviving of 12 children born to Arthur Dalton and Julia Marie Moyer. As a girl she enjoyed dancing, singing and playing basketball. After moving to the Washington D.C. area with her husband William H. Peters, she raised a family, worked in the private and public sectors, and was the first in her family to achieve a college degree. A keen supporter of the arts, in later years she was director of the Jerome Art Center in Jerome, Arizona and the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria. A master gardener, Paige spent her retirement designing and planting gardens, volunteering and traveling to “faraway places with strange sounding names.” Her kindness and gentle spirit touched all those whom she met. She is survived by her three children, Pamela, Patricia and William, as well as her grandson Keith, who would like to offer their heartfelt thanks to Ted, Curt and Antje, who opened their hearts and homes to Paige in her final years. No services are planned but the family invites all those who knew Paige and whose lives she touched to donate to the charity of their choice in her name.

PHOTO/DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

Francis C. Hammond Middle School, which is the RPCA’s highest priority for field lights, would receive lighting by fiscal year 2023 if the proposal is approved.
Traffic and Parking Board approves removal of parking spaces

The change will accommodate DASH Line 34 alignment
By Kassidy McDonald

The Traffic and Parking Board voted Monday night to remove five parking spaces along North Pitt and Pendleton streets to accommodate the DASH Line 34 realignment.

DASH Director of Planning Martin Barna requested the removal of these five spots in a presentation to the board.

The new route comes after a previous proposal had been altered due to community and Alexandria residents’ concerns. The original proposed route prompted concerns about the densely populated residential areas on North Pitt Street. The new proposal avoids this busy area along North Pitt Street, allowing for a new route that does not disrupt a busy residential area but still provides close bus service to residents who want to use public transportation.

In April, the board discussed eliminating up to twice as many parking spaces along the route – altogether up to 10. But that number was reduced to five after the board received pushback from residents. Barna urged residents to also consider the benefits the new bus route will bring to Old Town.

One stop will be added at southbound Pitt and First, which will not require the removal of any spaces. Another stop that won’t require a parking spot removal will be added at northbound Pitt and Montgomery. At southbound Pitt and Madison, one parking spot will be removed for one bus stop. At westbound Pitt and Pendleton, two parking spots will be removed and the stop bar, a white line pavement marking across lanes that indicates where to stop, will move back five to ten feet for one bus stop. At southbound Pitt and Pendleton, one parking spot will be removed and the stop bar will move back five to ten feet to accommodate one bus stop.

At east and westbound Pendleton and Fairfax, one parking spot will be removed and the stop bar will move back five to ten feet for one bus stop. Finally, at northbound Fairfax and Pendleton, no spots will be removed due to existing restrictions at a fire hydrant.

The area of Pitt and Pendleton will experience the most change with three removed spots. Barna expressed concern about the narrow street geometry and bus radius at this location, making it necessary for the safety of bus riders and residents to remove these three spots.

Bus stops were removed from the original proposal at eastbound Pendleton and Royal and westbound Pendleton and Royal. These two stops would have amounted to four extra parking spaces being removed in Old Town, but the route has since then been altered to have less of an impact on the community.

“In consultation with the community and with staff we revised our proposal to no longer have stops there,” Barna said.

Barna said that DASH has held an extensive public engagement and outreach period with the community to discuss potential impacts as well as for them to voice their concerns. These outreach efforts included Traffic and Parking community meetings and public hearings, pop-up events at key transit centers, flyers and posters, updates to the DASH website and social media accounts as well as continued email correspondence with North Pitt Street residents.

Vice Chair Ann Tucker asked Barna whether these buses will be hybrid bus models to cut back on noise and exhaust on the new route.

“For reference, we have about 100 buses in our fleet,” Barna said. “Currently 14 of them are 100% electric and about 55 of them are hybrid electric. We actually just retired the last of our old diesel buses that were extremely noisy. So all the buses are clean diesel, which are much quieter, or electric or hybrid.”

Casey Kane, another member, asked a question about the Fairfax and Pendleton locations that are removing parking to accommodate turning radius of the buses.

“My concern is because we have removed parking doesn’t mean people won’t use it for parking, particularly delivery vehicles. ... Is this an opportunity to look at those for other uses like scooter corrals or on-street bike parking? And would that allow the buses to still make their turns?” Kane asked.

Barna said they typically would not put anything because there could be “people coming out of the scooter corrals and the proximity to the bus would then pose a problem. We would probably look at a different spot for a scooter corral,” Barna said.

During public comment, David Kaplan, chair of the Alexandria Transit Company Board of Directors, expressed his support for this new “compromised solution” that will serve Old Town along Pitt Street that did not have service previously.

“We heard a lot of concerns from the community about our original proposal and the amount of parking that was to be removed, and really encouraged the staff to look at compromise that would still allow us to serve the development that is north of Pendleton, and I believe we’ve done that with this plan,” Kaplan said.

The board then reminded the attendees that the Alexandria Transit Company Board of Directors had already approved the alignment of the route, making the meeting’s focus on the parking space removals where the bus stops will be located.

Staff’s recommendation to remove five parking spaces along North Pitt Street and Pendleton Street passed unanimously.

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Design Review Board approves Carlyle Crescent rooftop

Board discusses color, architectural concerns about design plan
BY KASSIDY MCDONALD

At a meeting on July 21, Design Review Board staff reviewed and approved an updated design plan for the proposed project for a 3,114 square foot rooftop addition at 1940 Duke St., Carlyle Block C.

The existing six-story office building, often called the “Carlyle Crescent Building,” takes up one lot with an area of 62,198 square feet, according to the Carlyle Block C Rooftop Amendment on the city’s website. The building is surrounded by other office buildings as well as residential and retail spaces.

When the Carlyle Special Use Permit was first approved in 1990, block-by-block design guidelines established parameters for height, open space, sidewalks and streets within each block approved by the Carlyle/Eisenhower Design Review Board, according to the DRB concept review document.

These block guidelines apply to Carlyle Block C where the office building is located. The proposal is in compliance with all Block C guidelines except the guidelines of height.

Staff opened the DRB meeting by giving a complete overview of the Carlyle project. The applicant had sent the board an email with their revised building renderings from a previous plan on July 19, and staff completed an analysis and presented their findings at the meeting.

“We have the submission that the staff report is on and then we received, along with a letter from the attorney, somewhat of an updated version of it, and I think both of [the design plans] answer some of our concerns and both of them also still don’t answer all of our concerns, so I’m going to walk through both submissions and make our concerns a little clearer,” staff member and board member Thomas Canfield said.

The applicant, I&G Direct Real Estate 25 LP, had proposed a design plan that adds a conference room and lobby area at the penthouse level of the existing office building on the west side facing Dulaney Street. They also proposed improvements to the existing exterior penthouse terrace area.

DRB staff was largely concerned about a couple of different aspects of the newly proposed design plan. One concern included the general aesthetic of the building and if the overall design would be affected by the rooftop addition. During the presentation, staff showed two renderings of a previously proposed and an updated proposed design which they said both looked “too utilitarian,” based on their analysis.

Original design submissions also included a heavy overhang and accents that did not match the existing colors of the building, according to staff. The applicant’s design included a terracotta color of which the board expressed their concern.

Modifications to the existing tower/turret structure and the architectural treatment of the proposed addition were also of concern to board members in their analysis.

“All the materials in the turret should be preserved just like you would if it were a historic structure, so our recommendation is to keep everything that is there and insert vision glass in the large openings at roof level and the lower half of the small openings at crown level,” Canfield said.

Staff then continued their overview presentation by showing drawings of the structures they were discussing.

“It is important, given the amount of detail that we need, to get drawings that show all of the pieces,” Canfield said.

Some of the recommendations from the DRB that were detailed in both their analysis presentation and key takeaways section from the DRB concept review document include preserving the remaining portions of the exterior architecture of the turret, filling in turret voids with glass and the use of spandrel glass should be avoided by adjusting ceiling heights, preserving the northernmost turret column and modifying the tangent of the operable glass window-wall.

The real estate applicant, I&G Direct Real Estate 25 LP, was represented by Robert Brant at the meeting. Brant stressed the importance of this particular design meeting and having a proposed timeline that would allow them to start construction on the interior of the building by the end of this year.

“One of the main driving forces of this application is a particular tenant’s interest in this rooftop conference room and space,” Brant said. “This [rooftop conference room] has become a really popular thing in the office market and that’s what we are looking to achieve.”

The DRB and the applicant’s team then had a conversation about the interior turret columns. Within their proposed design plan, the applicant was planning on changing or demolishing these turrets. The DRB expressed their concern that the northernmost turret column should not be modified to preserve the “iconic shape” of the building.

What the DRB said and what seemed to be a common theme during the entirety of the meeting was that most of their recommendations to the design plan were not so much about the intent of the project, but were more about the general aesthetic and preserving the building’s shape, especially from the pedestrian’s point of view from the street.

Board Member Roger Lewis made sure his opinion about the building’s aesthetic was heard by the applicant.

“Something [needs to] happen so that the geometric independence of that tower is preserved because that’s what has been lost [in the design plan],” Lewis said.

Staff said that there are solutions to the problems they raised that will allow for the preservation of existing structure, and it is now a matter of being worked through and coming up with a “secondary layer of detailing.”

Brant continued to stress the importance of the timeline and how urgently they want to move forward. He expressed that they would be ready to “hit the ground running tomorrow.”

The DRB told Brant that the necessary recommendations need to be made to the design, and then the DRB would review a package that could be circulated as a PDF, so that the applicant’s time concerns are addressed. If revisions are not up to standard, they can bring the proposal back to the DRB at the next regularly scheduled meeting, according to the DRB concept review document.

The DRB voted unanimously to approve the concept submission for the proposed Carlyle Block C rooftop amendment, with Lewis making the motion and Paul seconding.

The DRB also voted to recommend approval of an amendment to the Carlyle Block C Design Guidelines to modify the maximum building height, with Canfield making the motion and Lewis seconding.

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Couple transforms cozy Cape Cod into expansive oasis
BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

Elizabeth Jones and Michael Wolin’s Rosemont home is quaint and charming. At approximately 1,500 square feet, the Cape Cod-style property includes three bedrooms, two baths and several young children running around; by all accounts, it should be fairly snug. Yet walking into the house is an open, expansive experience, with plenty of room for both storage and living comfortably. The spacious feel of the home belies its actual size, which, according to Elizabeth, was intentional.

“We really tried to maximize storage,” Elizabeth said. “When we worked with our contractor, we really wanted to make sure that the layout accommodated as much storage while still keeping an open living space.”

Since purchasing the home in 2014, Elizabeth and Michael made a series of renovations to transform it into a light-filled oasis with a soft, neutral color palette.

Originally, 4 Walnut St. looked much more colorful than it does now. In fact, one of the first projects Elizabeth and Michael embarked on after moving in was “de-oranging” the place. The kitchen had orange terracotta flooring, cabinets and countertop backsplash, and the dining room featured a bright orange and red carpet. Updating this room took precedence.

“It was not an oriental, but it was made to look like an oriental and it looked painfully bad, so we replaced it,” Elizabeth laughed.

Then, about a year after moving in, they sprayed the kitchen cabinets and replaced the counter backsplash with tiles from Architectural Ceramics on Union Street. They...
swapped the original “orange-y” granite countertops for honed marble.

“The kitchen has been such a great space because it’s small but it functions well,” Elizabeth said. “Having marble is really nice to work with, and I don’t do much baking but if I did, I’m sure I’d like it even more because people love it for baking or bread making.”

“I really like the marble. It just looks really classic,” Michael added.

The couple also spent a significant amount of time redoing various closets, cabinets and bookshelves to maximize space. To the left of the front door, in the living room, are two sets of closets that the couple had put in several years ago.

But rather than procuring all new materials for the closets, Elizabeth and Michael asked a carpenter to use hardware from one of the basement doors they ended up replacing.

“Being a designer, and my husband is very interested in architecture as well, we wanted to preserve as much as possible of the original house,” Elizabeth said. “So, we were like, ‘we’re putting in new [basement doors], have the carpenter [use] what is already existing.’”

In the same room, two stark white bookshelves line the walls, which were redone at the same time they added the closets.

Although the bookshelves already existed, they were originally very narrow “because books were a lot smaller way back when, in the 1920s,” Elizabeth said. The house was built in 1926.

“It was the strangest collection of knick-knacks, and I found myself going out to buy things for a bookshelf that didn’t accommodate actual books,” she said.

A construction team renovated the bookshelves, making them adjustable and deeper to accommodate standard-size books.

To the right of the front door is the dining room, which includes several other updates beyond just the “de-oranging” project.

They repainted the room an olive green color, implemented built-in cabinets and enclosed the radiator in a white cover with a ledge on top for additional storage or

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A professional chef and restaurateur, Elizabeth noticed her storage woes during dinner parties.

“We knew we needed more storage, functional storage, as much as you can hide in a small space,” Elizabeth said. “... The more we can hide, the better.”

One particular renovation came at an apt point in time. Right before the COVID-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, Elizabeth and Michael were putting the finishing touches on their basement. Previously, it had been semi-finished with paneling, carpeted squares and an overall dark atmosphere.

Elizabeth designed the floor plan and had a vision, and I wasn’t really sure how it was going to work out, but it worked out well,” Michael said. “[The basement living room] in particular I think is a really nice set-up for watching TV., but also for the girls to play in, and we hang out down here.”

In line with the pandemic adjustments, the couple also installed a back yard fountain last summer to increase outdoor usage. The idea stemmed from a trip to Rosemary Beach, Florida, where they saw many people with fountains in their yards and liked their appearance.

The fountain is adorned with water lettuces, which Elizabeth’s sister gave to the family as a gift. They rapidly multiplied, and now take up a significant portion of the fountain.

As a way to keep busy during quarantine, the couple undertook many activities around the house – one
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of which was creating a vegetable garden in the front yard. They planted peppers, tomatoes, herbs and snap peas, which Elizabeth said are “out of control but enjoyable” by September.

The yard also includes an array of flowers, from knockout roses to dahlias to hydrangeas.

“Almost everything has been planted from seeds in the front. I just scatter it, and whatever is happy stays and whatever is not happy doesn’t stay,” Elizabeth said.

During the past eight years, Elizabeth and Michael have chipped away at achieving their dream vision — a feat especially impressive given the compactness of the house.

For Elizabeth, who works as an interior designer, the process has been enjoyable.

“It’s been fun. It’s like a little laboratory. I don’t know if everybody loves that in my house since I’m always coming up with an idea when I’m awake in the middle of the night,” she said with a smile. “It’s been a nice way to try things out before suggesting them to clients, for sure.”

Through meticulous modifications such as paint jobs, added cabinetry and counter renovations, the couple transformed a small fixer-upper into a light and airy sanctuary with plenty of room for the family of four to build many more years of memories.

“We spent a lot of time, when the kids were little, walking from home to the Old Town Farmers’ Market on the weekends. It’s a great activity; you end up seeing neighbors out there,” Elizabeth said. “… Just being able to access Old Town and all the shopping and restaurants, but then come back here afterwards, it feels so nice.”

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The big picture

Learn the latest trends in real estate
BY DIANN CARLSON

Recent changes in the real estate market may be causing alarm for some potential buyers as they enter at this often confusing time.

Their friends, who last year purchased a new home, have benefitted from historically low interest rates. But, as everyone knows, the Federal Reserve has more recently raised interest rates and will likely do so again before the end of 2022. Where are potential buyers in this new reality?

Let's take a walk back in time to learn from the past.

During the 1970s, the average interest rate was 8.75%. In the 1980s, the average was 12.5%. The 1990s brought relief when the average interest rate was only 8.12%. The early 2000s was an even better average at 6.29%. The 2010s average was 4.09% and the average rate in June 2022 came down to 3.25%.

What we are seeing this summer as the rates rise a bit is perhaps a stabilization in rates, and thereby, a balancing of the marketplace. No one anticipates that rates will increase to the levels of the 1980s. Is it possible we could see rates looking like the early 2000s again?

Potential buyers will do well to consider that they may be paying a higher interest rate this summer than they would have last summer, but this year – they are not likely to need to use an Escalation Agreement in their Offer to Purchase and may not have to compete with a bevy of other buyers interested in the same home.

They likely won't have to pay a substantial amount in an escalation clause, as they would have last year.

They may even be able to secure the seller’s agreement on an inspection contingency or an appraisal and financing contingency within their offer to the seller. Possibly all three.

Lenders this July are encouraging buyers to consider paying “points,” which may be tax deductible as prepaid interest, to obtain a low interest rate. It’s a feasible option to request that the seller pay a point or two as part of the contract negotiation.

The “frenzy” of last year’s housing market has transitioned this year into a more level playing field for buyers, and sellers.

The prudent seller will be mindful of these conditions and when pricing their property for the market, they will be nimble in taking a realistic view of where the market is today, causing them to have the houses that will sell before their competitors.

It’s all in the balance.

The writer is an associate broker with TTR Sotheby’s International Realty located in Old Town. She provides her buyer and seller clients with personal service and shares her references with potential clients. Call or text her at 703-628-2440 or Dcarlson@ttrsir.com.
When you add steam to convection cooking, it tenderizes food while rationing moisture.

Secrets of the steam oven

Learn about this game-changing kitchen advancement
BY RORY CALLAGHAN

Technological advancements make our lives easier: cars, air conditioning, cell phones and the internet. Would you ever want to go back to not having these conveniences? This is how I feel about my steam oven. I’m so reliant on it for everything, from toasting bread to roasting meats and vegetables, that when my first one failed after three years of daily use, I immediately replaced it. I cannot live without a combi-

steam oven. I’m not a trained chef, but I’m a very good cook. I don’t bake because that requires the precision of molecular chemistry, and such hard work is no fun. I consult recipes, but rarely follow them rigidly or even measure ingredients. I enjoy the freedom of not worrying too much, and that’s where steam ovens excel because they are very forgiving. You’ll never cook another dried-out chicken or casserole.

My countertop oven at home cost only $300. It will fit a four- to five-pound chicken on its single rack. For $600 you get a two-rack countertop model. From there the price jumps to $2,500 - $6,000. Not only are the better models larger, but they eliminate the exchange of flavors. This means you can cook a starch, veggie meat and seafood together and they each maintain their individual flavor profile. Cleanup is simple and fast. Steam clean your oven instead of scrubbing a sink full of pots and pans.

People’s initial reaction to hearing about them is often, “Oh, I don’t need that.” Fair enough. Who needed GPS before we enjoyed it? We’d look at a map or ask for directions and reach our destination eventually. But now that you have it, would you want to drive to an unknown location again without GPS?

That’s exactly how adding steam to your quiver of cooking tools will have you thinking. It’s always an effort to learn something new but if what you’re learning is how to make food easier to cook and better tasting, why not? And learning something new is invigorating. The best steam ovens allow you to not bother learning. Enter the kind of food and its weight, and the brain inside the machine cooks it perfectly for you. There is a steam oven for every budget.

Convection cooking still confuses some people, but it just means a regular oven with a fan to move the air around for better temperature consistency. When you add steam to convection cooking, it tenderizes food while retaining moisture. Then switch to bake or broil mode to bring it to a golden brown and delicious finish. Vegetarians and omnivores alike will marvel at the ease, speed and results achieved in a steam oven.

Americans are used to large ovens. Combi-steam ovens are typically only 24" wide, though full-size ones are available. It’s natural for someone to look at a steam oven and say, “That’s too small for me,” but it’s an illusion. Most family meals are easily made in the 24" ovens, with three or four racks, though you must learn how to time what goes in when. Convection steam cooking eliminates the need for a large cavity. To cook a very large turkey or roast you will need a full size oven. Miele makes them in three sizes. The small ones handle up to a 14-pound turkey or roast. The largest is as big as a standard American oven.

There are two methods for getting the water into the oven: reservoir and plumbed. The reservoir method uses a pitcher-like vessel that holds the water. There is a valve that automatically dispenses water as it is needed into the steam generator. Beneath the oven is a drip tray that is removed after cooking for disposal in the sink.

Plumbed units have a permanent water supply like a faucet, and cost more than the smaller, non-plumbed ovens. You need a plumber to run the supply and drain lines going to and from the oven to under the sink, so these are best installed as part of a full kitchen remodel. Here are some foods that combi-steam ovens not only make easier to cook but turn out better than if cooked using a typical method.

Spare ribs. These are a mess to cook and take all day because you must first simmer them in a huge stock pot, then transfer them to the grill or broiler. Steaming helps break down the collagen, tenderizing them in the pan at low temp steam in half the time simmering takes, and retains flavor. You must get them to that state to achieve that silky, moist texture we love. Then in the same pan without removing it, broil to char your rub and/or bbq sauce. Fall off the bone tender and so easy.

Shellfish. I have a huge

SEE STEAM OVEN | 20

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steamer pot that I used to use for crabs, mussels and clams. Never again. Too much to cleanup after enjoying a meal.

Risotto. I cannot personally vouch for this because I’ve never made it. But I have a friend who is a pro chef, and he swears by it. It eliminates the boredom and work of standing at the cooktop, stirring the pot from start to finish. The combi oven moisturizes every grain of rice evenly without having to attend to it.

Bread. I’m not a baker, but real commercial bakeries always use steam ovens, both for proofing and baking.

I read an article in the New York Times headlined “Get a combi-steam oven even if you use it only to reheat leftovers.” Most of us reheat leftovers in our microwave, which is certainly fast. But that’s about the extent of its benefit. The price for hot food in one minute is dry, tough food that has had flavor leached out of it, and arguably is less nutritious.

To reheat in your steam oven, place a plate of food in the oven, and set it to steam at 225-250 degrees for seven to 10 minutes. I always reheat leftovers this way and they taste freshly cooked. You simply cannot get that result in a microwave.

The functions on even the least expensive steam convection oven include toast, bake, steam bake, broil, steam broil, proof, pure steam, keep warm and steam clean.

Remember, food feeds the body, and beauty feeds the soul.

The writer is Kitchen Planning & Cabinetry Specialist at M&M Appliances at 817 S. Washington St. He can be reached at roryc@mandmappliance.com.

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STEAM OVEN FROM | 19

Steam oven functions include toast, bake, steam bake, broil, steam broil, proof, pure steam, keep warm and steam clean.

HOME OF THE WEEK

Elegant townhouse-style condo in Old Town Village

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Everyone loves the open concept with a bit of definition between the dining and living room, the floor to ceiling built-ins and the gas fireplace with mantel, in addition to the high ceilings, crown molding and chair rail. Grill on the sunny patio with plenty of space for al fresco dining and a storage room housing the new HVAC system.

The second floor features the primary bedroom with a walk-in custom closet, a balcony perfect for morning coffee and a lovely en suite bath with a soaking tub, stall shower, double sinks and water closet. The inviting guest room has built-ins, an en suite bath with tub/shower and great closets.

The terrific location, hardwood floors on both levels, an expansive powder room, one reserved and one unsigned parking spots, a community salt-water pool and fitness center are just a few of the reasons that Old Town Village is a great place to call home.

AT A GLANCE

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All about monkeypox

Know the signs and symptoms to keep yourself safe
BY DR. VIVEK SINHA

In today’s internet age, unlimited information is at our fingertips. We can essentially look up any subject matter, anywhere in the world, and become well-versed about any topic. But one drawback to this is sometimes the information we have access to may not be completely accurate. Never has this been more relevant than during a world-wide pandemic. Over the past three years, COVID-19 has dominated news headlines.

This is slowly evolving. Over the past few months, we are seeing more and more articles and news reports about monkeypox. While there is a tremendous amount of information available online about monkeypox, how can we be sure that the information we are reading about is accurate? Let’s talk about some basics of monkeypox and discuss what we do know and what we don’t know yet.

What is monkeypox?

Monkeypox is a viral infection that causes a rash that is very similar to smallpox. It is classified as a zoonotic infection — an infectious disease that is spread from animal to humans. One of the reasons why we are so concerned about monkeypox is that the virus has evolved to human-to-human spread. While the rash that monkeypox causes can look similar to chickenpox, these viruses are unrelated.

How is monkeypox transmitted?

There are two main types of transmission that can occur: animal-to-human and human-to-human. Animal-to-human transmission usually occurs through contact with an infected animal’s bodily fluid, or through a bite. Less commonly, it can also occur through eating raw or minimally processed meat that comes from wild animals in certain regions of the world.

Human-to-human transmission can occur in several ways. Direct contact with infected sores, scabs or bodily fluids are the main cause of spread. The virus is also thought to be spread through respiratory secretions when prolonged face-to-face contact occurs. In addition, spread can also occur through contact with secondary objects, such as clothes or linens that have come into contact with infected sores. Spread from the mother to the fetus can also occur in pregnant females.

If a non-infected person is exposed to the monkeypox virus, it can take five to 13 days for the person to develop symptoms. However, some estimates state that the incubation period — time of exposure to time of disease presentation — can last from four to 21 days. People infected with the monkeypox virus through an animal bite may have a shorter incubation period.

If a person is diagnosed with monkeypox, they are considered infectious from the moment they have symptoms until all of their skin lesions have scabbed over and new skin has grown over.

What are the symptoms?

Since monkeypox is a virus, the timeline of symptoms presents typically like other viruses. There is a period of symptoms that last for approximately five days prior to the onset of the rash. This period is called the prodromal period. During these five days the patient may experience fever, severe headache, body aches, fatigue and severe swelling of the lymph nodes. Towards the end of the prodromal period, typically one to four days after the fever develops, a rash appears. The rash itself tends to concentrate around the face, but it also can develop on the palms, soles and areas of mucous membrane such as the area around the eyes, anus and genitalia. Once they erupt, the rash lesions usually progress through various stages:

- They start as small, flattened discolored rashes usually two to five millimeters in diameter called macules. The lesions then evolve to one centimeter area of raised skin called a papule, then to a clear and small blister filled with fluid called a vesicle. Finally, they progress into a pustule, a patch of skin that’s filled with yellowish fluid/secretions. Often, the lesions form a central depression on top of the lesion. Eventually after one to two weeks, the lesions crust over and they then drop off. The rashes have been described by patients as painful and itchy.

- Several complications can occur, including respiratory infections, sepsis and loss of life.

How do you diagnose monkeypox?

Like many disease processes, proper diagnosis involves clinical and laboratory findings. The diagnosis should be considered when patients present with the typical rash. Typically they would have some other risk factor for infection, such as recent travel to areas of outbreaks or close or intimate in-person contact with someone suspected or confirmed of having monkeypox or people part of a social network experiencing monkeypox. In addition, clinicians should suspect monkeypox in people who may not fall into the risk factors above but do present with lesions in their genital regions or are experiencing proctitis, a painful inflammation of the lining of the rectum. Testing is most commonly accomplished via obtaining a swab of the dry lesions and processing it via PCR in a lab.

There are several other infections that should be ruled out prior to diagnosing monkeypox: varicella (chickenpox), herpes simplex virus and other sexually transmitted infections. Less likely but given concerns of bioterrorism, it is important to consider smallpox as well.

Can monkeypox be treated?

Monkeypox usually causes mild to moderate infection and typically is self-limiting. Most people recover without medical intervention. However, it is important to closely monitor people because very serious complications can occur. There are certain people who have a higher risk of severe disease: people younger than 8 years of age, people with immunocompromising conditions and pregnant or breastfeeding women. These people should undergo treatment with antivirals. In addition, treatment can also be considered for people with very severe symptoms or people with lesions in the mouth, eyes or genital areas.

One of the more common treatments is an oral antiviral medication that is taken several times a day for two weeks. People who are seeking treatment must coordinate with their physician, who will coordinate with the local health department. There is also a vaccine available for certain people who are immunocompromised or who have been exposed to suspected infection.

Recently, the World Health Organization has declared monkeypox a global public health emergency. Like most things in medicine, education is the most important first step.

If you are concerned that you or someone you know may have been exposed to the virus, or if you have a fever that is associated with a rash, seek help. Speak to your physician and determine if testing is indicated.

Stay educated. Stay informed and stay safe.

The writer is chief medical officer of Bellevue Medical Partners, an office and house call practice based in Old Town.
Our View

Words matter

Words are important, both those that are spoken and those left unsaid. For instance, hearing the words “I love you” from a loved one is affirming for both the hearer and speaker. The absence of those words, especially if longed for, can scar for life.

The power of words, and how much it hurts when they are omitted, is at the forefront of today’s page 1 Alexandria Times story, “Wolf’s school Integration.” For those unaware, a new Virginia Historical Marker was unveiled at George Washington Middle School last Saturday. Along with detailing the history of GW as a high school, the plaque contains this sentence: “Alexandria’s school system was desegregated in 1965.”

That sentence certainly comes as news to us, as it undoubtedly does to the Black students and their families who braved insults, isolation and physical threats to desegregate Alexandria’s public schools in 1959. Yes, of course desegregation in Alexandria was started, not finished, in 1959. It happened after a court order mandated that Alexandria’s then-superintendent T.C. Williams stop blocking the admission of nine Black children from previously all-white schools.

For a better understanding of what happened in 1959, see the Alexandria Times four-part series on integration of Alexandria public schools written by freelance writer Jim McElhatton; simply go to alextimes.com and search under “McElhatton.” Start with “A school cook’s forgotten civil rights stand” that ran March 22, 2018.

Though we wish it had begun and been completed all at once, that’s not how it happened. That’s also seldom how life works. It took more than another half-decade before the desegregation that began in 1959 was completed.

It’s also fine if people want to parse words, and call what happened in 1959 the beginning of integration, while full desegregation wasn’t achieved for another six years. What’s not OK is to simply cancel the integration of 1959 by ignoring it.

It’s unfortunate that Alexandria has erected a historical marker that’s historically incorrect about one of the most significant events in this city’s history.

The last paragraphs of our editorial that ran on Jan. 31, 2019 – that accompanied McElhatton’s third story on integration – bear repeating.

“But the real stars of that dreary day in the middle of February almost 60 years ago were the nine school children who broke the color barrier in Alexandria. Those children were: Jessie Mae Jones, age eight; Margaret Lomax, six; James Lomax, eight; Sarah Ragland, eight; James Ragland, 13; Patsy Ragland, 14; Gerald Turner, six; Sandra Turner, seven and Kathryn Turner, 11. The children integrated three formerly all-white schools that day. Theodore Ficklin Elementary, William Ramsay Elementary and Francis Hammond High School.

“When we think about the bravery of those children long ago, it’s important to consider what that must have felt like: To walk into a school full of people who mostly didn’t want you there. To face the uncertainty of whether your very presence was going to result in violence, as it did in many other places. To sit in a classroom with other children your age – and be the only one with dark skin.

“These were exceptional children, chosen for their intelligence and character, and they were important spokes in the large wheel of the civil rights movement that rolled forward bit by bit. What they endured in the winter of 1959 and beyond helped pave the way for Alexandria to later have black members on its school board and city council, a black mayor, for Virginia to elect a black governor and ultimately, for the United States to elect a black president. Those gains were hard won, and important steps in that journey were taken on Feb. 10, 1959. Alexandrians of every race and background owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.”

Opinion

“Where the press is free and every man is able to read, all is safe.”

- Thomas Jefferson

Photo of the Week

An Amtrak diesel engine recently photographed at Alexandria Union Station. Note the paint job that was done last year to commemorate Amtrak’s 50th anniversary.

Your Views

A loss of trust

To the editor:

As a member of the Stakeholders Committee to help select the new city manager, I was impressed by the breadth of substantive questions that were asked to the candidates. Foremost was the principle of trust, as one would expect for a leadership position in public service.

Having lived in Alexandria since the mid-1980s while stationed at the Pentagon when ashore, long sea deployments and war often took me away from home. It’s that cruel sea that teaches a captain why trust in those who lead is necessary – at sea and ashore. If leaders lose trust of those they oversee, order disintegrates – if not into chaos, then dereliction. Purposeful ships can eventually lose purpose.

Trust was particularly important for the city’s first public presentation to the Duke Street Corridor Advisory Group’s recent meeting. The city needed to earn back that trust because at the first presentation of the controversial Seminary Road Diet in 2018, the city’s main justification was that Seminary Road was “a corridor with a high number of KSI (killed or seriously injured) crashes.”

This was not true for the very safe mile where the diet was actually done on Seminary Road but, sadly, it was true for the part of Seminary Road on the other side of I-395. There, the median level of income was five times less, but its accident rate was 17 times more than the same distance – but there were no road safety proposals for that section.

For the Duke Street Corridor presentation on June 30, the deputy director of the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services emailed to let people know, “The main goal of this meeting is to go over the approved 2012 plan. ... There are no proposed changes.” The city’s presentation and pictorial views of Duke Street were similarly titled, “2012 Plan Concept.” However, what was shown was not the plan City Council approved in 2012.

Added to the pictorial view of Duke Street that had been approved by Council in 2012 were five-feet wide bicycle lanes – placed between a bus lane and two traffic lanes on each side of Duke Street – where Phase I is to be done.

The 2012 city manager memorandum that Council approved had no bicycle lanes throughout Duke Street. Council’s direction was, “A parallel off-corridor bicycle facility should be examined to accommodate bicyclists” at both ends of Duke Street in Phase I.
More history on GW High School

To the editor:

As a GWHS alumnus, the Out of the Attic article in the July 21 Alexandria Times, “GW High School: Now a state landmark,” brought back favorable memories. The GWHS football field probably hosted a third historic event which was surprisingly not recognized.

During the same era when the Quantico Marines defeated Virginia Tech in the football game pictured, the field hosted what was most likely the first integrated college football game in Virginia as the Penn State freshman team played the U.S. Naval Academy Plebes in the fall of 1952.

If my childhood memory is correct, the Penn State team featured an elusive African American halfback, possibly the future NFL Hall of Famer Lenny Moore. While this event may be judged historic today, I do not recall any publicity of this fact at that time. Perhaps the Office of Historic Alexandria can verify if this recollection is factual.

-Gerald B. File
GWHS ’57
Alexandria

BY ROB WHITTLE

Poor Robert's Ruminations
with Rob Whittle

Seinfeld, Dr. Atkins and me

A few years ago, a staffer at my ad agency saw an article that proclaimed that the Today Contraceptive Sponge was making a comeback in the market. The Sponge was infamous for being taken off the market in a Seinfeld episode in which Elaine, hoarding a limited supply of Sponges, must decide which of her prospective lovers was “Spongeworthy.” We pitched the account, won the business and were soon deeply immersed in matters of female reproducitvity.

The new Sponge owner mentioned to me that his PR guy, whom he loved, was leaving his old agency and was looking for a place to park himself and his accounts. I asked to speak to him and within a few days, found myself opening a New York office with five employees to service “Stephan’s” PR clients. The jewel in the crown was not the Sponge; rather, it was the Atkins Diet, one of the most popular and controversial diets ever. To be specific, the entity paying the bills was Atkins Food, purveyors of carb-free candy bars, ice cream, cookies, cakes and the like. Dr. Atkins’ immensely popular books on low-carb dieting provided the seed money for Atkins Foods.

As the ever-optimistic entrepreneur, my thought was, “What could possibly go wrong?”

The first sign of trouble was in the form of a lawsuit from Stephen’s previous employer. It seems that Stephen had a non-compete clause in his contract that he neglected to tell me about. After settling the case, profits from the New York branch of my agency were slow to materialize.

Meanwhile, the Food and Drug Administration was giving the Sponge fits. The new Sponge factory was not up to snuff and serious alterations were needed. We were busy publicizing the fact that the Sponge was coming back, and the Sponge people were busy not paying us for our efforts. This went on for a few months until I finally cut them off.

But we still had Atkins, and the fees were starting to become substantial. It seemed that everyone in the U.S. was on a low-carb diet. Eat all the steak, hamburger, sausage and cheese that you want. You will lose weight!

Halfway through our New York adventure, Dr. Atkins suddenly died. The official cause of death was his slipping on a patch of ice and cracking his head. That did not stop the worldwide press from branding Atkins a crew loses trust ... as a godsend. He proceeded to work 60 hours a week on their behalf, and, like the Sponge did with us, Atkins stayed busy not paying Anthony for his services. Excuses piled high as to why payments were not forthcoming.

Nonetheless, I had the bright idea of exporting the Atkins PR account to other members of our network in Germany, France, Italy and Spain, following Atkins’ own planned expansion. To set things up, I flew to London – with building a global empire on my mind, met with Anthony and representatives of Atkins and came away with a structure for European marketing of the Atkins diet.

I returned to Alexandria and was greeted by a registered, certified letter from Stephen giving me his resignation. I was angry beyond words. We had invested in a New York office, taken some business hits and now, just when it was starting to pay off, Stephen leaves! He explained to me, a little too smugly for my taste, that Atkins was taking PR in-house, and giving him a big raise and stock options, which made him set for life financially. Besides, he said, Atkins was offering a generous settlement to buy him out of his contract with me.

I sent a truck to New York to retrieve our office furniture, closed out the lease, which was expiring, and washed my hands of the Big Apple.

Five months later, Atkins Foods declared bankruptcy. Stephen was out on the street, and poor Anthony, too. Sometimes losing is better than winning. We got our money and didn’t have to worry about paying for an office we didn’t need. Such is the life of the entrepreneur.

The writer is CEO of Williams Whittle Advertising and is the author of two historical novels, "Pointer’s War" and "Pointer and the Russian."
Benjamin Thomas was innocent

On Aug. 8, 1899, a group of Alexandrians dragged an innocent 16-year-old Black boy through the cobblestone streets of Old Town, kicking, beating and shooting him — before hanging him. Confronted with an innocent man’s death and a mob’s disrespect for the law, the white establishment blamed the Black community for inciting a mob, and poor whites for lynching Benjamin Thomas.

Edward and Julia Kloch, whose 7-year-old child Lillian came home without the axe she was told to retrieve from next door, were a poor, quickly growing white family. “The little girl” explained her failed errand by telling her parents that Thomas tried to assault her. Kloch swore out a warrant for Thomas’ arrest.

Thomas told police officers he was innocent and after his lynching, most of Alexandria agreed. Yet the only people punished were members of the city’s Black community. On Aug. 9, Alexandria Gazette Editor Harold Snowden called the mob’s actions deplorable, but made it clear that when a white woman or girl is sexually assaulted, Alexandrians won’t forcefully intervene to stop a lynching.

Thomas was in prison awaiting trial based solely on the testimony of the Kloch child — who admitted Thomas was not violent with her but complained of the way he treated her, wrote the Baltimore Sun.

Alexandria freedman H. M. Murray wrote in his diary that the evidence against Thomas was “very meager.” “The little girl” said he “pulled up her clothes.”

Rev. R. E. Hart of Washington, D.C. investigated the lynching and spoke with the Cleveland Gazette, which reported: “It is now generally admitted that he was not guilty. The mother of the girl told him [Hart] … the young man was not guilty and that she had known him from a youth to be a good boy.”

Even Mayor George Simpson told Hart Thomas’ guilt was “doubtful.” White authorities, compromised for allowing an innocent man to be lynched, blamed members of the Black community who had tried to protect Thomas. The night Thomas was arrested, Black Alexandrians alerted police and the mayor of a threat to Lynch him. They asked for added protection for him and offered to help. When their services were refused, the men stood guard anyway until police arrested the leaders.

The next morning, at the trial of the Black men, police didn’t testify that they wanted to protect Thomas, but said the Blacks were openly threatening the white community. After the trial, white Alexandrians complained, saying the Black men acted “high handed,” and believed it was because the victim’s family was poor.

The Washington Post reported that city officials blamed the African Americans for “making threatening demonstrations,” that “spurred the whites on to decisive action.” The article also said those participating in the lynching were trying to establish “white supremacy” over Blacks.

Snowden blamed poverty, writing victims of sexual assaults that resulted in lynchings were “usually among those white people who associate on terms of equality with negroes, and with them, as with others, bad company almost invariably produces ill effects.”

At the conclusion of their trial, the Black men were fined, and those who couldn’t pay went to the chain gang.

John Mitchell, editor of the Richmond Planet wrote, “Was there ever a greater parody upon justice than the sight of citizens of Alexandria, colored citizens hauled before a white mayor and fined $20 for doing their duty? Mayor Simpson is a disgrace to the office. He, a sworn official of the law fining other citizens who were anxious to see the laws upheld.”

Those who denied Thomas’ constitutional rights and killed an innocent boy not only weren’t punished — they weren’t even charged.

OUT OF THE ATTIC

Weekly Poll

Last Week

Are you surprised to learn that Latinos have much better outcomes per case of COVID-19 than Blacks or whites in Alexandria and Virginia?

52% I don’t have an opinion either way.

17% Yes, that’s shocking.

16% No, I expected as much.

16% What shocks me is that whites fared worst statewide.

This Week

The first Black students attended previously all-white schools in Alexandria in 1959, yet full desegregation wasn’t achieved until 1965. When do you think our city schools integrated?

A) February 1959.

B) 1965.

C) I’m not sure.

D) It doesn’t matter.

Take the poll at aletimes.com
Weekly Words

1. One with a lot on his shoulders?
6. Harley bike
9. Self-satisfied
13. ___ Gump Shrimp Company
18. Uplift
19. Corn serving
20. Bread with a pocket
21. "Top Chef" coverings
26. ___ Mary (cocktail)
27. Stain from a pen
28. Finger or tail movements
29. "Howdy!"
31. Many a fed. holiday
32. Dishwashing liquid
34. Lasso, but not Ted Lasso
36. Comic Aykroyd
37. Mordor monster
43. Wise villager
45. Sporting
47. On holiday
49. Middle Eastern food on a stick
52. "Yeah, yeah"
53. Performing "Hamlet," say
56. Southern sch. that Brink attended
59. Name that anagrams to "Easter"
60. Second-longest river in Africa
62. Brady's former sitcom
64. Minecraft resource
65. They often use litmus paper
69. Business magazine
71. Dissuade
72. Unequally applied rules, or a hint to interpreting the starred clues' answers
73. City near Seattle
74. "Dude!"
75. A lot of ___ (1984)
76. "I'm not leaving until I hear a John Lee Hooker classic!"
77. Two-in-one utensil
78. Haw's partner
79. English football club with a cannon in its logo
80. Before, poetically
81. "Yeah, yeah"
82. Cold cut sausage
84. Some host roasts
85. Los Angeles baller
86. Spectators
87. "You won"
88. Modern "methinks" (Abbr.)
89. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
93. "You won"
100. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
120. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
144. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
146. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
188. "Dangerous" for ___ (1984)
JULY 29

SCOUT’S HONOR & HOMEWARD TRAILS ADOPTION EVENT Join Barkhaus and Homeward Trails Animal Rescue in honoring one of our fallen, Scout Brice. Come out to support his local rescue and help socialize adoptable pups in need.

Time: 6 to 9 p.m.
Location: 529 East Howell Ave.
Information: https://visitalexandria.com/events/scouts-honor-homeward-trails-adoption-event/

JULY 30

COMMUNITY WELLNESS EVENT FOR RABBITS AND GUINEA PIGS The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria is excited to invite you to our first Pets & People Community Wellness event for rabbits and guinea pigs. Free services available will include physical exams, nail trims, microchips (for rabbits only), pet food and supplies (while supplies last), and information on caring for your rabbits and guinea pigs.

Time: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location: 4101 Eisenhower Ave.
Information: AlexandriaAnimals.org/Rabbits-and-Pigs

JULY 31

JUNIOR DOCENTS AT GADSBY’S TAVERN MUSEUM Every Sunday, June 19 through Labor Day weekend, from 2-5 p.m. guests can meet Junior Docents who will be stationed throughout the tavern. They will be sharing the history of early America and the tavern and also the history of chocolate with a hands on demonstration.

Time: 2 to 5 p.m.
Location: 134 N. Royal St.
Information: https://apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=45706

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Time: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: 1600 King St.
Information: https://www.braborestaurant.com

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- Backed by American Standard’s 150 years of experience
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Human Trafficking?
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT

We can all be human-traffic heroes! Stay alert and report any suspicious behavior you see by calling #77.
PUBLIC NOTICE
ABANDONED WATERCRAFT

Notice is hereby given that the following watercraft has been abandoned for more than 60 DAYS on the property of: Bruce G. Welch, 3574 Cypress Creek Rd., Comfort, TX 78013. Phone #: 956-279-0830
1982 Shamrock 20', White. Hull #: SHAO13490382
Application for Watercraft Registration/Title will be made in accordance with Section 291-733.25 of the Code of Virginia if this watercraft is not claimed and removed within 30 days of first publication of this notice. Please contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources with questions.

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Replace your roof with the best looking and longest lasting material - steel from Erie Metal Roofs! Three styles and multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer - $500 Discount + Additional 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders.) Call Erie Metal Roofs: 1-844-902-4611
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<td>Logan Circle</td>
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</table>

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