City and firefighters reach an accord

Collective bargaining approval would increase compensation and costs
BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

The Alexandria City Council approved a resolution last week to commit funding toward a collective bargaining agreement between the City of Alexandria and the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 2141, the local firefighters’ union.

The agreement provides funding for salary increases, reduced work hours, investments in safety initiatives and a benefits package.

City Manager Jim Parajon and local union leader Josh Turner praised the agreement, while also acknowledging that both sides made compromises and that discussions are not over yet. But city resident Bill Rossello, who has worked with local governments on fiscal matters and was a long-time member of Alexandria’s budget committee, said the agreement is too expensive with hidden unintended fiscal consequences.

Parajon said the agreement marks a profound step toward strengthening the relationship between the city and fire department and therefore bolstering the department as a whole.

“I think it shows a true commitment on the part of our elected body and management team to be fully

Basketball brothers

PHOTO/ANNA JAEGER PHOTOGRAPHY
Brothers Kye (pictured) and Kullen Robinson have the ACHS boys’ basketball team playing well. See page 12 for the full story.

Rev. George Pera dies at 93

Community leader was an Alexandria Living Legend
BY OLIVIA ANDERSON

George Pera, a community leader and former senior pastor, died on Jan. 17. He was 93.

Pera garnered a reputation throughout Alexandria as a man with a philanthropic heart, strong sense of spirituality and desire to serve his community. Many community members, some of whom had seen Pera recently, shared fond memories of the Alexandria Living Legend upon hearing news of his passing.

Sandra Calhoun, who worked as director of seniors’ ministries at Westminster Presbyterian Church with Pera, stated that his mind was sharp right until the end.

“I had lunch with him about a month before he died. His mind was just great and his body was frail, but he still kept up,” Calhoun said.

Many people admired Pera for his blend of intelligence and integrity. Jane Ring, a close friend and active member with Westminster, said Pera was a joy to be around.

“Those years working at the church were wonderful because he was such a marvelous person and really a genius,”
Ready to fall in love with a new home?

Roses are red, violets are blue, let's find the perfect home for you! Look to our Alexandria experts for real estate advice. Contact them for a consultation on how they can guide you through your real estate journey.

**ACTIVE**

300 S Columbus Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
3 BD | 3.5 BA | $1,595,000
Listed by The Goodhart Group

**PENDING**

9 E Del Ray Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301
5 BD | 4 BA | $1,639,000
Listed by The Homes of Alexandria Team

**SOLD**

2500 N Van Dorn St, Unit 822, Alexandria VA, 22302
2 BD | 2 BA | $250,000 | Sold 5K Over Asking
Listed by Pia Taylor

**PENDING**

118 E Randolph Ave, Alexandria, VA 22301
4 BD | 2.5 BA | $1,295,000
Buyer Represented by The Rivkin Group

The Goodhart Group
sue@thegoodhartgroup.com
allison@thegoodhartgroup.com

Homes of Alexandria Team
ellen.patrick@compass.com
bobi.bomar@compass.com
daniela.spigai@compass.com

Pia Taylor
pia.taylor@compass.com

The Rivkin Group
bonnie.rivkin@compass.com
courtney.rivkin@compass.com

Compass is a licensed real estate brokerage that abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is not guaranteed. All measurements and square footages are approximate. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Compass is licensed as Compass Real Estate in DC and as Compass in Virginia and Maryland. 1006 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314 | 703.277.2152

compass.com
Teenager killed in Alexandria

A 17-year-old boy was killed on Jan. 27 following a shooting in Alexandria’s Seminary Hill neighborhood.

At approximately 11:29 p.m. APD officers responded to a shots fired call for service in the 4600 block of Kenmore Avenue. Upon arrival, police discovered one victim, a 17-year-old juvenile male, with upper body trauma from an apparent gunshot wound, according to a news release.

The victim was then transported to the hospital and later was pronounced dead.

APD has arrested a 17-year-old juvenile male, an Arlington resident, in connection with the incident. The male was charged with possession of a firearm by a person under age 18.

This investigation is active, and anyone with relevant information is encouraged to contact Detective Matthew Kramarik at 703-746-6650 or at Matthew.Kramarik@alexandriava.gov.

Dealer sentenced for causing overdoses

A man was sentenced on Monday to 50 years in prison for distribution of fentanyl resulting in death, according to a news release.

On Sept. 21, 2021, Michael Vaughn, 28, distributed cocaine laced with fentanyl at an apartment in the Skyline area of Fairfax County, which is located near the outer edge of the City of Alexandria.

According to the release, six individuals took the substance thinking it was cocaine, all of whom suffered overdoses and were transported to the hospital. Five victims survived after Narcan was administered, and the sixth died as a result of a fentanyl overdose.

Trial evidence showed that Vaughn had intentionally added fentanyl to the cocaine, according to the release, and he had 60 additional grams of fentanyl powder at his home when he was arrested on Oct. 20, 2021.

He was sentenced for distribution resulting in death and bodily injury as well as for possession with the intent to distribute fentanyl.

APD, sheriff react to Memphis death

Following the recent Memphis police incident in which a man was beaten to death by police officers, the Alexandria Police Department released a statement denouncing the attack.

Signed by Police Chief Don Hayes, the statement says that APD members are “deeply disturbed” by the released footage of the violent encounter between Memphis officers and Tyre Nichols at a traffic stop that ultimately led to Nichols’ death.

“The deplorable actions of these officers not only illustrate a complete disregard for the sanctity of human life but violate the fundamental values of the law enforcement profession as a whole,” the statement reads.

It goes on to state that the impact of excessive force is a stark reminder of the importance of accountability within policing, and that this incident undermines APD’s efforts to strengthen community relationships and foster trust.

“We share in their grief and in the heartache the community feels. We also want to assure our community these actions are the antithesis of APD’s values,” the statement reads. “Every member of our department is dedicated to serving the Alexandria community with integrity and empathy. Our department values the sanctity of life and appreciates the trust the community places in us.”

The Alexandria Sheriff’s Office also released a statement condemning the incident. Signed by Sheriff Sean Casey, the statement highlights ASO’s recently adopted policy of active bystandership that “requires employees to intervene when they witness another engaging in unacceptable conduct.” The policy was implemented following George Floyd’s murder three years ago in Minneapolis, Minn.

“We will be reinforcing this by immediately conducting mandatory refresher training for all deputies on peer intervention as well as on our use of force policies,” Casey wrote. “I remain committed to working toward a more just society and ensuring that our profession does all we can to prevent abuse of power.”

CORRECTION: In last week’s story, “City Council approves King Street apartment conversion,” two public speakers were mistakenly identified as Alexandria Transit Company Board members. The Times regrets the error.
**Valentine’s Dinner for Two**

**CHOOSE 2 Soups or Salads**
- Boston Salad
- Red Pepper Soup
- French Onion Soup
- Caesar Salad

**CHOOSE 2 Delicious Entrees**
- Beef Tenderloin Filet with Blue Cheese Scalloped
- Potatoes & Broccoli Florets
- Chicken Valentino with Roasted Asparagus & Rice Pilaf
- Grilled Salmon Filet with Parmesan Risotto
- Roasted Asparagus
- Brown Butter Scallops with Parmesan Risotto
- Roasted Asparagus

**CHOOSE 2 Heart-Shaped Pastries**
- Chocolate Ganache
- Luscious Cream Puff with Mixed Fruit
- Raspberry Marquis
- Lemon Poppy Seed Petit Four

**FIREFIGHTERS**

supportive of the fire department. We want to make sure that we have the best fire department we can,” Parajon said.

The process was extensive and involved numerous conversations between the city’s and fire department’s bargaining units. Beginning several months ago, the two parties met weekly or biweekly to discuss the various issues the fire bargaining unit desired to alter.

“IT was very lengthy. [There were] a lot of spirited, in-depth discussions. A lot of analysis went into a lot of the elements, particularly as it relates to compensation and benefits and things like that. There was a lot of work that was done behind the scenes,” Parajon said.

According to Parajon, the sides differed on topics such as targeted wage discussions for fire marshals and medics, but both wanted to reach a mutually beneficial agreement.

“What I found was that we always had the common goal of trying to find a great agreement that was very supportive of our fire department as well as something that from a community standpoint we could support,” Parajon said.

Turner, IAFF Local 2141 president and city resident, emphasized that the fire department’s priorities lay in negotiating not only wages and benefits, but also in working conditions and service delivery.

While the city and department reached a baseline agreement, Turner noted that conversations are far from over. With the assistance of an independent arbiter, both parties created a joint labor management partnership consisting of management and union representatives to provide a framework for continued discussions on how to better the organization.

The agreement will allocate $2.5 million next year for salaries and other related costs, and an additional $13.9 million over the next three years. It also allows for more safety initiatives and a commitment to hire more firefighters and medics, totaling up to $2.4 million next year and $13.5 over the next three years.

According to Parajon, the funds will be supported by grants and the city’s general fund.

The agreement is set to begin on July 1 and run through June 30, 2026. It includes 52 additional positions and a reduction in firefighter work schedules from 56 to 50 hours per week. The Alexandria Fire Department currently holds one of the highest numbers of working hours in the region, and finding an amenable agreement was a significant driver in negotiation conversations for both sides.

“I think in the agreement, that commits us to finding a way over the three-year agreement to achieve that, which will be challenging, but we’re committed to do that,” Parajon said.

The ordinance states that the 50-hour workweek will start in year three, which Turner said will help the city better compete with other departments in the region and support the mental and physical well-being of AFD employees.

“There are some provisions for recruitment, where the city has to have so many firefighters that they hire every year and how many recruit schools they need to have, but also within that grouping is identifying frankly how that affects firefighter health [and] para-medical health,” Turner said.

Some residents have criticized the large operational budget increase that will come with this collective bargaining agreement, especially the combination of higher pay for shorter hours worked. A fire department must be staffed 24/7, or 168 hours per week, which evens out to three battalions — AFD’s current amount — of 56 hours worked by each firefighter.

But because the new 50-hour week would equate to an uneven 3.56 battalions, AFD would likely have to increase that number to four, potentially leading instead to a 42-hour work week and the question of how to fund those extra positions.

Rossello said his primary concern is the magnitude of the increase in the overall AFD budget.

“Every staff member got a huge raise, a promotion to a higher pay classification and an 11% decrease in work hours, not to mention a reduction in required work tasks. While the magnitude of the wage increase may well have been needed, the reduction in hours will require an 12% increase in budgeted positions,” Rossello said.

Rossello also suggested that this agreement is likely an interim step on the way to the 42-hour work week, which could increase personnel costs by 33%, and that the additional hours might be built into overtime, adding to another 10% hike in fire personnel costs.

“Fire departments are generally popular among functions of municipal government, but would residents be okay with paying 43% more for a service they may use once or twice in 40 years living here?” Rossello asked.

Rossello said the cumulative effect of the current agreement along with the future cost of moving to the 42-hour week is too much of a fiscal burden for city residents.

“That would be a huge mistake for any city/county (Arlington is doing it, but Fairfax County is not),” Rossello said. "And we have 7% unemployment. We can’t do that."
**MYSTIQUE**
Fine Jewelry Designs

**BUYING EVENT**

Tuesday Feb. 7th  
10 AM - 5:30 PM

Wednesday Feb. 8th  
10 AM - 5:30 PM

Thursday Feb. 9th  
10 AM - 5 PM

123 S. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314  
For directions please call: (703) 836-1401

No Appointment Necessary | Call buyer for item related questions: (888) 787-1112

We Buy Gold, Silver, Diamonds and More!

- **FINE JEWELRY**
  - Any Age & Any Style
  - Gold, Silver and Platinum Jewelry
  - Broken or Damaged Jewelry
  - Designer Jewelry

- **DIAMONDS**
  - Loose & Mounted
  - Damaged
  - Any Size, Color, Styles

- **WATCHES**
  - Wrist Watches & Pocket Watches
  - (Rolex**, Breitling, Patek, Omega, Elgin, Waltham, Illinois, Hamilton, etc.)
  - Any Condition

- **SCRAP GOLD & SILVER**
  - Gold, Silver & Platinum
  - Dental Gold
  - Old Mountings
  - Class Rings & Fraternal Pins

- **COINS & CURRENCY**
  - Gold & Silver Coins
  - Bullion & Bars
  - Old Paper Money
  - Coin Collections

- **FINE ART & LUXURY GOODS**
  - Original Art By Known Artists
  - Designer Handbags (Chanel, Fendi, Gucci, Hermès, Louis Vuitton, Prada, etc.)
  - Pens (Montblanc, Montegrappa, etc.)
  - We do not buy china or glassware

- **STERLING SILVER**
  - Flatware & Serving Pieces
  - Jewelry (Turquoise, Southwestern, etc.)
  - Candlesticks & Candelabras
  - No need to polish, all solid silver
  - We buy solid silver - NO silver plate

- **RARITIES**
  - Military Memorabilia (Uniforms, Daggers, Swords, etc.)
  - Pre-1950 Advertising & Toys
  - Pipes (Ashton, Dunhill, Savinelli, etc.)
  - Old Photos & Autographs (Tintypes, etc.)

20% BONUS!  
For your trade when traded for store credit***

IMMEDIATE PAYMENT

National Rarities will match any competitor’s offer*

From Collecting Dust to Collecting Payment!

*National Rarities will provide a free evaluation, but is not obligated to purchase your items. Offer must be in writing and current. **We are not an authorized Rolex dealer nor are we affiliated or endorsed by Rolex, Rolex USA, or any of its subsidiaries. ***Exclusions apply.
We want to make sure that we’re preserving and protecting and retaining our employees, and this really does help,”

– Jim Parajon, city manager

Happy Valentine’s Day
Give them the full MONTE

PHOTO/DIANA GIAMMARCO

FIREFIGHTER

FROM | 4

Counties is not). ... Should residents pay a total of 75-80% more in four to five years than they pay today? Is that the [city’s] approach to ‘bargaining’ on behalf of residents?” he questioned.

Parajon noted that the city has not yet determined if it will increase its number of battalions but stood firm in the decision to move to 50 hours in order to align with regional partners and to provide a healthy and balanced work environment for employees.

“We’re still working through that. I think what we’re committed to is evaluating how we can get to a 50-hour work week with making sure we’re looking at what our fire department needs to be and look like to move forward. So it’s probably a combination of how we operate as well as some staffing additions,” Parajon said. “... We’re committed to try to make that adjustment downward. It just is the right thing to do.”

This agreement marks the first collective bargaining agreement between a Virginia locality and a union representing firefighters since 1970, and the second in 40 years since the city reached its first deal in November 2022 with the police union.

Collective bargaining – which allows a city’s public sector employees to negotiate wages, benefits and working conditions with their employers – existed in the city until 1977, when the Virginia Supreme Court passed a ruling that stopped local governments from collective bargaining with their employees. In April 2020, the General Assembly passed a new law permitting municipalities across the state to establish collective bargaining procedures of their own, which went into effect in May 2021.

On April 17, 2021, the City of Alexandria became the first locality in Virginia to authorize collective bargaining under the new state law, and last year it approved a good faith agreement with the Alexandria chapter of the Southern States Police Benevolent Association. It will include pay increases for officers, sergeants and lieutenants, with officers’ starting pay increasing 11% from $54,698 to $61,503 starting July 1 and increasing annually through June 30, 2026.

The firefighters’ wage hike is intended to ensure that the city will be competitive in both recruitment and retention of employees. The agreement includes 5% market-rate, base salary increases for firefighter I, II, III and IV positions, and a 10% market-rate, base salary increase for the fire lieutenant, EMS lieutenant, fire captain and EMS captain positions.

According to Turner, retention issues have existed throughout his entire 13 years with the department, with five fire chiefs having passed through the department during his tenure. Increasing wages, he said, is a strategic move that will benefit the city and employees.

Parajon echoed this sentiment, noting that increasing wages serves as a long-term investment that aims to capture employees for longer.

“This is a very competitive regional market for this discipline. We want to make sure that we’re preserving and protecting and retaining our employees, and this really does help,” Parajon said.

According to Turner, IAFF Local 2141 ratified the agreement with 96.2% voting in favor, a very high standard for approval.

“People are excited about this because for a long time ... sometimes things that were priorities or work that was done by the membership would go unnoticed. Now, it’s a conversation that has to happen,” Turner said. “... Frankly, it mirrors the values of our community.”

-oanderson@alextimes.com
Ring said. "... The world is better because George Pera lived in it for 93 years."

Pera was born on Dec. 16, 1929 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to A. George Pera and Mary Ely Pera. After graduating from Peabody High School, Pera attended the University of Pittsburgh, matriculated at Princeton Theological Seminary and studied at New York University. He holds three honorary degrees as a doctor of divinity, doctor of humane letters and doctor of literature.

Shortly after school, he began his career in ministry as a chaplain at Ohio State University and New York University. He then worked as associate pastor and senior pastor and head of staff at First Presbyterian Church in Greenwich, Connecticut in the 1960s to 1977; senior pastor of the American Church in London, England from 1977 to 1980; and senior pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Alexandria between 1980 and 1995.

Raised by a Presbyterian father and Roman-Catholic mother, it was inculcated in Pera at an early age that religion went hand in hand with serving the community. He articulated this in his Living Legends profile, saying he believed that God calls humans to "make human life more human" in any profession he or she chooses.

"I felt that the church, as I observed it growing up, gave a person a unique opportunity to do that. I believe the church is in the world to serve the world. I felt that to know the world I had to get out in it," Pera said.

Although Pera technically retired from Westminster in the mid-90s, he was subsequently named Pastor Emeritus and invited to be a guest preacher at the American Church in Paris while on sabbatical. He also served as interim pastor at the Calvary Presbyterian Church of Alexandria.

Calhoun said that Pera came to Westminster with "a wonderful world view" and loved to travel; he would orga-
“[Pera] never lost his mental acuity, and just remained a bundle of energy whenever you were around him,”

– Rev. Larry Hayward, Westminster Presbyterian Church senior pastor

PERA
FROM | 7

ize trips to places across the globe, such as England, Morocco and Scotland.

During the latter trip, the group approached St Andrews – one of the jewels of golf and lovingly referred to as “The Old Course” – but discovered that only members were allowed inside. Pera, who loved both a challenge and introducing himself to others, decided to find a workaround.

“He got back on the bus and said, ‘Well, I got in!’ He just charms people,” Calhoun said.

According to Calhoun, Pera was quite the character. He was a "snappy dresser" who liked wearing bright colored or patterned outfits, and was very well read, often introducing current events and literature in his sermons.

Ring praised his fervent interest in and pulse on world events.

“His sermons always related to what was going on in the world around us,” Ring said. “Indeed, the sexton had to change the title of the sermon three times one week because there were so many important things happening around us. He ditched the sermon he had prepared and talked about [the] thing of concern to the congregation.”

Pera had a quick-witted sense of humor, too. After retiring, he handed out a “business card” that said “bon vivant,” which means “one who lives well” in French. Diane Charles, former ALIVE! executive director and a longtime friend, said his comedic side is one of the things she’ll miss the most.

“Because he never seemed to take himself too seriously, it drew people to him to get his insight, perspective and knowledge on so many issues of importance to our community,” Charles said.

But his amusing outer quirks were not to outdo his compassionate inner disposition. When one Westminster family was stuck in Colorado for several months after their son had a skiing accident, Pera was quick to offer support in the form of housing, food and any other needed services.

“Within an hour [they] heard from George. He said, ‘Whatever you need, we’ll provide it. We’ll help,’” Calhoun said. “… He was that kind of person, [offering] whatever you need.”

Rev. Larry Hayward, who has been senior pastor at Westminster since 2004, had “a long collaborative and collegial” relationship with Pera.

SEE PERA | 9
since moving to the area. Pera acted as a mentor of sorts to Hayward by supporting him in his ministry, and a spiritual guide to the Westminster community as a whole through his leadership.

“[His involvement] continued into his retirement and even in recent years. He’s just been so committed to the hospital and Agenda Alexandria and senior services and other things that he’s been on, and he’s been great,” Hayward said.

Pera was very civically engaged, having been involved with a variety of organizations like Senior Services of Alexandria, Elder Crafters of Alexandria, the Steering Committee of the Call to Community, the Inova Alexandria Hospital Foundation and Agenda Alexandria, a forum for discussing local issues. In 2009 he was named a “Living Legend” of Alexandria for his myriad contributions to the city.

Mary Myers, former executive director of the Inova Alexandria Hospital Foundation, knew Pera well from his time serving on the foundation’s Board of Trustees. She said that the hospital was fortunate to have had Pera’s service for many years.

“He valued philanthropy and understood the hospital’s critical importance to the people of Alexandria,” Myers said. “And he could also inspire others to feel the same way. His caring and compassionate spirit showed itself on countless occasions. He was just a great gentleman.”

Pera was dedicated to his wife Nancy, whom he met in New York City on a blind date. They wed on New Year’s Eve in 1959 and were married for 58 years until her death in 2017. Calhoun said Pera and his wife complemented each other beautifully. Pera was outspoken and unafraid of controversy, and Nancy often balanced him out in her response.

“At times Nancy would say, ‘Oh George.’ I can still hear her saying, ‘Oh, George,’” Calhoun recalled, laughing. Whether he was leading sermons or spending time with friends and family, Pera was a force. His feisty yet generous spirit will be long remembered, Hayward noted.

“He obviously aged, but never lost his mental acuity, and just remained a bundle of energy whenever you were around him. I always had delightful times with him whenever we were together. And sometimes we were together at community events, sometimes at church events, sometimes just having lunch together,” Hayward said.

Pera is survived by his sister Mary Goodwin, nephew David Goodwin, daughter Tracey Sanders, son David Pera and granddaughter Hope Sanders.

A memorial service, which can be viewed virtually or in person, will be held at 2 p.m. on Feb. 15 at Westminster Presbyterian Church. A private interment service will take place in the memorial garden at the First Presbyterian Church of Greenwich at a later date.

-oanderson@alextimes.com
United States Senate Federal Credit Union

your credit union for life

Bowman Branch at Braddock Station
1310 Braddock Place | Alexandria, VA 22314
Corner of N. West Street & Madison Street
ussfcu.org/BowmanBranch
How the Potomack Company supports local artists
BY ELIZABETH WAINSTEIN

Never buy art as an investment. Collectors should buy what they love, what inspires them and what means something to them.

You may get lucky and sell what you have collected during a bull market but that’s an unknown variable. Collectors of Chinese art who bought before 2008 have done very well over the past 16 years as the Chinese art market has been at an all-time high, mirroring their financial markets.

Locally, works by Washington Color School artists have been undervalued for many years, until the past five years. The movement got its start in the 1950s when a group of Washington artists – Gene Davis, Thomas Downing, Morris Louis, Howard Mehring, Kenneth Noland and Paul Reed – influenced by the “Color Field Painting” movement in New York, came together to form the Washington Color School’s first generation.

More local artists joined the movement in the 1960s building community and influencing each other’s work. Artists considered part of the Washington Color School’s second generation include Leon Berkowitz, Edward Corbett, Willem de Looper, Sam Gilliam, Tom Green, James Hilleary, Valerie Hollister, John G. Kofler, Ed McGowin, Alice Mavrogordato, Robert W. Newmann, Alma Thomas, Anne Truitt and Hilda Shapiro Thorpe. Many of these artists are now doing extremely well in the auction market.

The Potomack Company auction house in Old Town Alexandria recently sold an untitled oil on canvas work by Hilda Shapiro Thorpe for $24,000, setting a new auction record. Until then, her record was just $900.

Thorpe’s studio was located in Alexandria on King Street, above the children’s store Why Not, where she painted for years. Her work was exhibited at the Athenaeum and other Alexandria locations.

The time is right for local collectors to capitalize on Washington Color School paintings.

There are many other Alexandria galleries, one of which sold works now bringing handsome prices: Full Circle Gallery offered the furniture of George Nakashima, who is considered a leading innovator of 20th century furniture. Potomack has sold many Nakashima pieces over the years, with one achieving $100,000.

So buy what brings you joy but always keep an eye on trends in the market to make an educated decision on whether to keep an object in your collection or cash in on it.

Potomack will provide a complimentary estimate to keep you abreast of today’s values. Currently, Potomack is actively seeking works by Washington Color School artists, including Hilda Shapiro Thorpe, and furniture by George Nakashima.

For more information, visit potomackcompany.com.

The writer is owner of The Potomack Company, an auction house in Old Town.
‘We have high hopes for this team’

Robinson brothers have ACHS boys’ basketball squad dreaming of banners
BY GWEN PEACE

There’s one name dominating Virginia high school basketball right now: Robinson.

But behind that one name, there are two players – a pair of brothers – who have been working as a team to make a major impact on the court.

The Alexandria City High School boys’ varsity basketball team has earned a 12-4 record – a huge turnaround for the Titans, who went 10-11 last year and finished No. 136 in Virginia.

The difference maker? The offensive and defensive prowess of the Robinson brothers.

Kye Robinson, a 6’2” junior point guard and captain of the team, averages 21 points per game, and ranks No. 1 in Virginia for points scored per 32 minutes played, with 24.1 Furthermore, he has made 118 field goals on the season, earning him the number three spot in the state.

His co-captain and elder brother of one year, 6’3” senior shooting guard Kullen Robinson, directs his own talents toward the other end of the court, leading the team in rebounding with six per game. He is no slouch offensively either, closely trailing his brother in points per 32 with 18.8, which is the seventh best number in Virginia.

Together, the brothers account for the majority of the Titans’ scoring.

With numbers like that, one might imagine that they’ve been playing on the same team for their whole lives. This isn’t the case though. In fact, this is the first time that the two have played high school basketball – or competitive basketball at any level – together.

Kullen Robinson attended a different school for his sophomore and junior years, preventing the two from being able to team up on the court, but transferred back to ACHS for his senior year.

Despite never competing together before, the brothers have been practicing basketball together for as long as they can remember.

“We’ve played with each other our whole lives,” Kullen Robinson said. “I’ve enjoyed playing with him for sure.”

His brother was quick to express his own excitement over getting to play a season of basketball with Kullen at his side.

“There’s really just nothing like it honestly, like playing with your brother,” Kye Robinson said. “I mean that was something I just dreamed about.”

That dream has not only been realized but has also led to arguably what is one of the most promising teams that ACHS has fielded in recent years. Kye attributes this success to the healthy competition between him and Kullen, which drives them each individually to be better for the team as a whole.

“I think no matter what we’re doing, we’re gonna be good together,” he said.

The chemistry of the Robinson brothers has proved infectious and is bringing the rest of the team together as well.

Many of the older players have been through a lot together, struggling last year to gain any sort of forward momentum after being hit hard by the pandemic and lacking players with varsity experience. Head coach Tyrone Sally remembers how last year the boys got “smacked around” by multiple teams and were “at the bottom trying to fight [their] way up.”

Kye reminisces on the previous season, without his brother by his side, and has no desire to repeat it. Instead, he’s been devoting all of his free time, late at night and early in the morning, to practicing in order to be “way more productive than I was last year.”

But there was a silver lining. The tough season brought the team together, forcing the players to get better, and fostering a deep sense of camaraderie.

This year, the fraternity that all of the boys share – not just the two that are blood-related – has been a key factor in their winning ways.

“They play hard for each other,” Alexandria City High School Athletic Director James Parker said. “They really, really believe in themselves.”

And the ultimate goal? A district championship, followed by a deep post-season run.

It will be no easy feat, with a challenging gauntlet of conference opponents standing in their way, but with the Robinson brothers at the helm of ship, Parker believes that the team is in good hands.

“We have high hopes for this team,” he said.

---

Obituary

Joann S. Noonan

Joann S. Noonan, 74, passed away on Jan. 22 at Swedish Covenant Hospital in Chicago, Ill. She was born on Oct. 17, 1948, in Alexandria, Va., to Richard James and Dorothy (Krefter) Silliman. Joann built a career as a secretary for the CIA, then put herself back through college and George Mason Law School to become an attorney working for the protection and advocacy of those with disabilities. She had a fiery passion for politics, human rights and animals of all shapes and sizes. She is survived by her son Brendan Michael Noonan (Kristi) of Chicago, sister Gayle (Silliman) Walters, grandchildren Jackson and Mikaela, and first husband Terry Noonan. She is preceded in death by her parents, her sister Susan “Tootie” (Silliman) Sommers and her granddaughter Grace “Gracie” Noonan. Donations in Joann’s memory can be made to ASPCA. www.aspca.org.
Why all dog owners should be dog trainers

BY KIM GILLIAM

Our dogs bring us joy, but a disobedient dog or one with behavioral issues can also be a constant source of stress for both ends of the leash. Dog training creates a common language that can help you communicate with each other. It also provides the all-important mental stimulation that tires dogs out and keeps them happy. No matter your pup's age, breed or temperament, every dog can benefit from instruction.

Training has a number of other benefits as well. It builds your relationship with your pup, can be a great source of exercise as you open up opportunities to take them along with you on adventures, improves your dog's safety as they are under control and looking to you for behavioral cues, helps them handle different social situations with more confidence and a relaxed demeanor and can help when you leave them with others – like at the vet or boarding – making those visits less stressful. Plus, it's fun!

So you've dedicated time to training, great. But do you ever feel like your dog is just ignoring you? That can happen sometimes. Just take a step back to think through the possible reasons why and how you can address them.

1. Be clear on what you want. Make sure you are giving clear, concise cues. Dogs tend to understand “sit,” but may have trouble with “please sit, darling, so I can put your collar on and we can go outside for a walk.”

2. Use high value treats. Food gets your dog excited about training and can actually rewire their brain to feel calmer and happier in stressful situations. Use delicious, aromatic treats to ensure your dog doesn’t ignore you, then reward your dog regularly to keep them motivated.

3. Mix it up. Your dog may hesitate to come when called because they don’t know whether they’re getting a treat or a bath. Try to make rough experiences more pleasant. For example, visit your vet just to say hello; they’ll be happy to pet your dog and offer them a treat when you pop by.

4. Be considerate. Your dog may prefer to do their “roll over” trick on a soft carpet, not the hard kitchen floor. They may be refusing to sit if they’re on hot sand or gravel. Think through any environmental or physical conditions that may cause them to refuse.

5. Build up to distracting environments. Pups listen perfectly in your living room but act totally differently at the park as noises and other distractions make it difficult to focus. Practice in your backyard or somewhere a little bit more distracting than your living room and keep training short and easy. As you increase distractions, use higher value treats. Have your dog work for a minute, then release them to sniff freely.

6. Help them generalize. You tell your dog “sit” in your

Seven lessons in teaching
living room while you’re sitting on the couch. That doesn’t easily translate to “sit while I’m standing, holding your leash, while I’m catching up with my friend at the park.” You’ll need to practice in different scenarios to drive that cue home.

7. **Keep it fun.** The stress of training can make your dog anxious. If you’re feeling frustrated with them, they can pick up on that. They may yawn, sniff the ground and avoid eye contact. Keep training sessions short, light-hearted and fun and give treats generously. It should always feel like a game, not a chore.

Working through these issues will not only help to strengthen your bond with your dog, but just think how impressed your friends and neighbors will be when they see you out training in your hood or showing off your pup’s tricks at your next get-together.

The writer co-owns Frolick Dogs, an indoor dog gym in Alexandria, with her husband, Kevin Gilliam.
How to see a high return on remodeling investment
BY BRANDPOINT

So, you are remodeling your basement – smart move! According to Redfin’s real estate experts, a basement renovation is one of the top 10 ways to maximize your usable square footage and in turn, increase your home’s value.

Not sure where to start? Here are three tried-and-true basement finishing projects that will help you create a purposeful, comfortable living space that your family can enjoy now and that will appeal to potential homebuyers down the road.

Use a high quality subfloor
First, a basement renovation is a major investment into your home, so protect your investment by installing a quality subfloor. A subfloor from a trusted brand provides a barrier between the concrete floor and your finished floors. This barrier not only protects against the effects of moisture, like mold and mildew, but it also helps the basement floor stay warmer underneath your feet and cushions your steps. Many DIY-friendly options have an intuitive tongue and groove design that makes installation quick and easy. You can finish a 500-square-foot basement in just half a day.

Upgrade basement windows
If you have windows in your basement, no matter how large or how small – lucky you! They allow natural light to filter into an otherwise dark space, making the basement appear brighter and more inviting. But sometimes, a home’s original windows are ridden with gaps and cracks around the glass and frame, causing the room to feel cold and damp in the winter and uncomfortably hot in the summer. Fix this problem and create a comfortable basement living space by installing new, energy-efficient windows. New windows not only help regulate room temperature, but they also offer improved security, reduce outside noise and give the space an updated, finished appearance.

Brighten up the room
If you do not have basement windows that draw in natural light, there are still plenty of easy DIY projects that will help create a bright, inviting living space whether for your benefit or to appeal to a future homebuyer. Illuminate your finished basement with all-over lighting, which is typically best achieved through recessed ceiling lights or budget-friendly track lighting. To create ambience, go with Nordic-inspired floor lamps or wall sconces that highlight the family photos hung on the wall.
Complete your basement renovation by painting the walls in a neutral paint color, like a soft off-white that reflects and absorbs the light in the room. To bring additional warmth into the finished space, go with an on-trend “greige” color – a mix of gray and beige – on the basement walls or ceiling.

What’s next?
Like any home improvement project, remodeling your basement can feel like a daunting task. But with the right foundation and a few DIY projects in your arsenal, you can easily transform your basement into a functional, comfortable living space. Not only will a finished basement optimize your home’s available square footage and in turn increase its value, but your newly remodeled living space could make you think twice about selling.

---

**HOME OF THE WEEK**

Timeless treasure in Old Town

A timeless home filled with modern conveniences, coupled with the charm of yesteryear, Hunter Mews is one of Old Town Alexandria’s few single-family homes nestled on one of its oldest streets. This home is a true rarity that is seen through two conventional lenses – the classic look and feel of Old Town from the exterior, yet young and new throughout the interior – that awaits you as you pass through its gates.

Upon entering the home you will be welcomed by the entry foyer, the main living room radiates from the natural light that shines through a full bank of windows across the room. The gourmet kitchen has been renovated with brand new high end appliances, quartz counters and center island. The light-filled breakfast/family room has a 20-foot wall of floor to ceiling windows which look out to meticulous gardens with plush plantings. The primary bedroom offers the perfect space to unwind, as it has a gas fireplace, floor to ceiling wall of windows, vaulted ceilings with built-in speakers and cove lighting. The luxury primary bathroom has a jacuzzi tub and spa shower. The upper level also includes four additional bedrooms that have been extensively renovated. A well appointed roof deck is accessible from two rooms and overlooks the private gardens.

A beautifully crafted staircase takes you to the lower level that is an entertainer’s dream. A mahogany wet bar with wine storage for over 400 bottles is the centerpiece of the room, along with a gas fireplace with double arched brick hearth and welled windows for natural light. The custom studio/home office is perfectly designed for a workout or craft room. The lower level also features a large bedroom suite with a built-in daybed and a full bathroom; it’s an area that could serve as an additional guest bedroom or an au-pair suite. Additionally, there is a dedicated laundry room. Step outside and you are transported into your very own sanctuary, giving you the luxury of entertainment and privacy. The backyard has a built-in gas grill, a pond, irrigation, lighting and beautiful brick patio. Enjoy outdoor entertaining and al fresco dining! There is an attached garage with additional storage and custom floor finish, as well as additional off-street parking. So come in, stay awhile, and fall in love as this gracious piece of charm, elegance and history welcomes you home.

---

**AT A GLANCE**

**Address:**
119 Wolfe St.,
Alexandria, VA 22314

**Neighborhood:** Old Town

**Price:** $4,950,000

**Square feet:** 5,884

**Bedrooms:** 6

**Bathrooms:** 4.5

**Year built:** 1988

**Contact:**
Christine Garner
Weichert Realtors
christinegarner.com
703-587-4855
FEBRUARY 3

MIND YOUR MANNERS SPECIALTY TOUR From scandal to social class, balls reveal the political intrigue and power structures that were part of early America. Gadsby’s Tavern will present a specialty tour detailing the history behind George Washington’s Birthnight Ball.

Time: 6 to 7 p.m.
Location: 134 N. Royal St.
Information: visitalexandria.com/events/mind-your-manners-specialty-tour-2

THE UNSEEN EXHIBIT Stop by for the opening reception of The Unseen Exhibit at Del Ray Artisans to meet the curator, Peter Michaels, and the artists. The exhibit will explore the hidden, imagined or dreams that make life much richer.

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.
Location: 2704 Mount Vernon Ave.
Information: delrayartisans.org/calendar

FEBRUARY 4

TWELFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION: COLOSSAL TWO RELEASE Port City Brewing Company is celebrating 12 years of beer in the city. To celebrate the occasion, the brewery will have live music, food trucks and the release of Colossal TWO, a smoky imperial porter originally brewed in 2013 for the brewery’s second anniversary.

Time: Varies
Location: 3950 Wheeler Ave.
Information: portcitybrewing.com

ANNUAL BOUTIQUE WAREHOUSE SALE The annual Alexandria Warehouse Sale will be spread out in stores, pop-up tents and open retail space along King Street and select side streets in Old Town. Sixty independent boutiques from the DMV region will participate in this year’s sale, offering up to 80% off retail prices for clothing, shoes, jewelry, home furnishings and more.

Time: Varies
Location: Throughout Old Town
Information: oldtownboutiquedistrict.com/alexandria-warehouse-sale

AFRICAN AMERICAN WATERFRONT HERITAGE TRAIL LAUNCH The Office of Historic Alexandria and the African American Heritage Trail invites the public to an open house to celebrate the launch of the new southern route of the African American Waterfront Heritage Trail. The event will teach more about the history along the waterfront with a recreation of a sample of the stops along the trail inside the Lyceum.

Time: 10 a.m. to noon
Location: 201 S. Washington St.
Information: alexandriava.gov/historic-sites/african-american-heritage-trail-south-waterfront-route

YAPPY HOUR WITH CANINE CARDIO Enjoy an afternoon of fun at Barkhaus. Guests are invited to meet and greet with Canine Cardio. There will be a Valentines themed photo op, complimentary Polaroid pictures and discounted seltzers. All dogs must be registered with Barkhaus prior to attending.

Time: 1 to 4 p.m.
Location: 529 E. Howell Ave.
Information: visitalexandria.com/events/yappy-hour-with-canine-cardio

FEBRUARY 5

STORYTIME: BLACK AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS Beatley Central Library will hold a storytime in its outdoor reading garden to discuss Black authors and illustrators. Children up to age 5 are welcome with

Time: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: 480 King St.
Information: kingandrye.com/happenings

FEBRUARY 6

COCKTAILS AND CUPID BRUNCH Stop by King & Rye Restaurant for a special brunch, where love will be in the air with a love songs playlist and decorated photo wall. There will also be a list of specialty Valentine’s Day cocktails and all guests will receive a gift that includes a 20% discount for returning visits. Reservations are not required but highly encouraged.

Time: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: 5005 Duke St.
Information: alexlibraryva.org/event/7858761

Stop Googling Ask Ironistic! We are the one stop shop for your online presence 703.829.0809
Our View
A collective bargaining conundrum

Collective bargaining is a complex issue with myriad facets that vary from locality to locality and from department to department within a given city. As shown in today's page 1 Alexandria Times story, "City and firefighters reach an accord," ambiguities abound in what is nonetheless a needed and historic agreement.

It is indeed worth celebrating Alexandria’s second collective bargaining agreement in the last 40 years, after Virginia’s General Assembly two years ago passed a measure legalizing collective bargaining, which had been outlawed in the Commonwealth since the ’70s. It’s been well documented in these pages that Alexandria’s police and firefighters have lagged behind their regional counterparts in salary, and it’s widely understood to be a factor in hiring and keeping public safety officers.

It’s a self-defeating cycle to constantly be hiring police officers and firefighters, to get them fully trained and performing at a high level – only to lose them to another jurisdiction with a higher pay scale. Alexandria is too significant, and too affluent, to serve as any other jurisdiction’s minor league farm team.

So we applaud this agreement, which was tensely but mostly collegially negotiated, for bringing our firefighters’ pay and hours more in line with regional counterparts.

But – yes, there’s usually a “but” – this agreement is also rife with hidden implications that could escalate the cost to potentially budget-busting levels. And it’s Alexandria’s residents who are going to be paying, primarily in the form of property taxes, the bill into perpetuity.

The across-the-board salary increases for fire personnel this year, and in the next two years, are fairly straightforward. Few city residents likely begrudge those raises. It’s the accompanying reduction in hours, which starts in year three of the current agreement, that starts the cascade of problems.

For starters, it’s a double raise. For example, if someone makes $75,000 for working 56 hours a week, that’s an hourly wage of $25.76. If their pay is raised over a three-year period to $87,000, that’s an hourly wage of $29.88. And if their hours are simultaneously reduced to 50 in conjunction with that $87,000, then their hourly wage jumps to $53.46. That’s a 30% increase in the hourly wage over that three-year period.

(please note: These numbers are being used to illustrate the double impact of a salary increase and reduction in hours worked. They are not the actual salaries or raises of Alexandria’s firefighters.)

The primary unintended consequence of this reduction in hours is that additional workers are needed. And if firefighters’ hours eventually go all the way down to 42 from their current 56, then another whole battalion of firefighters would be needed to staff Alexandria’s fire stations 24/7. To go from three fully staffed battalions to four is to add 33% more firefighters to Alexandria’s ranks – all earning higher salaries for fewer hours worked.

And while a 56-hour work week sounds excessive, it’s not always as bad as it seems because firefighters are on duty 24 or even 48 hours at a time, and they’re able to make and eat meals and sleep – that’s why fire stations have bunks – in between calls. A firefighter can work 56 hours by pulling two 24-hour shifts and one 8-hour shift.

Firefighting is a dangerous and essential public service. Our quarrels with this planned reduction in hours are not in any way intended to denigrate the excellent work that our firefighters do.

But budgetary implications as serious as these have to be openly aired and debated. There is zero doubt that Alexandria’s firefighters deserved the raises they received in this collective bargaining agreement. But the fiscal impact of the looming reduction in hours isn’t a bargain.

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

Photo of the Week

A sunburst through the anchor at Waterfront Park last Friday morning in Alexandria.

Your Views

Enforce the parking code

To the editor:

I recently saw a vehicle with a commercial tag and a company logo “UtiliQuest,” which is likely an asset on UtiliQuest’s books. Readers might be surprised to know this apparently is not considered a commercial vehicle by Alexandria’s alleged parking enforcement officers. This vehicle remained parked in a “restricted,” “residential” spot for 10 days without once moving, yet the truck warranted only a single $40 ticket. The end. The owner likely viewed it as a cheap place to park.

One might ask, “what’s up?” The answer: “commercial vehicle” is now defined by “weight” and “size,” so this one doesn’t count. So, it’s not really that much different than what could be any resident’s own private pickup truck.

Oh, this is a change. Who made this decision? The ‘super.’ Where does it say this in code? Oops ... it doesn’t. I’ve followed up on this management chain and code. In truth, Alexandria’s parking code matches the generally accepted concept that a commercial vehicle is a work vehicle bearing markings to that effect – such as having a logo, a commercial license and so on.

The point being: Parking restrictions are a farce without enforcement. Leaving it up to staff to make up rules out of thin air is jaw-droppingly ineffective government.

At Alexandria’s recent parking and traffic board session, parking enforcement was noted as citizens’ most frequent request. The staffing level is abysmal. We need twice as many officers. And more funding. And better supervision. None of that is new.

It was also reported that the most parking tickets in the whole city are issued on Sanger between Beauregard and Van Dorn. This is smack dab in the area where the city is doing a major initiative for a new West End plan. Guess what, on the community survey to determine issue priorities, where does “parking” appear? Nowhere. Not. Nada. No mention.

Turning a blind eye is no answer. Fund it. And figure out how to enforce it.

–Carol James, Alexandria

The opinions expressed in letters and columns are those of the writers only and do not reflect the views, nor receive the endorsement, of the Alexandria Times.
Tear no more names down

To the editor:

Jimm Roberts’ view, in his letter to the editor “Keep the name, switch the name,” in the Jan. 19 Alexandria Times, is undervalued. The beauty of what Roberts points out reminds us that the name of one statue or street name being torn down or uprooted is they’re just one person with that name. Somewhere to your left or right is someone with that name who is history walking.

For example, there’s former president Woodrow, whose last name is Wilson, and Mayor Justin whose last name is Wilson. A 123Me might show them to be related so in the vein of history, let all names come together – tear no more down, instead build more up.

Well done, Jimm Roberts for giving us food for thought!

-Carrie Devorah, Alexandria

Campaign finance reform

To the editor:

Recently I discovered that my beloved Virginia ranks in the bottom 10 in state campaign finance and disclosure laws, as there are no limits on campaign contributions and no restrictions on personal use of donations. We have increasing levels of dark money flowing into the state without any disclosure mechanism and limited oversight by the Department of Elections.

During the last election cycle, according to OpenSecrets, a non-profit, bipartisan organization tracking money in politics, the cost of the 2021 Virginia gubernatorial race was nearly $188 million, one of the most expensive in the country. As the cost of elections has risen, so has the role of big donors. While you and I and most individuals give $200 or less, this is less than 10% of the money funding our elections. An eye-popping estimate by OpenSecrets reveals that nearly two-thirds of the money raised in 2021 by state candidates in Virginia came from large donors contributing more than $50,000.

The Virginia General Assembly in its current session is considering 13 common sense campaign finance bills. These include bills to establish caps on contributions, improve disclosure of dark money, prohibit foreign money in our elections and restrict the personal use of campaign donations, among others. Last year, similar bills were introduced, and they were all killed.

Meanwhile, it is noteworthy, since Jan. 21 was the 15th anniversary of Citizens United, a Supreme Court ruling that unleashed a torrent of money in our elections, that Delegate Vivian Watts has introduced a resolution that calls on Virginia’s House of Delegates to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution allowing the states and Congress to regulate election spending.

I urge everyone to let their state senator and delegate know this is the time to reform Virginia’s lax election laws.

-Eugenia Burkes, member, Big Money Out of Politics – Virginia

ChatGPT and the Public Schools

BY MARK EATON

Alexandria City Public Schools, unlike the public school districts in New York City and Los Angeles, has yet to ban student access to ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence tool that generates essays, solves equations and completes coding assignments. For those who are not familiar with it, ChatGPT generates near instantaneous well-written responses to complex questions.

There are warnings about ChatGPT facilitating pervasive plagiarism or eliminating the need for teachers altogether. Fortunately, Alexandria City High School’s most accomplished writing teachers suggest that an AI-driven education apocalypse may not be imminent or, at least not in high school English classes.

One ACHS teacher has talked with teachers in other communities and said, “...teachers weren’t particularly worried. The Advanced Placement curriculum does so much with on-demand writing but also revision and metacognition, writing about writing, that using AI – however effective it might be – doesn’t give a significant advantage.”

Another experienced teacher observed that technologies were being developed to detect AI’s use and said:

“My plan is to have more required steps than I already have. This way I can see the development of the idea. Google does is great for seeing how often students edit a document – there’s a feature called trackback – so if it’s just a copy-and-paste job, I’m usually pretty suspect already. I try to make sure that my students use the same document from brainstorming to final draft and share it with me from the beginning.”

These teachers see writing instruction as a process of progressive steps which nearly guarantees that AI will not substitute for student work. This approach is far more effective than the “Go-write-an-essay-and-I’ll-tell-you-what’s-wrong-with-it” model my teachers used.

In short, the less thoughtful an assignment is, the greater the probability is of AI-related plagiarism. The inverse relationship between assignment quality and the probability of plagiarism has been present for as long as students have had internet access.

Teachers who know their students and how they write and talk often have an internal signal that triggers when they see a student’s writing that is inconsistent with their experience and intuitive sense of how the student expresses themself.

AI is a good source about AI’s uses. ChatGPT’s response to the question, “Will ChatGPT make the teaching of writing unnecessary?” is facile and shows a deferential tone.

It also contains, in the final paragraph, a pitch for teachers to use ChatGPT as an instructional aid:

“ChatGPT is a powerful language generation model, but it is not a replacement for teachers in the classroom. While it can be used to generate text, it is not able to understand the context or purpose of the writing, nor can it provide the feedback and guidance that a teacher can give.”

“…in summary, ChatGPT is a powerful tool that can be used to generate text, but it is not a replacement for the guidance and feedback that a teacher can provide in the classroom. It can be used as an aid to enhance the learning experience for students, but the human touch of a teacher is still very much important to guide students on the correct path.”

For all of ChatGPT’s fluent expression, the most important words in its response are probably “context” and “purpose.” ChatGPT may generate impressive text, but if it does not effectively address context and purpose, it is of limited utility. The best writing teachers at ACHS have already figured this out.

MARK EATON

BY MARK EATON

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/.
African American heritage along the waterfront

In 1800, Alexandria resident and former mayor Robert Townsend Hooe signed an Indenture of Apprenticeship with John Hughes, a shipbuilder and sea captain in Alexandria. Hooe, a prosperous merchant and owner of a warehouse on Point Lumley at the foot of Duke Street, agreed to indenture an enslaved boy named Charles to "be taught and instructed by Hughes in the Art[,] Mystery and Business of a Ship Carpenter and no other Business for a period of 12 years." After 12 years, Charles would be emancipated and able to enter the business as a free man with a full suit of clothes and the tools necessary to start his own business.

This moment of Charles' life, captured in a historic document, provides a glimpse into maritime Alexandria and the people involved in the "art and mystery" of ship building more than 200 years ago. This history, along with some of the artifacts excavated from waterfront archaeological sites, is featured in the new southern route of the African American Waterfront Heritage Trail. Charles' story is highlighted alongside the events, places and people, like Benjamin Banneker, George Henry and George Lewis Seaton, that contributed to the history of Alexandria's waterfront.

Even before the founding of Alexandria in 1749, Africans and their descendants, enslaved and free, have lived and worked along the waterfront, making significant contributions to the local economy and culture. In the 1820s and 1850s, Alexandria became home to the country's largest domestic slave trading firm, which profited from the trafficking of enslaved African Americans from the Chesapeake to the Deep South.

The Civil War revolutionized social and economic relations, and freed African Americans found new job opportunities because of the waterfront's industrialization. The Potomac River played an important role in leisure activities too, much as it does today. The history shared on the trails strives to highlight African American experiences while recognizing that their voices are often not directly preserved in the historical record.

The African American Heritage Trail Committee has developed two trails, both beginning at Waterfront Park, that together span more than three miles from Old Town North to Jones Point Park. The trail is available as a web page and a self-guided, online StoryMap that allows residents and visitors to walk the trails and experience 30 stops covering two centuries-plus of Alexandria's history. Ultimately some of these stops will include interpretive signage, like the history of Charles and the trade of ship carpentry at Point Lumley Park.

The new southern route of the African American Waterfront Heritage Trail will launch on Saturday. Visit https://www.alexandriava.gov/Historic for more information on the trails and all the events celebrating Black History Month in Alexandria. This community history project was developed by members of the African American Heritage Trail Committee past and present: Councilor John Chapman, Susan Cohen, Gwen Day-Fuller, Elizabeth “Indy” McCall, Maddy McCoy, committee chair Krystyn Moon, McArthur Myers and Ted Pulliam. Support from the Office of Historic Alexandria is provided by the Alexandria Archaeology Museum and the Alexandria Black History Museum.

Visitors learn more about Alexandria's African American history in Waterfront Park. Left to right: Marvin Sanders, Tamika Sanders, Ebony Wilkes, Monte Cole Kincaid and Dana Kincaid.

Weekly Poll

Last Week

Have you been to the Birchmere?

59% Yes, many times!
18% No.
16% Yes, once or twice.
7% I'm not familiar with the Birchmere.

This Week

Do you support the collective bargaining agreement for Alexandria’s fire department?

A) Yes, it’s a step in the right direction.
B) No, there are too many financial consequences.
C) I’m not sure.

Take the poll at alextimes.com
**Weekly Words**

**ACROSS**

1. Smoking or nail-biting, e.g.  
2. Some receivers in football  
3. Karaoke need, for short  
4. Android download  
5. Like a tuned piano string  
6. Rust and laughing gas, for two  
7. Medical researcher's find  
8. The ___ said "I'm all in!"  
9. The ___ said "I'm spent!"  
10. Loch monster, informally  
11. Like elms or mansions  
12. Wrecking ball swinger  
13. James portrayed by Beyonce  
14. Shows mercy to  
15. French city where Van Gogh painted  
16. Heat rub target  
17. Proposal-defeating votes  
18. Four-handed piano tunes  
19. When Brutus struck  
20. High on pot  
21. The ___ said "I'm tired!"  
22. Reason to protest  
23. Nerve cell transmitter  
24. Human-powered transport  
25. Out of the rat race, say  
26. Off base with permission  
27. "Place" of 1990s TV  
28. Out of the rat race, say  
29. A "3-4-5 triangle"  
30. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
31. "Gladiator" wardrobe item  
32. "Place" of 1990s TV  
33. Out of the rat race, say  
34. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
35. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
36. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
37. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
38. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
39. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
40. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
41. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
42. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
43. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
44. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
45. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
46. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
47. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
48. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
49. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
50. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
51. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
52. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
53. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
54. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
55. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
56. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
57. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
58. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
59. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
60. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
61. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
62. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
63. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
64. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
65. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
66. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
67. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
68. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
69. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
70. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
71. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
72. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
73. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
74. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
75. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
76. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
77. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
78. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
79. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
80. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
81. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
82. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
83. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
84. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
85. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
86. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
87. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
88. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
89. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
90. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
91. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
92. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
93. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
94. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
95. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
96. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
97. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
98. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
99. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
100. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
101. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
102. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
103. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
104. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
105. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
106. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
107. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
108. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
109. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
110. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
111. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
112. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
113. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
114. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
115. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
116. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
117. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
118. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
119. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
120. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
121. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
122. "Glorious" wardrobe item  
123. "Glorious" wardrobe item  

**Solutions from last week**

**DEATH NOTICES**

JOSEPHINE MATAS BINOYA (94), of Alexandria, Jan. 24, 2023  
DANIEL BLUEITT (57), of Alexandria, Jan. 22, 2023  
GILDA CHARLTON (70), of Alexandria, Jan. 21, 2023  
VIVIAN MILLER (88), of Alexandria, Jan. 25, 2023  
GEORGE PERA (93), of Alexandria, Jan. 17, 2023  
ELIZABETH PUSCHECK (85), of Alexandria, Jan. 20, 2023  
TYLER SUITERS (53), formerly of Alexandria, Jan. 24, 2023
The NRA National Firearms Museum presents a Collection of Arms from one of America’s most
Low Prices! Expert Professionals, Enormous Selection & Training!
Largest Gun Show in Metro DC! Guns, Knives & Accessories!
TABLES! Expert Vendors
TICKETS SOLD ONLINE ONLY
1300(757) 331-1439
VA & Utah CCW Courses
Low Prices! Expert Knowledge & Training!

Happy Valentine’s Day!

The City of Alexandria seeks input from community stakeholders regarding the Mount Vernon Trail at East Abingdon Drive Project.

The City plans to widen the existing trail adjacent to East Abingdon Drive north of Slaters Lane to create more space for people walking and biking along East Abingdon Drive and reduce potential conflicts between trail users.

The trail widening begins at the intersection of Slaters Lane and East Abingdon Drive and runs north along East Abingdon Drive for about 200 feet, which is adjacent to 615 and 625 Slaters Lane. The trail will be widened from approximately 4.5 feet to 10 feet, which is consistent with the rest of the City’s trail network and will allow trail users to pass side-by-side more comfortably. The width of the trail at the bus stop will be approximately 13 feet.

The draft design plans are available for review on the project website: https://alexandriava.gov/go/4189. This information is also available for review in-person at City Hall, 301 King Street, Suite 3600, Alexandria, VA. In response to COVID-19, all visitors must have an appointment scheduled with a City staff member to access to City Hall offices. To arrange for a time to review the project documents and plans, please call 703.746.4408 or email alexandria.carroll@alexandria.gov.

Comments and questions may be submitted by email to alexandria.carroll@alexandria.gov or over the phone by calling 703.746.4408, no later than February 17.

This project is funded by a grant from the Virginia Department of

---

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Mt. Vernon Trail at East Abingdon Drive Project
VDOT UPC #100422
DPI PROJECT #1503003
Willingness to Host a Public Hearing
Transportation (VDOT). Pursuant to the grant requirements, the City is willing to hold a public hearing if requested. To request a public hearing, send a written request postmarked by February 17, 2023, to:

Alexandria Carroll
City of Alexandria Department of Project Implementation 301 King Street, Suite 3200 Alexandria, VA 22314

If a request for a public hearing is received, the City will post an announcement (including the date, time and location of the hearing) at a later date. Please note, a public hearing is not required to submit comments or questions.

The City of Alexandria ensures nondiscrimination and equal employment in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. To request more information or special assistance for persons with disabilities or limited English proficiency, contact the City of Alexandria Office of Human Rights at 703.746.3140, 311 Gray District (PG) or TTY/TDD 311.

LEGAL NOTICE

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT
NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

The following requests have been received for administrative review and approval.

For information on the following applications or to comment, visit the City’s website at www.alexandriava.gov/planning or call (703) 746-4666.

Special Use Permit #2023-00001
704 Four Mile Road
Administrative Special Use Permit request for a New Use for a Child Care Home; zoned: RA/Residential Multi-Family
Business Name: Esau’s Family Home Daycare
Applicant: Esau Merino & Imelda Majano

Planner: Patrick Silva – patrick.silva@alexandriava.gov

In accordance with Section 11-500 of the Zoning Ordinance, the above listed request may be approved administratively by the Director of Planning & Zoning. If you have any comments regarding the proposal above, please contact Planning & Zoning staff at 703.746.4666 or email the planner listed no later than February 23, 2023.

LEGAL NOTICE

Board of Architectural Review
LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing will be held by the Board of Architectural Review on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, room 2400, second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 on the following applications:

BAR #2023-00009 OHAD Request for alterations at 516 Oronoco Street Applicant: Stella Kim

BAR #2023-00010 OHAD Request for alterations and addition at 631 N Columbus Street Applicant: Sherri Crane

BAR #2023-00012 OHAD Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 631 N Columbus Street Applicant: Sherri Crane

BAR #2023-00014 OHAD Request for alterations at 116 Queen Street Applicant: Caroline Antonacci

BAR #2023-00015 OHAD Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 116 Queen Street Applicant: Caroline Antonacci

BAR #2023-00016 OHAD Request for reapproval of a previously approved application for alterations and addition at 710 King Street

Applicant: Village Brauhaus; Fito Garcia

BAR #2023-00020 OHAD Request for alterations at 221-223 N St Asaph Street Applicant: James McIntire and Kathryn McIntire

BAR #2023-00021 OHAD Request for demolition/encapsulation at 221-223 N St Asaph Street Applicant: James McIntire and Kathryn McIntire

BAR #2023-00022 OHAD Request for alterations and addition at 210 Franklin Street Applicant: Marks-Woods Construction

BAR #2023-00043 OHAD Request for demolition/encapsulation at 210 Franklin Street Applicant: Marks-Woods Construction

Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD); Parker – Gray District (PG)

Public comments will be received at the Public Hearing. The public may submit comments in advance to Lanning Blaser at lanning.blaser@alexandriava.gov or make public comments on the day of the

Public Hearing.

For reasonable disability accommodation, contact Alicia Chase at alicia.chase@alexandriava.gov or 703.746.3810, Virginia Relay 711.

For further information, call the Department of Planning & Zoning at 703.746.4666 or visit alexandriava.gov/dockets

POTOMAC WINDOW CLEANING

Residential window cleaning inside and out. Serving the local area for 35 years. Family owned and operated. (703) 356-4559. Licensed, Bonded, Insured. The Montgomery family thanks you for your interest.

CHEVY CHASE FLOOR WAXING SERVICE

Wood floor polishing, buffing, waxing, old floor specialists Servicing local area 30 years Licensed, bonded & insured (301) 656-1810

We do not repair damaged floors

OFFICE MANAGER/ADMINISTRATIVE ASST.

Part-time Office Manager/ Admin Assist in Alexandria, Nativity Lutheran Church, 1300 Collingwood Road.

Core responsibilities are maintaining the church database and communication app, initiating emails, preparing weekly newsletter and Sunday worship materials. M, T, and W 8:30-1:30 hourly wage beginning at $14.

Send resume and cover letter to Nativitylutheran1@gmail.com

Keith’s custom built storage sheds built to your specifications. No permit required anything under 15 x 20 10 ft. tall. Rough to finish carpentry and painting. 703-863-7567.

ATTN. AUCTIONEERS: Advertise your upcoming auctions statewide and in other states. Affordable Print and Digital Solutions reaching your target audiences. Call this paper or Landon Clark at Virginia Press Services 804-521-7576, landonc@vpa.net

Notice is hereby given that Gallman Transportation Service LLC, 224 E. Taylor Run Pkwy, Alexandria, VA 22314 (mailing address-9402 Silver Fox Turn, Clinton, MD 20735), has filed an application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity that would authorize: 1. Passenger transportation as a Common Carrier over Irregular Routes, providing service in the Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas, and Manassas Park, Virginia and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William, Virginia, and; 2. Transportation of Medicaid recipients throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia as a Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Carrier as defined in Section 46.2-2000 et seq. of the Code of Virginia.

Any person who desires to protest the application and be a party to the matter must submit a signed and dated written request setting forth (1) a precise statement of the party's interest and how the party could be aggrieved if the application was granted; (2) a full and clear statement of the facts that the person is prepared to provide by competent evidence; (3) a statement of the specific relief sought; (4) the name of the applicant and case number assigned to the application; and (5) a certification that a copy of the protest was sent to the applicant. The case number assigned to this application is MC2200731PS.

Written protests must be mailed to DMV Motor Carrier Services, Attn: Operating Authority, P. O. Box 27412, Richmond, VA 23289-0001 and must be postmarked on or before February 16, 2023.

Any protest filed with competent evidence will be carefully considered by DMV. However, DMV will have full discretion as to whether a hearing is warranted based on the merits of the protest filed.
Living, Loving, Listing Old Town

LAUREN BISHOP, REALTOR
202.361.5079 | LBishop@McEnearney.com
LaurenBishopHomes.com | Licensed in VA

FOR SALE
500 DUKE STREET
Offered for $3,650,000
5 Bedrooms | 4 Full Baths

FOR SALE
601 & 607 ORONOCO STREET
Offered for $4,995,000
6 Bedrooms | 4 Full & 2 Half Baths

JUST SOLD
1503 WAKE FOREST DRIVE
Sold for $800,000
Represented the Buyer