City Council approved police collective bargaining agreement

Decision marks first in Virginia
BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

City Council voted unanimously last week to approve funding in the upcoming fiscal year budget for a collective bargaining agreement between the city and the Alexandria chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association.

Since Virginia’s bargaining provision went into effect last year, this is the first in the state to have been implemented. Collective bargaining allows the city’s public sector employees to negotiate wages, benefits and working conditions with their employers.

If the good faith commitment is ultimately approved, the agreement will include pay increases for officers, sergeants and lieutenants, with officers’ starting pay increasing 11%, from $54,698 to $61,503, starting July 1, 2023. Police sergeants’ starting salary will be $69,497 and police lieutenants’ salary will be $86,288. Then, salaries would continue to increase annually through June 30, 2026.

The agreement includes specialty pay for positions that require training or experience, creation of a labor-management partnership for training access and the formation of a union committee. Police officers in other localities will be able to transfer to the Alexandria Police Department, with their experience compensated at market rate, and there will be a clear promotional process for those interested in advancing in the APD ranks.

"[We’ve] worked long and exhausting hours to build first a level of trust, then..."
2500 KING STREET | $2,200,000

Timeless elegance and panoramic vistas from this classic brick four square perched majestically in the shadow of the Masonic Temple! This landmark residence has been brought back to life by Bluestone Builders in collaboration with Thompson Moran Design team. The home is the epitome of classic: with approx. 3,400 sq ft with 5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, 2 covered porches, a gracious front entry foyer and a light filled home with an open floor plan, exposed brick wall and gourmet kitchen with center island! The main and upper level have 9 foot ceilings, transom windows above the doors, wide plank wood flooring, open staircase, 9” baseboard and oversized 2 over 1 windows. Entertaining is effortless with the open circular floor plan making this the social center of the home. Beautiful french doors lead to the back porch overlooking rear yard... perfect for al-fresco dining. The dining room has a secondary entry & powder room tucked away off the hall. The second level has an owners suite with custom built-ins & wainscoting, 2 walk-in closets, luxurious bathroom and a Jack & Jill bath flanked by two additional spacious bedrooms. The third level offers panoramic views of the City, full bath, 3 walk-in closets making a perfect guest suite or home office! The lower level incorporates an au pair suite/guest room, full bath, family room w service bar, laundry & private entrance. 2 off-street parking spaces. Blocks to Metro!

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Carpenter’s Shelter awarded $2.5 million

The fifth annual Bezos Day 1 Families Fund, created by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos in 2018, issued a $2.5 million grant to Alexandria’s Carpenter’s Shelter.

Carpenter’s Shelter is one of 40 recipients from 26 states and Puerto Rico that will receive immediate donations, totaling $123.45 million.

According to the Day 1 Families Fund website, the donations aim to help these organizations “continue their compassionate, needle-moving work to help families move from unsheltered homelessness and shelters to permanent housing with the services they require to achieve stability.”

Carpenter’s Shelter is a homeless shelter that offers shelter and services with the stated goal of transitioning visitors into permanent, sustainable housing.

Sheriff’s Office earns CALEA re-accreditation

The Alexandria Sheriff’s Office has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies for the tenth consecutive year.

ASO received its formal accreditation during CALEA’s fall conference on Nov. 18 and 19 in St. Louis. It also earned a meritorious distinction for being continuously accredited for more than 15 years.

CALEA conducted a virtual assessment over three days in April to evaluate ASO’s policies and procedures, management, operations and support services related to law enforcement.

“In many ways, the agency appears to be a model of how to operate a modern-law enforcement agency, especially in the area of community engagement and court security,” CALEA said, according to a news release.

ASO serves as a secondary responder with its primary mission of operating the William G. Truesdale Adult Detention Center, managing courthouse security, transporting prisoners and serving legal processes and warrants.

Home for the Holidays Jingle!

SAT. DEC 17, 2022 - 7:30 P.M.
SUN. DEC 18, 2022 - 3:00 P.M

Helena Colindres, soprano

Traditional holiday fare with music from Tchaikovsky’s and Duke Ellington’s Nutcracker, Handel’s Messiah, holiday favorites, a sing-along and more! Featuring soprano Helena Colindres. Welcoming back BalletNova for Saturday’s performance.

Adult: $20-$89 Student: $15 Youth: $5
(703) 548-0885 alexsym.org

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Alexandria Choral Society’s holiday concert

On Dec. 17, the Alexandria Choral Society will end the year with a holiday-themed concert, “Snow on Snow,” on Dec. 17 at the George Washington Masonic Temple.

The performances will be directed by Artistic Director Brian Fontaine-Isaac and feature a wide repertoire of styles such as traditional carols, sacred gospel, swinging jazz and contemporary ballads, according to a news release.

The concert will feature female composers in “Aleluia” by Elaine Hagenberg, “Ring out!” by Jennaya Robinson, “Silent Night” by Laura Jekabson, “Peace on Earth” by Errollyn Wallen and “Go Tell It on the Mountain” by Rosep-
hanye Powell. It will also include all-time favorites such as John Rutter’s “We Wish You a Merry Christmas.”

ACS offers a “pay what you can” model with a suggested ticket price of $30. For more information, visit AlexandriaChoralSociety.org.

-oanderson@alextimes.com

Some COVID-19 testing sites to close

Come Dec. 26, several COVID-19 testing sites will close their doors.

Curative, a private healthcare company, has chosen to discontinue all of its Alexandria kiosks as part of a decision to close all testing centers throughout the region before the end of the year, according to a news release.

However, several other places throughout the city will remain open for testing. Some of these include Alexandria libraries, scheduled appointments for public school students and faculty and three Neighborhood Health clinics, located at 2 E. Glebe Rd., 1200 N. Howard St. and 6677 Richmond Hwy.

For more information, visit https://www.alexandriava.gov/COVIDTesting.

-oanderson@alextimes.com

ADOPTABLE PET OF THE WEEK

- Holiday Elf -

2-year-old Bodey might describe his breed as American Love Bug. He loves his human & canine friends and is always looking for ways to curl up and be closer. He’s clocking in at nearly 70 lbs, so is hoping for an active lifestyle in his new home. Some may say he’s “a bit” large for a lapdog but his sincerity is convincing. In addition to chilling with humans, Bodey enjoys playing Fetch and walks in the park as well.

Meet Bodey!
AlexandriaAnimals.org/Adopt-By-Appointment
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-Kerry Wright & Dustin Richards

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CITY COUNCIL  FROM | 1

cooperation, and then a compromise to get a very strong agreement that recognizes the valued contribution of our police for our community,” City Manager Jim Parajon said.

Negotiations have been ongoing since March, taking place several times each month. Specifically, officers and city officials discussed ways to promote officer recruitment and retention. Some changes include improvements to longevity bonuses, call-back pay, court pay, language pay, specialty pay and disability benefits.

Last year, the city appointed two labor relations positions, Chief Labor Relations Officer Kevin Stokes and Labor Relations Administrator Sean Rogers, to oversee implementation of Alexandria’s collective bargaining ordinance.

At the meeting, Stokes called the discussions “productive, meaningful and substantive” and said the ultimate negotiation does not jeopardize the city’s finances.

“We were able to find common ground on all items while promoting public safety and advancing employee wages and benefits,” Stokes said. “... With a competitive starting salary, the Alexandria Police Department is better positioned to attract, recruit and hire officers from many backgrounds, including officers from unrepresented groups.”

During deliberation, city councilors showed unanimously enthusiastic support for the ordinance. Councilor Canek Aguirre said the decision-making process was laborious but rewarding at the same time.

“[I want] to commend both sides. This has been a lot of work, it has been a long time coming, we’re talking 40-plus years. It’s amazing that we’ve been able to get to this point, so I’m excited for this,” Aguirre said.

Vice Mayor Amy Jackson expressed gratitude for the previous councils that helped inch the city closer to this agreement during the past five decades. Aguirre shouted out former Councilors Mo Seifeldein and Del Pepper, and Jackson shouted out former Councilor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, for their prior work on this issue.

“It’s not just this council, it’s been on the shoulders of other councils that helped us get to this point,” Jackson said. “... This is a huge moment in history, and we all recognize that.”

The city approved its collective bargaining ordinance in April 2021, a regulation that had not existed since the 70s. Though Alexandria was one of 17 municipalities that had previously permitted collective bargaining for public employees, the Virginia Supreme Court banned the practice in 1977.

After the General Assembly passed a new law in April 2020 permitting municipalities across the state to establish collective bargaining procedures of their own starting the following year, community members, labor representatives and councilors came together to demonstrate support for passing an ordinance, not only to benefit the city but also to set an example for surrounding jurisdictions.

The road to this point has been rocky. City employees have long been calling on council to increase compensation for workers who lagged behind their regional counterparts. Though the city made some adjustments, fire and police unions said they weren’t enough. The ongoing pay issues have resulted in dire staffing shortages and hiring challenges in the police and fire departments.

During last week’s legislative meeting, Councilor John Chapman expressed hope that the new agreement will mark the start of a better working relationship between the city and its public sector employees.

“Hopefully this extends the olive branch from council to employees here to show that we fully value the work that you do, particularly for our public safety folks. The fact that you go out every day and put your life on the line for the citizens of this city does not go unnoticed, and hopefully this is the start of continuing to show that to you on a regular basis,” Chapman said.

Jackson made a motion to adopt a resolution for the tentative bargaining agreement, which Chapman seconded.

The beauty of the negotiation process, Mayor Justin Wilson said, was that all parties were able to bring ideas to the table with the goal of arriving at a mutually agreeable solution.

“It’s one that I think moves the needle forward and recognizes our hardworking police officers for the work that they do every day for our residents ... but does so in a constructive way in partnership with the city, recognizing that we’re all in this together,” Wilson said. “I’m excited to be at this point. I think it’s an important milestone for us as a community, and we also recognize that we will be back at this again several years from now.”

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How to enjoy Christmas in Alexandria: Teen edition

BY CHARLOTTE E. HEINRICHS

It’s the best time of the year in our lovely city. And this holiday season I have 12 ideas, for the Twelve Days of Christmas, of course, for how teens can enjoy the Christmas cheer and festivities.

First, bundle up, grab some friends, and take a stroll down historic King Street. Those people really know their stuff when it comes to decorating for Christmas. Bows and wreaths on the homes, and decorated storefronts that are lit up with holiday cheer, really do set the mood. The gas lanterns have a nostalgic charming effect and add to the theme.

Second on your Christmas season to-dos, especially for those who love dogs and want to see terriers and hounds dressed in Christmas apparel, is to hop down to the Scottish Christmas walk parade. You’ll see some cute dogs and plaid and indulge in the jingle of Scottish tunes.

Third on the list is a visit to a park that used to be a real war fort called Fort Ward. On Dec. 10, from noon to 4 p.m., this historic gem will host Union Santa Claus. Take my word for it since I visited him last year – it is a lot of fun. He drops in from the Civil War era to encourage little girls and boys to be good and to support President Lincoln and the Union. He isn’t the only one there, either. There are reenactors from the same era, and delicious warm cider. Fort Ward is located at 4301 West Braddock Road.

Fourth, go take in the twinkling lights on King Street from heights of the Masonic Temple. It is a great view, especially if you get there during sunset.

Fifth, partake in the entertainment for yourself and others by organizing your own Christmas caroling squad. Print off the first few verses of "Silent Night," and "Oh Holy Night" and head into town with some friends, siblings and a cup of hot cocoa. Ring a doorbell, step back and raise your voice to spread some Christmas cheer in the neighborhood, all while making your own traditions and great memories.

Sixth, enjoy the hard work of the dancers of International Dance, as we perform many dances and mini stories in "The Christmas Spectacular: One MadANCEical Toy Shoppe." The performance is Dec. 17 and the tickets can be purchased at the box office. The performance will be at the George Mason University, located at 4373 Mason Pond Dr. I hope to see you there from the stage, although I will be focused on my jumps and spins, and doing my best to dazzle with all of the other local dancers.

Seventh, eat alfresco on King Street. Ever since the pandemic, there has been outdoor eating and it is one of my favorite things, so I’m so glad the restaurants kept it now that the pandemic is behind us. The lights really put you in the Christmas spirit, and if you get there in time you can pick a spot next to a heat lamp.

Eighth, grab your closest buddies, and test your selfie skills by posing with the giant Christmas tree in front of city hall.

Ninth, after your selfie, head down the street to pick up gifts at any of the classic shops. There are a variety of unique options for your teachers or relatives.

Tenth, this is a bit out of town, but I highly recommend that you don’t miss an annual stop at Mount Vernon. My family tries to get a Christmas dinner at the Inn, and when it’s cold enough, they have a crackling fire for the dinner guests. The Christmas décor, the charming historic place-settings and the delicious menu is the stuff of holiday traditions.

Eleventh, for those who are religious, the true meaning of Christmas is best celebrated in church. If you haven’t been in a while, it’s ok! Christmas time is always a good time to start. My favorite churches in the area are Immanuel Lutheran Church, located at 1801 Russell Rd. with a start time at 10 a.m., and Del Ray Baptist Church on 2405 Russell Rd. with a start time at 10:15 a.m. What could be better than reading the original Christmas story about the birth of Jesus, from the original Book, and singing classic carols in celebration?

And finally, the twelfth suggestion is to go thrifting. Living in a historic part of the country always makes for the best thrifting, and your out-of-town family will appreciate the treasures that you find in the bargain shops in our wonderful area. No matter what kind of shopping you do, definitely do it in person instead of online. It is so much more fun.

Merry Christmas, happy holidays and have a happy New Year Alexandria!

The writer is a student at Immanuel Lutheran School.
Ready to read

Childrens’ books to check out this season
BY LESLIE GOLDEN

Books make great gifts for people of all ages. Below is a list of children’s book classics grouped into three age categories for the child in your family or heart. Whether you plan to read aloud to your baby or toddler or encourage a young child or pre-teen to read on their own, there’s something for everyone in this list. You’ll find legendary authors like Eric Carle and Sandra Boynton and other legends—in-the-making.

Check out local bookstores Hooray for Books! and Old Town Books for these and other children’s titles.

1 to 5 years old
“The Snowy Day”
Ezra Jack Keats
No book has captured the magic and sense of possibility of the first snowfall better than “The Snowy Day.” Winner of the Caldecott Medal and universal in its appeal, the story has become a favorite of millions, as it reveals a child’s wonder at a new world, and the hope of capturing and keeping that wonder forever.

“Who’s Hiding in the Snow?”
Katharine McEwen
There are lots of animals in the snow. Where are they hiding and what are they doing? In this innovative lift-the-flap book, little ones can pore over beautifully collaged pages and explore under rocks, snowbanks, and icebergs to find out interesting facts about wildlife in snowy climates.

“Hanukkah” (Bright Baby Touch and Feel Series)
Roger Priddy
A touch-and-feel board book for babies and toddlers introducing Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights. This is an ideal first board book to share with your baby or toddler as a first step to discovering Hanukkah traditions.

“Dream Snow”
Eric Carle
It’s Dec. 24, and the old farmer settles down for a winter’s nap, wondering how Christmas can come when there is no snow. But when the farmer awakens, he finds that it has really snowed outside, and now he remembers something. Putting on his red suit, he goes outside, puts some gifts under the tree for his animals, and presses a button near a Christmas tree, creating a most surprising musical treat for children everywhere.

“Christmas, Little Pookie”
Sandra Boynton
An ideal stocking stuffer, “Christmas, Little Pookie” is a captivating and classic board book. Join Mom and her little Pookie as they bake cookies, decorate the house, sing with friends and family — and at last settle down to sleep. Told and illustrated with Sandra Boynton’s celebrated charm and pizzazz, “Christmas, Little Pookie” is a classic holiday tale.

4 to 8 years old
“Winter Mazes”
Clever Publishing
Explore all there is to experience in winter with “Winter Mazes.” The fun, full-color pages contain more than 25 challenging mazes for children to complete. Each activity features a different winter theme to explore and new challenges to solve. Young fans of mazes can try to find their way through a variety of scenes, including a snowy, starry night; an ice-skating rink; a snow-filled meadow; and much more.

“Star Trek: Trek the Halls”
Robb Pearlman
Here is a delightfully quirky twist on “Deck the Halls” that will be a holiday must-have for Trek fans of all generations. This lighthearted holiday picture book features beloved Star Trek characters and locales from The Original Series, The Next Generation, Deep Space Nine, Voyager, Enterprise and Discovery.

“The Truth About Mrs. Claus”
Meena Harris
From #1 New York Times bestselling author Meena Harris, “The Truth About Mrs. Claus” is an empowering story about being true to yourself, honoring family traditions and believing in Christmas magic.

“The Christmas Quiet Book”
Deborah Underwood
The holidays are filled with joyful noise. But Christmas is sometimes wrapped in quiet: “Searching for presents quiet,” “Getting caught quiet” and “Hoping for a snow day quiet.” Irresistibly cute, soft colored pencil illustrations of bunnies, bears and more paint a magical holiday picture indeed.

“Madeline’s Christmas”
Ludwig Bemelmans
It’s the night before Christmas and everyone is sick in bed. All except brave Madeline, who is up and about and feeling just fine. Taking care of eleven little girls and Miss Clavel is hard work, but when Madeline finds help from a magical merchant, the girls embark on a Christmas journey that will surely make them forget their sniffles and sneezes. With its endearing, courageous heroine, cheerful humor and wonderful, whimsical drawings of Paris, the Madeline stories are true classics that continue to charm readers even after 75 years.

“Green Is For Christmas”
Drew Daywalt
Illustrated by Oliver Jeffers
In this Christmas story starring the crayons from the #1 New York Times bestseller “The Day The Crayons Quit,” Green Crayon is certain that he is the only Christmas color in the box. Of course, Red, White, Silver and even Tan have something to say about that. This humorous, small hardcover Christmas story is the perfect stocking stuffer and a great gift for all kids who like to color.

“The Christmas Book Flood”
Emily Kilgore
Illustrated by Kitty Moss
This lovely and lyrical picture book, based on a real Icelandic tradition, brings all the sparkle and anticipation of Christmas — and of the joys of reading — to the page. With gorgeous artwork and a diverse cast of characters, Emily Kilgore and Kitty Moss’ “The Christmas Book Flood” is a surefire holiday classic.

8 to 12 years old
“The Girl Who Saved Christmas”
Matt Haig
Illustrated by Chris Mould
The entire family will rejoice at this whimsical story of the first child to ever be gifted a Christmas present. A perfect read-aloud this holiday season. From the author of “A Boy Called Christmas” — now a Netflix movie starring Kristen Wiig, Maggie Smith and Henry Lawful.

“The Family Under the Bridge”
Natalie Savage Carlson
Illustrated by Garth Williams
The heartwarming and memorable Newbery Honor-winning book about finding family in the unlikely places, featuring artwork by beloved illustrator Garth Williams. The classic middle grade novel is a welcome and meaningful read.

SEE BOOKS
especially at Christmastime. "Weird But True Christmas: 300 Festive Facts to Light Up the Holidays" By National Geographic Kids Even Christmas can be weird – it’s true! Get ready to celebrate the holiday season with wacky facts, stats, tidbits and traditions about the most wonderful time of the year. Did you know that Santa’s reindeer are probably all female? Or that artificial snow can be made from seaweed? Or that “Jingle Bells” was the first Christmas carol sung in space? Every kid will “ho ho ho” when they unwrap this fun and festive little gift book, perfect for stocking stuffers or under the tree.

"Nutcracked" Susan Adrian

Georgie has waited for this moment her whole life – to dance the part of Clara in “The Nutcracker” ballet. And when she finally gets the part, it’s like a dream come true … literally. Every time Georgie dances with the Nutcracker doll, she leaves the ballet studio and enters a world where everything around her – the old wooden furniture, the Christmas tree, the carefully wrapped presents – is larger than life. Then the Nutcracker’s magic seeps into the real world, putting Georgie’s friend in danger. Everything is falling apart, and it’s almost Christmas. Can Georgie save her friend, the Nutcracker and herself?

"The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" Barbara Robinson

This year’s pageant is definitely like no other, but maybe that’s exactly what makes it so special. Laughs abound in this bestselling Christmas classic by Barbara Robinson, which follows the outrageous shenanigans of the Herdmans siblings, or “the worst kids in the history of the world.”

"Mr. Wolf’s Class Snow Day" Aron Nels Steinke

A blizzard is coming to Hazelwood Elementary. It’s snowing, and there’s excitement in the air because the school day might end early. Students and teachers alike are looking forward to seeing what happens. Meanwhile, Abdi is distracted and worried because his brother is having surgery. He’s supposed to go home with Henry, but they miss the bus and end up having an unexpected adventure with Mr. Wolf.

The writer is a former publishing associate for Little, Brown Books for Young Readers. She currently resides in Old Town with her husband and two children.
The importance of self care

Shop local for wellness-related gifts
BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

Starting to think about what gifts to get for the holidays? If the answer is yes, you’re not alone. As the end of the year quickly approaches, the top of the priority list for many people includes both spending time with loved ones and finding the perfect presents to give them.

It’s also a time packed with chaos and anxiety, so for the Times’ first Holiday Gift Guide of the year, we’re highlighting local businesses that offer self-care and wellness-related products.

As we enter the thick of holiday season, it’s important to remember to maintain our individual health – both physical and emotional. Here are our top picks, from music lessons to mani-pedis, that are sure to restore the mind, body and soul.

In next week’s gift guide, we’ll share our top luxury-themed gift suggestions.

532 Yoga

When Suzanne Leitner-Wise moved from England to the United States in 2000, she had recently completed a two-year training program and was looking to become a full-time yoga teacher. She taught classes in a variety of settings, such as gyms and dance studios, and in 2012 eventually opened her own yoga studio in Alexandria.

“I was going here, there and everywhere, teaching about

532 Yoga offers a “New Students Special” package, which is $85 for one month of unlimited classes – half the cost of the normal month unlimited package. There are also single drop-in classes for $27, one week of unlimited classes for $60, various membership options and yoga teacher training.

The business also offers gift certificates for various amounts, available in-store or on the website. For more information, visit 532yoga.com.

“[Yoga makes me] much more happy, stable, better able to understand my own body,” Leitner-Wise said. “It’s a preventative means of maintaining the health of your physical body, which, once you get to know your physical body much better, also resonates with the mind. We teach all-encompassing yoga here.”

Mason & Greens

In March 2020, right before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Justin and Anna Marino opened Alexandria’s first sustainable dry goods and grocery store, Mason & Greens. The couple was looking to create something that “helps people and the planet,” and ended up with a store that is 100% palm oil free, package free and vegan.

More than two years later, Mason & Greens, located at

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SENIOR CARE
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913 King St., carries a wide array of natural, easily compostable products related to home, personal care, pets and organic food.

“Everything that you purchase in our store is not only good for you, but it’s also good for the planet,” Justin said. “We dig deep into the products that we carry. We have a very high bar that we set for the products that we carry in the store.”

The store is constantly rotating products, and recently added several new brands to its shelves. For example, they selected the Colorado-based Consciously Curly Company, which uses many mushrooms in its product line such as powdered hair masks. The ayurvedic repair mask, listed at $25, is made from organic herbs and works to strengthen hair and add shine.

Another featured brand, Cov, has a glacial clay cleansing mask for $32. The mask includes anti-inflammatory and calming properties, and works to clean, hydrate and tighten skin.

“I actually use that one every week and I’ve loved it,” Anna said.

In the way of new self-care products, Mason & Greens also offers body and lip scrubs, neck wraps (filled with lentils), incense, candles and intention journals.

“It’s really important, this time of year, to think about what we’re actually giving people, and what the impact of those gifts is, not only in their life, but also on the planet,” Justin said.

For more information, visit masonandgreens.com.

School of Rock
School of Rock Alexandria, located at 3260 Duke St., is a music school that offers camps and workshops to help kids learn how to write songs and play in bands. It is for kids of all skill levels who want to learn guitar, bass, drums, keyboard and vocals.

Steve McKay, School of Rock’s general manager, said that the skills students learn through the school goes beyond just music.

“They’re socializing, they’re learning teamwork, collaboration, some humility,” McKay said. “If you’re just taking music lessons you might have some goals, but when you’re in a band, everyone is depending on you to learn your parts. They just learn so much.”

School of Rock also puts on shows at the end of most camps, providing students with a goal to work towards.

Classes begin with the Little Wing program for students 3 to 5 years old, which consists of a curriculum where students play games to learn the foundational skills to grow their music abilities. Then comes the Rookies program, which teaches 6 to 7 year-olds about different instruments and introduces music theory. Starting at age 8, School of Rock offers one-on-one lessons in conjunction with band rehearsals.

“What School of Rock brings is the social aspect of being in a band, being a team,” McKay said.

For more information about School of Rock, visit schoolofrock.com/locations/alexandria.

Sugar House Day Spa & Salon
Sugar House Day Spa & Salon’s roots go back several centuries. The city’s very first sugar refinery opened in 1803, with the refinery owner’s home located on the property. City officials nicknamed it the “sugar house.” Decades later, in 1998, the now-popular day spa opened its doors in the same location.

“When they went to go file the paperwork to open up the spa, [city officials] said, ‘Oh, you’re getting the old sugar house!’ And they knew from then, ‘That’s what we’re calling it.’

These days, Sugar House is a salon with 13 stations and three floors, the first of which is a salon, the second floor is a spa, and the third floor is a hair salon. The first floor is dedicated to hair and the second and third floors are dedicated to spas.

Sugar House, located at 111 N. Alfred St., offers a diverse range of services. There are options for hair design, hair treatments, skin care, dermaplaning, microdermabrasion, power waxes, waxing, makeup, nails and 15 types of massages of varying types and lengths. On Mondays, there is a Medi Spa that offers injectables, including botox and dermal fillers.

According to General Manager Venessa Ortiz, massages, which start at $65 for a 20-minutes sinus relief treatment, are one of Sugar House’s most popular gifts. Sugar House also has numerous facial options, ranging from a classic facial to a $115 rejuvenating back “facial.”

There are also pre-made spa packages for those wanting to mix and match. The Short and Sweet package, priced at $234, includes an organic deep cleansing facial, classic manicure and classic pedicure.

“We’re able to offer quite a bit of services, and that’s what the owner really wanted to do was create this oasis and place for people to go and relax and treat themselves,” Ortiz said. “What woman or man doesn’t want to have just time to themselves and enjoy those things?”

For more information, visit sugarhousedayspa.com.

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532 Yoga operates with the belief that “yoga is for every body.”

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Mon. - Fri. Brunch all day & full dinner menu from 4 pm
How to keep your pet safe during the holidays
BY GINA HARDTER

As the year draws to a close and the days get shorter and colder, many of us are starting to plan for the holidays. Why not include your pet in those plans? Whether you are traveling, partying or celebrating quietly from home, here are some top tips for keeping your pet safe this holiday season:

- Special meals are one of everyone’s favorite parts of the holiday season, but what’s good for your human family may not be for Fido and Fluffy. Pets should avoid most human foods because they contain too much salt and fat for their sensitive stomachs.

- One of the most festive things about the season is the decorations, but it’s best to limit what your pet can access. From adventurous kitties scaling – and toppling – Christmas trees to decorations that might look tasty to a pup but contain toxins, keeping your decorations out of reach will make everyone safer. And don’t forget to keep lit candles well out of reach of any inquisitive paws – or little hands!

- As the year ends, people love to gather, but make sure you are taking your pet into account when party planning. Consider offering your pet a safe space away from all the hustle and bustle of the activities; being behind a closed door also limits the opportunity for a pet to dart out a suddenly opened door or window. Make sure your visitors also understand how to interact with your pet safely and comfortably, and keep animal-appropriate treats readily available to make sure guests are not offering a pet any forbidden foods.

- If travel is on your list but not your pet’s, make sure you check with your vet to ensure your pet is up-to-date on all vaccinations, including for diseases especially transmissible in a boarding environment like Bordetella and canine flu.

And of course, whether you are traveling far or staying home, make sure pets are wearing appropriate identification and that any microchips have up-to-date contact information so should your pet become separated from you, they have a much better chance of finding their way back to you.

However you are celebrating, from your friends at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria and all of Alexandria’s Animals, we wish you a wonderful holiday season!

The writer is director of marketing and communications for the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

Caring for furry friends

Pets should avoid most human foods because they contain too much salt and fat for their sensitive stomachs.
All your dog wants for Christmas is...a video game?

BY KIM GILLIAM

Can you imagine a day where you have to limit your dog’s screen time, telling them ‘Alright, that’s enough gaming Fido’? That day may soon become a reality thanks to Joipaw, a U.K.-based startup that is serious about making video games for dogs. What began as a way to keep the founder’s active dog from boredom during the pandemic could actually have significant health benefits for aging dogs.

“Imagine being informed early if your dog is showing signs of joint issues or dog dementia, signs that a human will have a hard time noticing quickly, but that can be sent to your vet to improve diagnostics and treatments,” Joipaw shared in a statement about their products. The founder realized the potential for a broader health impact after reading a 2017 study by European researchers that tested simple touch-screen games on nearly 300 dogs and found potential cognitive benefits for dogs with aging brains.

It makes sense – video games have been shown to have helpful effects on human brains when it comes to diseases associated with aging. But what is dog dementia? Also known as Canine Cognitive Dysfunction, it is a cognitive disorder in dogs associated with effects similar to those of Alzheimer’s in humans. It’s a condition related to the aging of a dog’s brain, which leads to changes in behavior and primarily affects memory, learning and comprehension. Incredibly, clinical signs of dementia are found in 50% of dogs over the age of 11.

But how would this work with dogs? Canine competitors play with their snouts using a “saliva-resistant touch-screen” mounted on a platform that dispenses treats whenever the dog does well at the game. Joipaw involves a “saliva-resistant touch-screen” mounted on a platform that dispenses treats whenever the pooch does well at the game.

The plan is to get more intricate games that utilize a motion sensor on the dog’s collar. Joipaw involves a “saliva-resistant touch-screen” mounted on a platform that dispenses treats whenever the dog does well at the game.

“saliva-resistant touch-screen” mounted on a platform that dispenses treats whenever the pooch does well at the game.

Research into touch-screen brain games for dogs is young but “very promising,” Clara Mancini, a professor of animal-computer interaction at The Open University in the U.K. and science adviser to Joipaw, said. She believes video games can offer dogs benefits that puzzle toys can’t, because they can be designed to become progressively more difficult. In addition to the hope that the tech can help dogs suffering from dementia, it could also be used to enrich the lives of those who are less active, such as shelter dogs, but she says more study is needed.

There’s no time frame for Joipaw’s release, but maybe next year this article will be about how doggie video games are the number one thing on your pup’s holiday wishlist!

The writer co-owns Frolick Dogs, an indoor dog gym in Alexandria, with her husband, Kevin Gilliam.
Clean energy home upgrades

Make dependable environmental improvements
BY FAMILY FEATURES

When you’re considering upgrades for your home, earth-friendly enhancements that impact your energy usage are smart investments. Energy-saving home upgrades can offer long- and short-term advantages for the earth, your wallet and even your safety.

Many homeowners evaluate their energy needs as they plan home improvements. There are several low-carbon, resilient energy options available that can help safeguard your family. Consider these environmentally friendly upgrades to diversify your home’s energy sources, reduce energy consumption and ensure your home is well-prepared to withstand interruptions to power service if the electrical grid fails.

Diversify energy sources
The growing conversation to “electrify everything” will require an overhaul on the aging electric grid just to manage the increase in demand. Accomplishing this will take decades and cost billions, according to the Department of Energy. In fact, according to a study conducted by Acu-poll Precision Research on behalf of the Propane Education & Research Council, 54% of respondents believe electricity for everything will be too expensive for taxpayers while 70% strongly agree Americans should have a choice when it comes to their energy source. Propane is a clean, affordable and abundant energy option that reduces carbon emissions right now. Using propane appliances like furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces and kitchen appliances alongside other energy sources reduces the strain on the fragile electrical grid. Unlike electric appliances, propane appliances can work even during power outages.

Seal in energy
Outdated doors and windows often lack energy benefits. Newer models have stronger, thicker panes that reduce the transfer of heat from inside to outdoors – and vice versa in the warmer months.Updating doors and windows allows you to easily repair any cracks or faulty seals that make it easy for energy to escape. When your home is well-insulated, your heating or cooling system works more efficiently.

Consider solar panels
When many homeowners think of renewable energy, they often think “solar.” Some states are mandating solar adoption, and while financial rebates help, solar panels are still considered an expensive upgrade for many people. The number of panels you need depends on your geographic location and weather, as well as the size of your home and your family’s energy consumption habits.

The number of necessary solar depends on your geographic location and weather, as well as the size of your home and your family’s energy consumption habits.
your solar system.

Install a backup power source

The Department of Energy’s “Electric Disturbance Event Annual Report” showed an increase in power outages from 2000 to 2020. More than half of consumers nationwide indicated they or a close family member or friend have been personally impacted by a power outage in the past two years, according to PERC.

As a result, many homeowners are saying “yes” to backup power generators. A propane standby generator can be a key part of resilient home upgrades by offering supplemental electricity in as little as 10 seconds after an outage. Propane doesn’t degrade over time, making it an ideal standby power fuel. Plus, it’s cleaner than diesel so you can keep your home functioning and family safe while being a good steward for the environment.

Increase energy efficiency

While landscaping plays an important role in curb appeal, it also serves more practical purposes. Thoughtfully placed trees and shrubs can block the heat that comes from powerful direct sunlight while serving as a break against blustery winds and providing a natural form of external insulation for the home. In outdoor living spaces, propane-powered appliances can offer increased energy efficiency. For example, propane can power full outdoor kitchens, fireplaces and fire pits, patio heaters, flame lighting or pool and spa heaters.

When the grid fails

In 2021, a winter storm decimated a major electrical power grid, leaving thousands of Americans in the dark and cold. Some people lost their lives while others battled to overcome extensive damage to their homes and businesses.

One way to reduce the risk of large-scale disasters is increasing Americans’ reliance on a broader mix of energy sources. Using a combination of propane, solar, electricity and natural gas can keep homes and businesses alike running efficiently and safely.

Relying on alternative energy sources like propane can also make a meaningful environmental impact in the long-term while offering short-term advantages, including continued access to power during emergencies when another energy source fails.

HOME OF THE WEEK

A contemporary paradise in Old Town

This stunning contemporary corner unit townhome sits only steps away from the waterfront in Old Town, Alexandria. Found at the edge of Robinson Landing with direct view of the Old Dominion Boat Club and Potomac River, it’s surrounded by shops, parks, restaurants and enjoys access to the development’s long list of amenities. Some amenities include the use of a full gym, concierge, indoor mail-box, conference room, library, lounge, pet spa and yoga center. The home comes complete with an elevator with access to all four floors, an attached two-car garage, tall windows on three sides filling rooms with natural light, high ceilings and more. There are four bedrooms and four and a half bathrooms. The primary bedroom is outfitted with two walk-in closets and an en suite with double sinks and a spacious shower. Entertain friends and loved ones on the main level featuring an open concept floor plan with the kitchen sporting Snaidero cabinetry, Thermador appliances, a gas fireplace and even a custom built-in bar. Finally, enjoy golden hour on the rooftop terrace with striking views of the Potomac River while taking advantage of the space’s full outdoor kitchen, grill linked to natural gas, fire pit, box planters and comfortable patio furniture. This home is a convenient two block stroll to the 100 block of King Street and about one mile to the King Street Metro. It’s located a few miles to the airport, Amazon H2Q and Washington D.C. The roof contains patio furniture, including a grill connected to natural gas, propane fire pit, patio table with umbrella and four chairs, all box planters and patio chairs with sofa.

AT A GLANCE

Address: 14 Duke St., Alexandria, 22314
Neighborhood: Old Town
Price: $2,995,000
Square feet: 2,761
Bedrooms: 4
Bathrooms: 4.5
Year built: 2018
Contact: ccarrigan@mcnearney.com
         gwood@mcnearney.com
Chris Carrigan: 571-245-6652
Gordon Wood: 703-447-6138
Alexandria’s holiday season may have kicked off with Plaid Friday the day after Thanksgiving, but nothing says Christmas like our city’s annual Scottish Walk Christmas Parade. This year’s parade, which begins at 11 a.m. on Saturday, will be produced by Visit Alexandria in partnership with the Campagna Center and the City of Alexandria. From clans in tartans tossing candy to well-wishers along the route to packs of Scottish dogs, this event is a favorite of residents and visitors alike. Former City Councilor Redella “Del” Peper, who retired in January after 36 years on council, will be the parade’s Grand Marshal.

On Saturday afternoon, Alexandria’s waterfront will be alight with the city’s 22nd annual Holiday Boat Parade of Lights, sponsored this year by Amazon, as soon as it’s dark at 5:30 p.m. Festivities along the waterfront begin at 2 p.m. And for those who want to start the weekend with another memorable event, the Campagna Center’s annual Taste of Scotland event will be held at 7:30 p.m. Friday evening at the Torpedo Factory. The party will include whiskey-tasting stations, hors d’oeuvres, beer and wine bars and a custom art exhibit from the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Proceeds benefit Campagna Center programs. For tickets, see https://www.campagnacenter.org/taste-of-scotland/.

- ddunbar@alextimes.com
Our View
The cost of safety

The old adage “you get what you pay for” is generally true, though most people do love a bargain. Dumpster diving can yield treasures in the form of used furniture or discarded trinkets, but that’s not where we turn for necessities.

Necessities are often expensive, and we’re generally willing to pay more for what we need most. The most basic necessity is safety, for without government-provided protection, life is indeed the Hobbesian description of “nasty, brutish and short.”

Public safety is the first function of government at every level, which is why it’s been so frustrating in recent years to see Alexandria’s police force be underfunded relative to surrounding jurisdictions, with attendant low morale and service cuts. In an era of rising crime rates and increased gang activity, we need more protection, not less.

So, we applaud the work of City Manager Jim Parajon and his staff in negotiating an agreement that works for both the city and the Alexandria chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association under Virginia’s newly reinstated ability for public sector unions to bargain collectively. See this week’s page 1 story, “Council approves police collective bargaining,” for more information on this agreement.

Public sector salaries are readily viewable, and it’s interesting to compare the average salaries, prior to these increases, of Alexandria’s police force compared to other city employees. For example, according to gosvalaries.com:

- Alexandria’s new race and social equity officer made $168,033 in 2021, while the highest paid police captain made about $5,000 less.
- Alexandria’s highest paid technical project manager made $146,670 in 2021, which was more than the highest paid police lieutenant.
- Alexandria’s highest paid police sergeant made $111,092 in 2021, less than the highest compensated computer program analyst.

Of course, a city Alexandria’s size needs computer program analysts, technical project managers and even a race and social equity officer – but should any of these people be paid more than the leaders of our police department? That’s difficult to justify when everything else we do – learning, working, playing – depends on being safe.

According to salary.com, the average high school teacher in Alexandria was earning $69,600 as of October 2022, about $1,200 more than the average police officer, who clocked in at $68,400. While teachers are certainly valuable and essential, and high school teaching is becoming more dangerous in addition to difficult, many teachers do have summers off, whereas police officers do not. We would argue that both high school teachers and police officers should make more than they do.

It’s important for residents to actively think about what’s most important to them, and where they want to see their tax dollars spent – and to consistently make their voices and votes heard, because the very act of daily living is one long exercise in paying taxes to government at all levels. We pay taxes on:

- the toothbrush we use in the morning,
- the coffee pot where we brew our morning joe
- the gas we put in our cars,
- lunch at our favorite eatery,
- a ticket to see a movie,
- and of course, on our income, home and motorized vehicle.

Yes, we must “give unto Caesar that which is Caesar’s” – and we should also vigilantly watch to ensure that our hard-won coin is spent on what’s truly essential. Public safety is worth the cost.

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

Your Views

In support of the Duke Street transitway

To the editor:

As a regular transit rider and a member of the DASH Advisory Committee, I am excited about the Duke Street Transitway. Transit should be safe, efficient, equitable and eco-friendly. The Duke Street Transitway, if properly implemented, will meet these goals.

Safe: Dedicated center-running bus lanes would be safer for pedestrians and drivers. Pedestrians would need only cross two lanes of traffic at a time rather than the current six lanes when crossing Duke Street. Buses would not start and stop in mixed traffic, creating crash opportunities for drivers and pedestrians. Center-running bus lanes must be constructed with tactile warnings and other modifications so those with blindness or low vision, such as myself, know when they are entering the dedicated bus lane.

Efficient: Center-running buses would traverse Duke Street much more quickly because they would not be slowed by traffic. Drivers would not be frustrated as they wait behind buses while passengers board and disembark.

Equitable: Many families near Duke Street live in multi-family buildings, which may lack adequate parking. Many may not have the resources to own and operate cars for all family members. The Duke Street Transitway and other proposed transit improvements provide an efficient, low-cost alternative.

Eco-friendly: We must begin to invest in infrastructure that encourages all travelers to use forms of transportation other than automobiles. If you are not a bus rider yourself, please consider the future for your children and grandchildren. Providing a faster and more convenient way to travel by bus will give them a more attractive option that also saves the environment. Global warming is a reality that we must begin to address. The transitway and other transit improvements are solid first steps.

-Bonnie O’Day, Alexandria
Your Views

Commanders need new ownership

To the editor:

As a native Washingtonian, Sunday afternoons in the fall were reserved for one thing; watching the Redskins. Now I work in the yard or wash the car. Unfortunately, the sad “Commanders” bear little resemblance to our once beloved Redskins. It starts with their record. In those glorious 20 years before Dan Snyder, the Redskins won 58% of their games. Since Snyder bought the team, they have a 40% winning percentage. Only four teams have worse records over this time frame, the Browns, Lions, Jaguars and Raiders. And we haven’t won a playoff game in 17 years. Our cherished Redskins have become a depressing bottom dweller.

It’s not just the record. In 2020, USA Today ranked the management of all 32 NFL teams. Washington ranked dead last: 32 out of 32 teams. The NFL had to step in to investigate Washington’s toxic workplace culture. But the stadium is nice, right? Um, no. FedEx Field is considered a dump around the league. In August, it was ranked the worst stadium in the NFL. When I was a kid, Redskins’ tickets were nearly impossible to get. Last season, FedEx Field ranked next to last in attendance. Until we’re free of the incompetence of Washington’s current owner, maybe I’ll start following the Ravens.

-John Christmas, Alexandria

Ban wildlife killing contests

To the editor:

Virginia residents have a unique opportunity to help wildlife in our state. I encourage all of my fellow Alexandrians to contact the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources and urge the agency to prohibit wildlife killing contests. You can do so here: [link to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources website]

Wildlife killing contests are cruel events in which participants compete to kill the highest number of animals, such as coyotes or foxes, within a set period of time. The winners receive cash and prizes, while the dead animals are typically dumped afterward. Often hundreds of animals are killed during a single contest.

It’s not just animal advocates who oppose these contests – a growing number of hunters and wildlife management professionals oppose these inhumane, irresponsible events as well. Eight states have already banned wildlife killing contests, and with community support, we can make Virginia next.

-Alicia Prygoski, Animal Legal Defense Fund, Alexandria

About Alexandria with Mark Eaton

2022’s Hits and Misses

BY MARK EATON

"About Alexandria" was one year old as of last month. Education experts say there is no improvement without assessment, so it is time to look back at a year of columns to identify the hits, the in-betweens and the misses.

The hits

The broken cistern at the Alexandria City High School King Street campus. ACPS now plans to repair the 450,000-gallon underground cistern at the King Street Campus. The cistern is designed to capture stormwater runoff from the hardscape as a first step in recycling the water for other purposes. Page 51 of the Superintendent’s Proposed Capital Improvement Plan Budget released on Nov. 10 shows a FY2024 allocation of $280,000 to “fund the replacement of the cistern.” The cistern is a massive underground concrete box; the repair funds will probably reactivate the pumps and pipes necessary to recycle water. This is a positive development consistent with the green design of the King Street Campus when it opened in 2007. Thanks go to Interim Superintendent Melanie Kay-Wyatt and her staff for taking action to make this forward-thinking system operational again.

The under-used Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Program. Stormwater runoff is a driver of the massive flood mitigation and environmental improvements to the city’s infrastructure now in progress. A column suggesting improvements to the city’s well-intentioned, but little used, Stormwater Utility Fee Credit seemed to generate no reaction from city authorities. However, on Nov. 10, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services announced improvements that make applying for the credit easier, extend the credit to two years and increase the credit’s value to 50% of the fee. Let’s hope that more Alexandrians apply for the credit.

The mystery of Chinquapin Pool. The effort to determine why the pool at the Chinquapin Recreation Center, the Rixie Memorial Pool, was built slightly too long for school and club swimming competitions fell short; the definitive explanation as to why the pool was built too long for competitions remains unknown. Even so, the effort to solve the mystery involved an enjoyable exploration of some of the city’s cherished urban legends. There were numerous comments about this story.

The in-betweens

Public sector hiring. A column on public sector hiring myths generated positive comments. A related column on the costs, financial and otherwise, of replacing the ACPS superintendent, which ran in late 2021, was not intended as a prediction. However, it became more relevant after the former superintendent’s resignation in the spring of 2022. The search has started for a new superintendent, which everyone hopes will yield someone who will lead ACPS effectively for at least five years. The new superintendent’s challenges include pandemic-related learning loss, particularly in the primary grades, and socialization issues. An ACHS teacher told me recently that some students “don’t know how to people,” meaning that the pandemic made basic human interactions a challenge.

Listening deficits, “equity” in education and school resource officers. The columns on Alexandria’s listening deficit and the use of the word “equity” in education – a word which varies between being a near obsessiona l goal and an anathema, depending on who is talking – seemed to fall in the middle ground. These columns generated modest responses.

A column urging a community rethinking of the role of the SRO’s was rendered essentially irrelevant by the creation of the School Law Enforcement Partnership between ACPS and the police department in the spring of 2022. In ACPS’ words, SLEP is “tasked with reimagining the existing partnership with the Alexandria Police Department to ensure a positive, safe and equitable experience for all students.”

The misses

An apology to consultants everywhere. Last year’s columns also contained some offhand slights or negative references to consultants – for example, media training and executive search consultants.

The intent was “all in good fun,” but with the passage of time these comments may be perceived as snide. So, to all the consultants who read “About Alexandria,” no harm intended and I will try to do better in the future.

The writer is a former lawyer, member of the Alexandria School Board from 1997 to 2006, and English teacher from 2007 to 2021 at T.C. Williams High School, now Alexandria City High School. He can be reached at aboutalexandria@gmail.com and free subscriptions to his newsletter are available at https://aboutalexandria.substack.com/.
Out of the Attic

Signor Blitz at the Lyceum

After management changed its policy of not allowing magic shows in Alexandria’s Lyceum, magicians staged shows at Lyceum Hall through the 1840s, beginning with four performances by Signor Blitz in February and March 1843. Signor Blitz was perhaps the most famous magician of his day and performed at Lyceum Hall early in his career.

Blitz was born in England as Antonio van Zandt in 1810 and moved to the United States in 1834, eventually settling in Philadelphia. He performed professionally for 50 years, traveling the country, including shows for former President Martin Van Buren and Presidents Millard Fillmore and Abraham Lincoln.

Blitz’s act was varied, mixing magic, ventriloquism, animal acts and plate spinning. His Lyceum Hall show ads promised readers that:

“Interesting Illusions will be Introduced. To conclude with Ventriloquism and the Dance of the Six Dinner Plates on a Common Table.”

A writer for the Alexandria Gazette noted that “Signor Blitz’s performances at the Lyceum Hall continue to amuse and delight old and young. He is not only one of the most expert adepts at his art, but his vivacity, and good humor secure him the approbation of his audience.” Accounts throughout his life noted his genial good humor.

Ads in other newspapers reveal more details of Blitz’s act. Just prior to appearing at Lyceum Hall, he performed five shows at Carusi’s Saloon in Washington, D.C., and the ad in the Daily Madisonian noted, “Signor Blitz can create more laughter and amusement, during his performances, than any other Professor. He can produce, from a small quantity of Bird Seed, the choicest Sugar Plums and Bon-Bons [sic] for the Ladies. He can also obtain from – nothing – an abundance of the choicest Fruits &c. &c. for his Fair visitors.” An attendee at one of the shows confirmed, “He did, as stated in his advertisement, produce a box of choice Apples, from nothing.”

Ads did not mention magic at Lyceum Hall “to delight old and young” again after 1849. In the 1850s and 60s, famous magicians including Blitz and others performed more often at competing venues Liberty Hall and Sarepta Hall. But Lyceum Hall primarily hosted lectures and meetings in the 1850s.

During the Civil War, Lyceum Hall served as a hospital and meeting space. After the war, it became a private residence and in the twentieth century an office building and, later, the first United States Bicentennial Visitor Center. It now houses The Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum.

The Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum’s tradition of magic shows continues with the Family Holiday Magic Show on Dec. 7. The show is free, but reservations are required and can be acquired at alexandriava.gov/shop.

Out of the Attic is provided by The Office of Historic Alexandria.

Weekly Poll

Last Week

What is your favorite part of Thanksgiving?

54% Spending time with family and friends.
28% The food.
13% Not working.
4% I don’t celebrate Thanksgiving.

This Week

How do you feel about the city’s recently approved collective bargaining agreement with APD?

A. I fully support it.
B. I don’t think it’s enough.
C. I don’t care either way.

Take the poll at alextimes.com
Weekly Words

ACROSS
1 Midsize string instruments
2 Lengthy account
3 Cause of some trips
4 Come down with
5 Neeson of "Nell"
6 Draft pick?
7 Allergy season sound
8 "Aligns?"
9 "I love you," in Spanish
10 "In that case ..."
11 Features of distressed jeans
12 Homes that sound like the first sign in the zodiac
13 Big name in talks
14 Tube inserted into a blood vessel
15 Pockets for falafel
16 Feels crummy
17 Most verdant
18 Opposite of rural
19 Glossary entry
20 Euclidean measure
21 Most sensible
22 Expansive
23 Part of a ruler's breakdown?
24 Big name in outdoor gear
25 Feels crummy
26 Most verdant
27 "I love you," in Spanish
28 In that case ...
29 Features of distressed jeans
30 Expansive
31 "In that case ..."
32"Aligns?"
33 "I love you," in Spanish
34 Feels crummy
35 Most sensible

DOWN
1 Opposite of rural
2 Lengthy account
3 Cause of some trips
4 Come down with
5 Neeson of "Nell"
6 Draft pick?
7 Allergy season sound
8 "Aligns?"
9 "I love you," in Spanish
10 "In that case ..."
11 Features of distressed jeans
12 Homes that sound like the first sign in the zodiac
13 Big name in talks
14 Tube inserted into a blood vessel
15 Pockets for falafel
16 Feels crummy
17 Most verdant
18 Opposite of rural
19 Glossary entry
20 Euclidean measure
21 Most sensible
22 Expansive
DEL RAY HOLIDAY TREE AND MENORAH LIGHTING
The Del Ray neighborhood will come together for the annual Christmas tree lighting, Menorah lighting and holiday carols. Attendees can enjoy hand-painted holiday windows in storefronts and start holiday shopping with a stroll down Mount Vernon Avenue, which will be illuminated by thousands of luminarias.
Time: 6 p.m.
Location: Mount Vernon and E. Oxford Ave.
Information: https://visitalexandria.com/events/del-ray-holiday-tree-menorah-lighting/

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Prepare a Ship’s Biscuit Ornament at the Alexandria Archaeology Museum
A nearly complete ship’s biscuit from the 18th century was found in Alexandria. Make your own ship’s biscuit ornament to commemorate the discovery and the city’s waterfront history. Each biscuit ornament will be stamped with the year the biscuit was made and then baked at home to replicate the sailors of the British Royal Navy who ate biscuits on voyages.

Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights
Old Town’s historic waterfront will shine for the 22nd Annual Alexandria Holiday Boat Parade of Lights as dozens of illuminated boats cruise along one mile of the Potomac River shoreline. There will be a pop-up beer garden from Port City Brewing Company, local food, music and hands-on activities from city boutiques.

Time: 2 to 8 p.m.
Location: 1A Prince St.
The December 17, 2022 Alexandria City Council Public Hearing is being held in the Council Chamber (301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia, 22314) and electronically. Members of the City Council and staff are participating in-person. The City Council Public Hearing can be accessed by the public in the City Council Chamber, through the live broadcast on the government channel 70, streaming on the City’s website, and can be accessed via Zoom Webinar by the following links:

City Council (Public Hearing Webinar):
Registration Link: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dUDqG CvQTbqLCIKvsSEGRw
Zoom Audio Conference:
Dial in: 301-715-8592
Zoom Audio Conference: CvQTbqLCIKvsSEGRw
Password: 749263
Webinar ID: 985 9017 1006
Dial in: 301-715-8592
Zoom Audio Conference: CvQTbqLCIKvsSEGRw

If you use the Zoom Webinar application, please be sure you have updated the application to the latest version for the best results. If you are unable to access the Zoom Webinar, please use the Dial-In number to access the meeting.

Public comment will be received at the meeting. The public may submit comments to the City Clerk at CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov for the City Council Hearing or make public comments on the day of the Public Hearing.

For reasonable disability accommodation for the City Council Hearing, please call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council’s Office at 703.746.4550 (TTY/TDD 838-5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

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BAR #2022 – 00407 – 610
Montgomery Street Appeal
Applicant: Mark Mitchell, Jr.
Appellant: Mark Mitchell, Jr.

The Alexandria City School Board is holding a public hearing to solicit input and collect information from the community to guide the school division on the current Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund Plan.

The public hearing will be held on December 15, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. in the School Board Meeting Room at 1340 Braddock Place in Alexandria either in person, virtually through Zoom, or submitted as written comments. Only topics related to the ESSER III Plan will be heard during the public hearing.

Use the link below to sign up to speak or submit written comments. The deadline to sign up or submit comments is noon on December 14, 2022.

https://acpsweb.wufoo.com/forms/whly82d0109q8gj30/

For more information, please contact the Clerk of the Board at 703-619-8316 or by email at boardclerk@acps.k12.va.us

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PUBLIC NOTICE
Trust Bank, located at 5203 Franconia Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22310, is in possession of assets owned by the following decedent, Cynthia R. Baggett, who at the time of her death was domiciled outside of Virginia. In accordance with Va. Code Ann. § 64.2-609(A), Trust Bank hereby gives public notice of its intention to deliver the decedent’s assets to the Administrator of decedent’s estate, Hillary Berard, who has qualified as Administrator in accordance with the law of the decedent’s domicile.

Delivery is to be made after the lapse of thirty (30) days from the completion of due publication of this notice, pursuant to the Code, once a week for four successive weeks.
Inquiries, including any notice of the appointment of a personal representative for decedent in Virginia or legal notice of any lien or encumbrance upon decedent’s assets, should be directed to Trust Bank at the address above.

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704 Fords Landing Way

Waterfront in Old Town Alexandria as you’ve been hoping to discover! It is infrequent to find this location and quality – classic Colonial with open floor plan for your 2022 lifestyle! This home’s interior has been restored and curated with absolute premium fit and finish throughout. The phenomenal water views from all levels and private setting are distinctive features in this opulent locality. Featuring easy walkable access to all that defines why Travel and Leisure has ranked Alexandria #EIGHT of the top cities in the US! Four large bedrooms and light-filled throughout! Six miles to National Landing, five miles to DCA, and eight miles to our Nation’s Capital! Offered at $3,495,000

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Janet Caterson Price
Alexandria Real Estate Specialist  |  NVAR Lifetime Top Producer
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