

The boys are back

Alexandria Aces set to launch 2023 season, commemorate last year's title



PHOTO/TESS WILHELM

Alexandria Aces players storm the mound after closer Ryan Brown retired the Bethesda Big Train 1-2-3 in the bottom of the ninth inning to secure the Cal Ripken League championship.

BY JIM MCGRATH

Baseball is back in town for the summer and this year the Alexandria Aces will be defending a championship for the first time in their 15-year history.

To recap the historic 2022 season, the Aces won the regular season title in the eight-team Cal Ripken Sr. League Championship. As the top seed, the Aces thwarted the momentum of the Bethesda Big Train squad, which was attempting to win its sixth straight championship. In a best-of-three series, Alexandria took the first two games, giving it a perfect 4-0 playoff record, including the finale, a 5-3 decision at Shirley Povich Field in Montgomery County, Maryland.

In the clinching game, the Aces scored two runs in the top of the ninth and final inning. The Aces' website, alexandriaaces.org, provided this description of how that cham-

pionship inning played out:

"Dylan Koontz (Campbell) led off the ninth with a walk, advancing to second on CJ Boyd's (Appalachian State) groundout in the next at-bat. Then, on his steal attempt, the Big Train committed one of their three costly errors on the night. Catcher Baylor Cobb missed the throw to third, bringing Koontz home for the go-ahead run. Moments later, Cade Sullivan (Western Michigan) launched a solo homer."

The dinger was Sullivan's third of the post-season and served as the insurance run,



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COURTESY PHOTO

The author with her husband John on their wedding day in 1976.

Lessons in life

Motherhood, alcoholism and finding a work-life balance

BY KERRY BOYD ANDERSON

Americans' experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic inspired many people to re-evaluate their lives, reconsider their priorities, reassess their values, move to new locations, find new passions and reorient careers. At a time when many people are going through that process, Caren Camp's new book offers specific life lessons that are particularly relevant to women.

Camp, who lives in Old Town and has been a meeting

planner the last 22 years for HelmsBriscoe, wrote "Life Lessons of an American Woman" last year. She drew upon her range of life experiences with career, marriage, adoption, motherhood and coping with alcoholism and depression in writing the book.

The oldest of six children, Camp hails from Dartmouth, Massachusetts. Her childhood included pulling up roots many times – her family moved 11 times by the time Camp turned 13 – due to her father's job with Burlington Industries. Her family's moves

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Follow this checklist for happy, healthy pets.

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Christine Roland Garner

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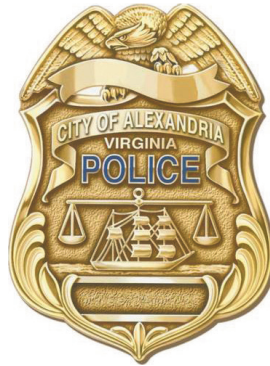
WEEKLY BRIEFING

Man charged in two bank robberies

The Alexandria Police Department has charged Jaquan Royal, 27, of Prince George's County, MD with two counts of bank robbery, according to a release. Royal is charged with the March 23 bank robbery in the 3500 block of Mt. Vernon Ave. and the April 3 bank robbery in the 400 block of John Carlyle St. No injuries were reported with

these incidents. Royal is being held in another jurisdiction according to the release. The APD considers this an active investigation, and any individuals with additional information should contact Detective Brattelli at (703) 746-6699 or email john.brattelli@alexandria.va.gov.

-lgolden@alextimes.com



PHOTO/APD

Suspect in dog poisoning case sentenced

Alexandria resident John Romano, the suspect accused of attempting to poison a dog in Del Ray on Feb. 6, pleaded guilty on May 26 in Alexandria District Court. Romano was sentenced to six months suspended jail time, 12 months' probation and 100 hours of community service according to a release from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria.

"While some may see this punishment as too lenient, I see this sentence as sending a clear message that this type of behavior is not acceptable. I hope the defendant in this case realizes how much worse this situation could have been if he had actually caused harm to one of his intended victims and I hope he takes this opportunity to make amends through the court ordered community service. I would also like to thank the Commonwealth Attorney's Office for the work they put into this case and for taking a serious approach to crimes against animals," said the AWLA's Chief of Animal Services Tony Rankin according to the release. No animals were harmed in this incident.

On a brighter note, now through the end of June, community members are invited to upload photos of their furry friends for a \$30 donation per photo to the AWLA for a chance to be selected the 2024 Animal of the Year. All kinds of animals are welcome. Pets do not have to have been adopted from the AWLA or live in Alexandria to

be considered.

The grand prize winner of the photo contest will grace the front and back calendar cover, receive a professional photo session, receive year-round invitations to AWLA events as "Alexandria's 2024 Animal of the Year" and have their photo featured on transport buses throughout northern Virginia. They must be able to travel to Alexandria.

Additional winners will receive professional photo sessions and receive full-page photos in the month of their choice in the 2024 calendar. They also must be able to travel to Alexandria. For more information, gogophotocontest.com/awlacalendarcontest

-lgolden@alextimes.com

Crashes continue, businesses shattered

According to a dispatch call, a driver was hospitalized after crashing her car into Bradlee Shopping Center's Robcyns at 3660 King Street on Tuesday. The incident occurred around 3:30 p.m. According to a bystander, the driver mistakenly

pressed the gas pedal instead of the brake and crashed through the window of the store.

This incident was preceded by a May 27 crash into a commercial property in the 400 block of E. Monroe Ave. in an attempted robbery.

Thirdly, according to ALX-Now, a car crashed into a commercial property in the 100 block of S. Payne St. on Wednesday morning. The driver was transported to a hospital following the accident.

-lgolden@alextimes.com

Correction: The story "Through their eyes" in the May 25 Alexandria Times identified the wrong namesake of the Harry Burke Award for Excellence in Special Education. The award was named for the Harry Burke who was a longtime Alexandria City Public Schools director of Special Education from the 1970s to the early 1990s, not the Harry Burke who was aquatics director at the Johnson Memorial Pool in the 1950s and 1960s. The Times regrets the error.

ADOPTABLE PET OF THE WEEK



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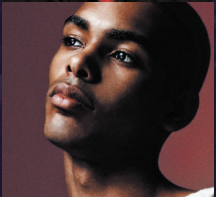
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WEEKLY BRIEFING

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Two arrested following robbery

The Alexandria Police Department identified and arrested two individuals in connection with a robbery and use of a firearm according to a release. On May 25, Fredericksburg, VA resident Michael Lazo, 19, and Alexandrian Dashaun Stoney, 32, robbed a commercial space in the 3700 block of Mt. Vernon Ave. The suspects were arrested and a firearm was seized.

On March 23, according to

an article in Fredericksburg's Free Lance-Star, Stoney agreed to a deal in Stafford Circuit Court that month. He served 22 days in prison for conspiracy to commit robbery after directing a teen burglary ring. Per the article, "according to evidence, a group of teenagers were connected to nine robberies that occurred during a two-week period in August 2020. In both cases, masked robbers entered the stores,

displayed a gun and left with money and tobacco products. Two teens have been convicted in connection with the Stafford robberies; Stoney was directly involved in just one of them... Stoney was initially arrested in 2021, but those charges were eventually dropped. Prosecutor Ryan Frank said Stoney spent several months in jail before the charges were dropped."

-lgolden@alextimes.com

ACHS students win C-SPAN competition

Two student teams from the Alexandria City High School TV and media production program won student video competitions earlier this month. A team of three students, Gryphon Magnus, Mia Mervis and Sarah McBurney, competed in the SkillsUSA media production competition in the broadcast news category. They placed

first in the district and second at the state competition. Another student team, with members Leo Dienstfrey, Lashelle Sakyi and Marisa Vidal won the StudentCam competition, run by C-SPAN and sponsored by Comcast, with their video "Modern Day Slavery" about human trafficking.

Vilma Zefran, who has been

teaching the film and media production class for 23 years, said that research is "not only the most important, but the most challenging skill" tested in the competitions. Zefran said, "They used many skills learned in other classes in our English and social studies programs and...see the value in this program."

-akopp@alextimes.com



PHOTO/GAYLE REUTER

On Monday, proud citizens honored and mourned US military personnel who died serving our country at various events on Memorial Day. Wreaths were laid, music was played, names were read and heroes were remembered.

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ACES

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as Aces all-star Ryan Brown closed out the proceedings with a snappy 1-2-3 up-and-down bottom of the ninth for the save.

Fast forward to 2023, and this summer's season, which

begins next week with a home game against the Silver Spring-Takoma Park T-Bolts on June 5. The nature of summer league baseball allows for only a short warm-up "spring training," according to Aces coach Chris Berset.

How short?

"We have one practice on the Saturday before the season and then it's full go from there," Berset said.

Berset also owns Prime-Time Baseball in Alexandria, and he coached a youth championship game last Saturday as part of his duties there.

"I oversee 20 teams in varying age groups," Berset said.

His U15 squad won its spring championship last weekend, but now he's focused back on the college kids. Berset said he's excited about this year's configuration of the Alexandria Aces, which includes new players from some of the best college baseball programs in the country, along with a few stalwarts from last year.

"We have a few guys returning in pitchers Reese Crockett (4-0, 1.65 ERA in 2022) and Will Long and infielder Chris Taylor. I'm really liking the makeup of this team," Berset said. "We have some very talented ball players from Auburn in Alex Wade and Gavin Miller.

"Our Ball State boys will continue to be key components to our lineup in Nick Gregory and Dylan Grego. My young Vanderbilt kids have played on a high stage before and our Campbell hitter Jonah Oster has swung the bat well so far this season," Berset continued.

The Aces will be pressed to improve on last season's best-



**CHRIS
BERSET**

ever record of 26-10. But Berset looks forward to the challenge of a new season – against many of the leading college players in the country.

"First and foremost – it's good competition. We compete against teams that have top players on it," Berset said.

The Aces are in the Cal Ripken League's South division along with the Lorton (Metro South County) Braves, the expansion Southern Maryland Senators and DC Grays. The four Montgomery County teams will comprise the North Division. Along with Bethesda and Silver Spring-Takoma,

SEE ACES

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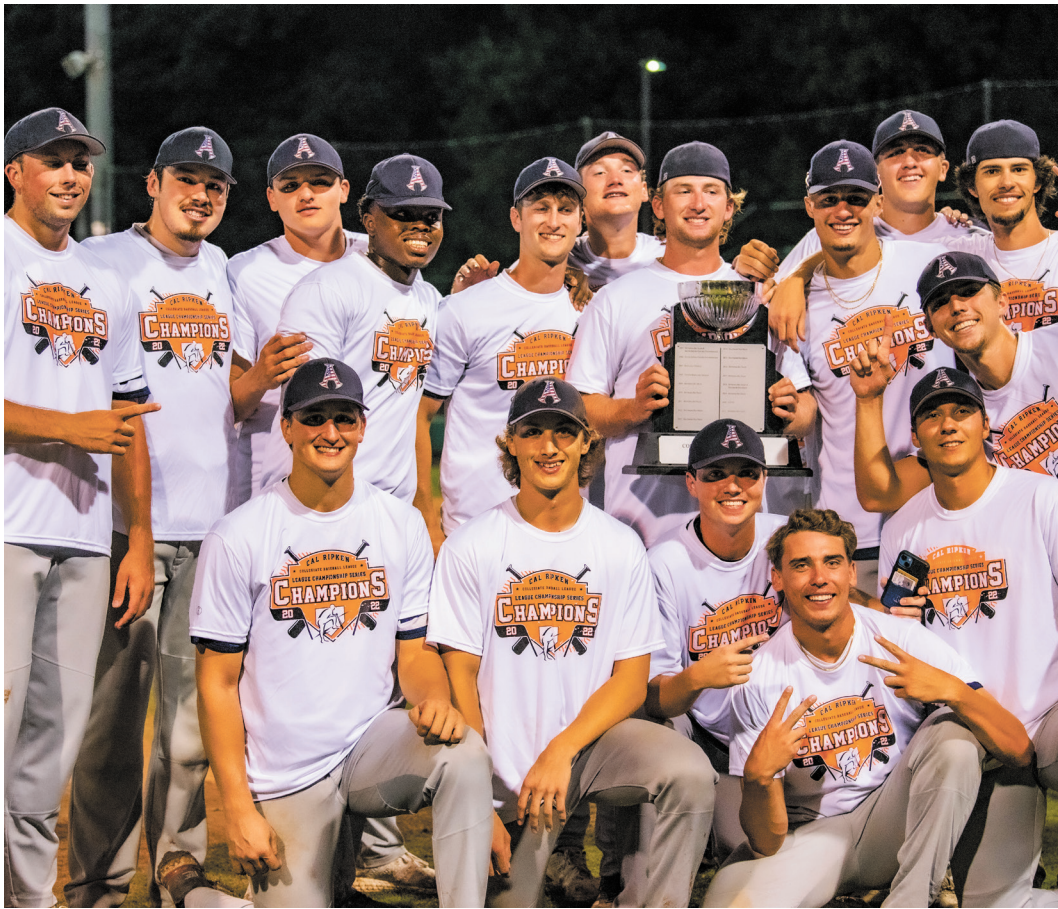
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The Aces celebrating their championship.



PHOTO/TESS WILHELM

The team photo of the 2022 Cal Ripken League champion Alexandria Aces.

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this will include the Gaithersburg Giants and Cropdusters Baseball.

Asked if the pitchers risk developing arm trouble transitioning directly from a 50 to 70 game college season directly to the 36-game Aces schedule, Berset says it's a matter of adjusting rest time.

"With a 'shortened' schedule, top pitchers come to our league so they can have their break in August. Also, the travel is relatively easy. Yes, it is the D.C. traffic you are fighting against, but being home each night is key."

In other words, there are no overnight road trips. And for the pitching, last season 21 different hurlers saw time for the Aces, with only one topping the 40-inning plateau.

Team president Frank Fannon is more specific about how competing for the Aces in a top-tier summer league helps boost the players'



FRANK FANNON

draft chances.

"Some of our players have excelled recently once they left Alexandria. Blake Burkhalter from Auburn was a second-round pick of the Atlanta Braves in 2021 and signed for over \$800,000. He played for us in 2021," Fannon, who has been with the team throughout its 15-year existence, said.

Each team is responsible for recruiting its own players, and the Alexandria team is unusual with its international flavor.

"Last year we had two players from China come and Jack Wang pitched for China recently in the World Baseball

Classic," Fannon said.

A key selling point of the Ripken league is that they leave the aluminum bats at home. Part of its stated mission is to promote collegiate wooden bat baseball, giving the league a throwback feel, as virtually all youth league and college programs use aluminum bats.

But for those aspiring to play professional baseball, where wooden bats are used, the experience swinging the lumber is invaluable. A wooden bat league enables hitters to show they can excel without aluminum bats, which are lighter and easier to swing, and likewise allows pitchers to show professional scouts that they can thrive in a professional-style league.

"Helping these boys out while they play is crucial in developing them," Berset said.

Playing at Frank Mann Field on Commonwealth Avenue, the former home of the Class A Alexandria Dukes back in the 1970's, also ties the Aces

to days of baseball past.

For now, all of the Aces' collective energy is directed toward the coming season.

"We're very excited to begin this season," Berset said. "Coming off a banner season, we should be able to have some great crowds on hand. The momentum of Alexandria is building rapidly so having the boys playing in front of this will be nothing short of sweet!"

The 18-game home schedule will be full of surprises, and each game will be sponsored by a different organization. According to Fannon, for the opener there will be a championship celebration ceremony 15 minutes prior to game time,

followed by the first pitch at 6:30. It will be billed as Alexandria Little League Night.

There will be food trucks at all home games, and Fannon emphasized the entertainment bargain which his team presents.

"Admission is still only five dollars, with plenty of free parking," Fannon said.

The Aces are a 501(c)(3) organization and they are consistently trying to raise money as the cost of uniforms, bats, and balls have all increased. Donations can be made on the team website or checks mailed to Alexandria Aces, P.O. Box 1219, Alexandria, 22313.

-jfmcrath65@gmail.com



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA FIRST HALF 2023 REAL ESTATE TAX, REFUSE FEE AND STORMWATER UTILITY FEE ARE DUE JUNE 15, 2023

The first half 2023 real estate tax, refuse fee and stormwater utility fee must be paid by June 15, 2023, to avoid late payment penalty and interest.

Pay by credit card or eCheck on the City's website at alexandriava.gov/Payments. Real estate tax payments can also be mailed to City of Alexandria, PO Box 34750, Alexandria, VA 22334-0750.

Pay in person at the Treasury Division, City Hall, Room 1510, or at the new West End Finance Office, 4850 Mark Center Drive, Second Floor, between 8AM and 5PM, Monday through Friday. A drop box on the Royal Street side of City Hall is available 24 hours a day. Payments must be in the drop box by midnight on June 15, 2023, to be considered on time.

General real estate tax information is available on the City's website at alexandriava.gov/RealEstateTax. Detailed assessment, tax balance and payment information is available at realestate.alexandriava.gov.

For payment questions or to request a tax bill, please call the Treasury Division at 703.746.4800, or email payments@alexandriava.gov. For assessment questions or to change a mailing address, please email realestate@alexandriava.gov. For questions on refuse fees or stormwater utility fees, please call Alex311 at 703.746.4311 or submit questions online at alexandriava.gov/Alex311.



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Goodwin
Living



COURTESY PHOTO

Camp's book focuses on her family (pictured), work and personal struggles and successes.

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took her to various cities in the North and South, and exposed her to many different perspectives and ways of life.

Camp spent 15 years working in the fashion industry after attending Saint Mary's School in North Carolina and then Laboratory Institute of Merchandising, a school that specializes in fashion design and merchandising, in New York City. She worked on 7th Avenue for Lilly Pulitzer, then joined Estée Lauder cosmetics and traveled around the country launching a new line called Prescriptives.

While working in New York, Camp met her husband, John, on a blind date. They were married within a year. The Camps moved to Virginia so John could pursue his MBA, and later settled in Los Ange-

les, where Caren continued to explore the world of fashion and beauty. But two years in California was enough for the young couple.

"We had wanted to experience the West Coast because we both grew up on the East Coast," Camp said in an email. "After living there for two years we found that we missed our families. Every time anybody had a baby, a wedding or a funeral we were the ones that had to fly 3,000 miles."

After she and her husband John adopted two children, in 1985 and 1990 respectively, Camp took time away from work to focus on raising her children, a time of her life that she says was extremely fulfilling. During that time, she was involved in nonprofit fundraising and independent meeting planning, and those skills supported her transi-


tion to working in meeting planning with HelmsBriscoe when she decided to re-enter the workforce.

When the Camps returned to Virginia from California, they first lived in Middleburg, then McLean – where they raised their two sons – before moving to Alexandria.

"... after the boys were going off to college, we decided to move to Alexandria because it is more of a neighborhood that we enjoy," Camp said.

A combination of memoir and life tips, Camp's book offers advice for everything from balancing work and family to building a new house and finding an effective exercise routine.

Camp used to find it uncomfortable to share difficult experiences with others. Over



JUNE 3 – 24, 2023

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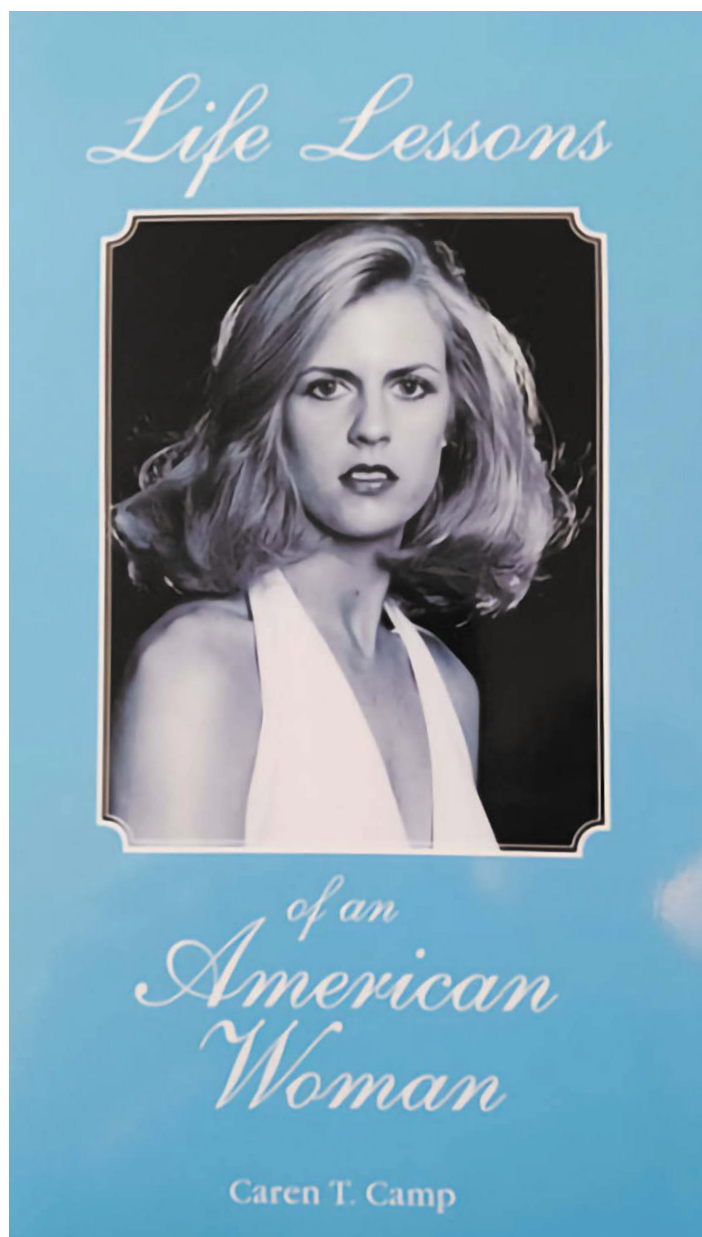
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Author Caren Camp graces the cover of her book "Life Lessons of an American Woman."

PHOTO/YELLOW DOT SHOP

CAMP

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the years, she found that sharing her story with women was often helpful for them and for her. Her introduction is titled "Share Your Story, Change a Life."

"In my 50s, I started sharing at A.A. meetings and Al-Anon meetings about my life and realized that it's very healthy to share," Camp said.

Other women began asking her about alcoholism recovery, health and adoption. She also began journaling and found that her subject areas could translate into book chapters.

"I decided that writing a book would be a good way to share with people," Camp said.

Camp's decision to share her story can be traced back to her experiences with her second son, Bob. For years, the family struggled with Bob's educational and behavioral challenges. As the family worked to find the right schools, counselors and other supports, Camp interacted with other parents who were trying to cope with similar challenges.

The exchange of information was useful in understanding their children's difficulties and finding help. Today, both of Camp's grown sons are doing well.

Camp noted that alco-

holism is often an inherited disease – it was for her. Multiple members of her family have struggled with the disease and multiple factors led her to the realization that she was facing alcoholism herself. So, at the age of 37, Camp stopped drinking.

"I am now over 30 years sober," she wrote in the book.

Her recovery from alcoholism also encouraged Camp to speak out. She discovered that she could help other people facing similar challenges.

"People who look like they have everything have a lot of trials and tribulations behind the scenes," she noted.

Coping with alcoholism is a major theme in her book.

"Do not be embarrassed about it," she advises. "Alcoholism is terrible, but I learned that I can give up drinking. I want people to be comfortable with recovering and not drinking."

Camp said that gratefulness, her husband's support, her children and wanting to stay healthy have helped to keep her sober. Camp gives much credit for her recovery to her husband's encouragement as well as attending Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon meetings. She described "never wanting to wake up with another hangover" as an

added motivation for honoring her sobriety.

In addition to a family history with alcoholism, Camp also had family members who suffered from debilitating depression. When severe depression hit her at the age of 57, Camp was not expecting it. It took a year before she recognized that she was depressed.

"Why didn't I see it? Because I thought I could work through it," she said.

Working with a doctor and taking prescribed medication quickly helped Camp feel like herself again.

Another one of her main themes is balancing motherhood and career. She hopes to help other women who are trying to juggle both.

Camp began her career in the 1970s, when professional women went to an office in a suit and high heels.

"It hasn't been easy, but I have done it. I had to work harder, stronger and longer than men to prove who you were in order to be noticed or make a comparable salary," she said.

Camp notes that technological and social changes have created a vastly different work environment for younger women in today's workforce. While in the past, women often lost their jobs when they had children, today employers are more likely to value women's experience and consider ways to retain them – including offering remote and flexible work.

Camp met the owner of local business Yellow Dot Publishing, Ellen Hamilton, through the Chamber of Commerce. Because Camp is a long-time resident who works and volunteers in Alexandria, she was happy to work with a local business owner to publish her book.

Readers can find Camp's book on the Yellow Dot Shop website or at the Made in ALX store in Old Town.

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PHOTO/MARGOT SCHULMAN

Nathaniel Stampley as Sweeney Todd and Ian McEuen as Pirelli in Signature Theatre's production of 'Sweeney Todd.'

'Sweeney Todd' at the Signature

A delightfully gory spectacle

BY MAE HUNT

Signature Theatre's take on "Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street" is a delightfully gory spectacle. It will run through July 9 as the final installment of So Many Possibilities, Signature's season-long tribute to the legacy of Stephen Sondheim.

Arguably the best-known of Sondheim's musicals, "Sweeney Todd" first made its Broadway debut in 1979. It follows its titular character, a talented barber whose obsession with revenge drives him to become a serial killer, and his partner-in-crime, pie shop owner Mrs. Lovett.

While undeniably dark in subject matter, in typical Sondheim fashion, "Sweeney Todd" is humorous and heart-

felt as well. Signature's production does justice to the show's complexities, thanks to excellent performances across the board.

Nathaniel Stampley is a phenomenal Sweeney, with the kind of baritone voice that is breathtaking and smooth, even in the character's most depraved moments. Rather than take a more comedic approach to the role, Stampley's version of Sweeney is genuinely terrifying. He appears controlled, but just barely, as if he could snap at any moment.

For this reason, the dynamic between Sweeney and Mrs. Lovett, played by Bryonha Marie, is a joy to watch. Mrs. Lovett's actions are just as heartless as Sweeney's, but Marie's charismatic and funny performance makes that an easy fact to forget – at least, until the plot forces the au-



PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER MUELLER

Bryonha Marie as Mrs. Lovett and Nathaniel Stampley as Sweeney Todd in 'Sweeney Todd' at Signature Theatre.

dience to remember. Marie's bubbly Mrs. Lovett provides a fantastic contrast to Stampley's stoic Sweeney, and her near-flawless grasp of the Cockney accent is impressive as well.

IF YOU'RE GOING

Where: Signature Theatre, 4200 Campbell Ave., Arlington, 22206

When: Through July 9

Tickets:
Online at sigtheatre.org

The rest of the cast were just as great. John Leslie Wolfe gave a controlled but skin-crawling performance as the show's villain, Judge Turpin, and the comedic timing that Christopher Michael Richardson brought to the role of Turpin's lackey, the Beadle, made the character one of my favorites to watch in the entire production.

Aside from the perfor-

mances, a definite highlight of Sweeney Todd is the production design. Upon entering the theater space, the audience is transported into a gritty version of Victorian London. Steam floats up through grates in the stage floor, and the set is sterile and angular, reminiscent of a butcher shop.

Although Sweeney Todd is a famously gory show, Director Sarna Lapine and her team decided to use red fabric and ribbons to represent bloodspill, rather than liquid fake blood. This may be disappointing to audience members who anticipated a more grisly viewing experience.

Personally, I found the murder scenes to be effectively haunting, in a symbolic sort of way that aligns with Sondheim's trademark exploration of the human condition. Rather than distract the viewer with shock value, Signature's production invites the viewer to sit with the uncomfortable

feelings that the story intends to stir up inside them.

Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. Based on the book by Hugh Wheeler. Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick. Music directed by Jon Kalbfleisch. Choreography by Alison Solomon. Scenic design by Mikiko Suzuki MacAdams. Costume design by Robert Perdziola. Lighting design by Jesse Belsky and sound design by Eric Norris.

Overall, Signature Theatre's take on Sweeney Todd is subdued, but seamless. With a cast and crew that truly gives it their all, it's impossible not to have fun, even during the show's darkest moments.

The writer, a lifelong Alexandrian, works in the fine arts industry. She is an accomplished playwright who was the former editor-in-chief and fine arts editor of the Kenyon Collegian.

FINANCE



FILE PHOTO

Mailboxes are vulnerable to thieves. Drop-off checks in-person.

Dirty laundry

Protecting your checks from theft

BY JOSEPH COLLUM

Paper checks are still an important method of making payments. Checks provide customers with an easy and convenient tool to make payments when they prefer not to use digital technology. They also serve as an alternative payment tool when technology is not an option. Unfortunately, paper checks are also sub-

ject to theft and fraud. We've seen a significant increase in the reports of check theft in recent years.

Thieves are stealing mail from home mailboxes. Even locked postal "blue boxes" are not immune to theft. After stealing mail, fraudsters find and alter checks, known as "check washing" by using chemicals to remove ink from the payee line and the dollar amount of the check. They then change the value



FILE PHOTO

Enroll in your bank's payment service as an alternative to paper checks.

of the check to a much larger amount and add their own name as payee while preserving the legitimate signature on the check.

Often, the thief will use the name of a "mule" as the payee. A mule is an individual the fraudster uses and then pays to negotiate the check on his or her behalf.

I heard a recent story of someone who mailed their monthly payment via check to their local power company. The amount was just

above \$100. The individual used a post office box close to their home to send the payment. A week or so later, the check cleared their account in the amount of \$4,000. The check was made out to a complete stranger.

A thief accessed the mailbox, stole the mail, washed the check for their own benefit and was able to cash the check at a national bank. In this situation, the victim was able to get their money back, but not before incurring stress, worry and the hassle of closing their account and opening a new one.

Potentially avoid this situation by following a few best practices.

Visit the post office

If you write and mail checks, take your mail with checks inside a post office location. Do not use your own mailbox to send checks. Avoid the blue boxes for mail drop. Even those located at your local post office can be vulnerable to theft.

Review transactions

Log on daily via your bank's digital banking platform to review transactions. It's a fast,

secure and easy way to verify the items posted to your account. Most banks make check images available online. Take a moment to click on the image and review it to ensure it is legitimate. If you notice anything out of the ordinary, call, message or visit your bank immediately.

Enroll online

Enroll in your bank's bill payment service, which is generally free. The bank will remit payments on your behalf. And you will save the cost of postage as well.

Put it in ink

Use pens that make it more difficult to wash checks. Generally, a gel pen is best. A simple internet search for "best anti-fraud pens for checks" will point you in the right direction.

While these steps may not eliminate the possibility of fraud, they will greatly reduce the chances you could be affected by this ongoing issue.

The writer is the executive vice president and director of branch and business banking for Burke & Herbert Bank.

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ALEX KIDS

Student stress

Learning to live with the inevitability of academic pressure

BY CLAIRE HOLLOWAY

Living is stressful. There is always something that needs to be done, some assignment to polish, some studying necessary, some problems to solve. Whatever it is, there will always be something worth stressing about. It is a vicious cycle. We all continue to live through stress, often repeating the actions of anxiety and worry and going through motions of pressure.

How and when did we start living like this? We suffer in the depths of our apprehension-ridden minds. We have all been wired to think and live this way. It started at a young age. When academia gets introduced, we are suddenly aware of skill level, intelligence and deficiencies. We are first judged and we feel the need for unattainable perfection.

Think about that word “un-



CLAIRE HOLLOWAY

attainable.” Perfection is inherently unattainable. From a young age, children are put in situations where they are graded. Children then become used to the idea of measuring themselves against teacher expectations or their own peers. They become attached to these standards that only set them up for failure.

As children age, they receive heavier, harder assignments. Higher standards and more pressure mean more stress and more intense anxiety which comes solely from academics.

But they are still children.



FILE PHOTO

Learning and gaining knowledge should be a pleasure.

They still deserve to have a life outside of whatever the school thinks of them.

It is not that easy. School work does not work like that. Yes, education should be a top priority, but it cannot define a whole life. Kids deserve to be able to do sports and take time to spend with families and decompress. They deserve to sleep a full night through. Necessities like sleep and self-care are getting postponed for

the sake of history and algebra. What makes anyone think that this is okay?

These feelings of intense anxiety from a young age have genuine long-term consequences. A child who develops an anxiety disorder can experience trouble with personal development, family life and education. The child will have trouble with the very education that causes this anxiety. That is a vicious cycle.

Teenagers who experience chronic anxiety often deal with depression, substance abuse and even suicide. Academic pressure is not necessarily the main source of that anxiety, but is most certainly a contributing factor to stress, breakdowns and burnouts.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, an estimated 49.5% of adolescents live with mental illness. School is not necessarily the cause, but it is in no way helping the situation. Learning and gaining knowledge should be a pleasure, but students are legitimately breaking down and even losing lives.

An estimated 77% of college students experience psychological distress according to the American Psychiatric Association. College is a different level of pressure than middle and high school, but the place that distress starts is in our schools. Schools meant to be a haven and shelter from the troubles of the world, but have become a leading cause in chronic anxiety.



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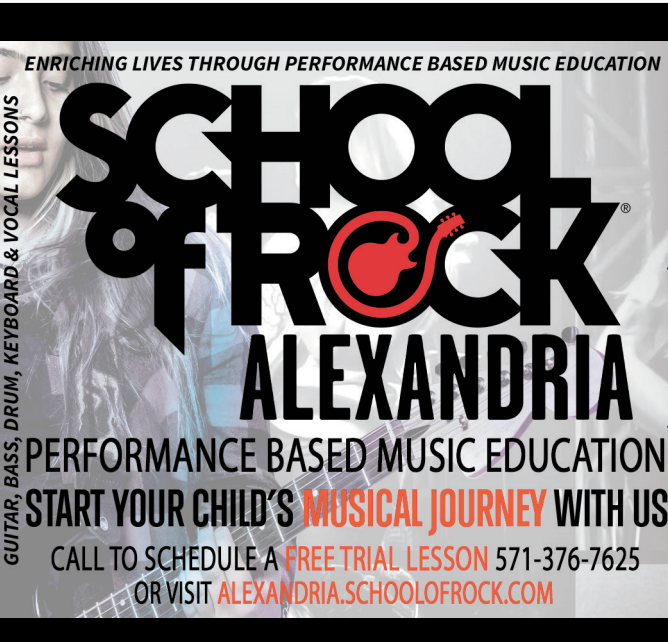
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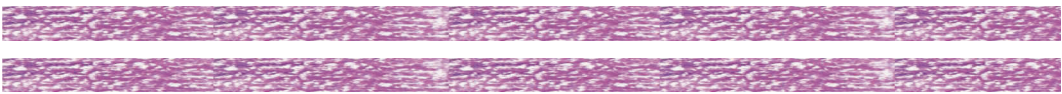
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ALX KIDS

ACADEMICS FROM | 14

School needs to be a supportive environment for growing, developing and expressing emotion. Some seem to forget growing up includes learning about yourself. You can know the capital cities of all 50 states but if you do not know a healthy outlet for your emotion or anything, really, about yourself, then you have learned nothing.

We must move past failure. There is hope for us yet. It cannot be squandered by regret.

Parents must get involved in their children’s mental health. Anything your child goes through in regards to mental illness, you should be there to help them.

There is a lack of collaboration between school and parents which prevents a safe

environment for expression.

Empathy is a key ingredient to understanding and handling a student’s emotions. The fact is that children are the future and the beginning of solutions for the issues facing the world today.

Not only do they inherently deserve respect as humans, but it is also criminal that more care is not taken in the forming of their minds. It is ridiculous that we, as a society, reap the benefits of a struggle we never see.

We need to accept and give credit for the efforts, pain, struggle and sacrifice of the young. We need help. We deserve more credit than anyone wants to give. Please, someone help us.

The writer is a student at St. Rita’s Catholic School.



FILE PHOTO

School needs to be a supportive environment for growing, developing and expressing emotions.

School Profile

St. Paul’s Episcopal Preschool

At St. Paul’s Episcopal Preschool our mission is to educate the hearts and minds of young people for lives of learning, leadership and service. Our early childhood education program (serving 18-months to 5 years) is designed to engage the youngest learners to develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively. Through developmentally-appropriate practices rich in social connections, language literacy, math and other disciplinary skills and content, we are committed to making the preschool experience as full and positive as possible. In addition to classroom learning, St. Paul’s offers an array of specials, including: art, chapel, library, music, resource, science and weekly field trips.

At St. Paul’s Episcopal Pre-



PHOTO/ST. PAUL’S EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL

school, we believe that play is the work of children. Through imagining, building, pretend-

ing, and exploring children learn how the world works and how they might change it. Our

teachers facilitate learning by encouraging, guiding, clarifying, comforting and loving. Low teacher-student ratios allow for individualized attention to help children develop to their fullest potential. Children learn to navigate friendships by sharing materials, taking turns, acting responsibly and taking perspective of others’ ideas. Collaboration and small group work are supported by teachers who encourage exploration in our enriched learning environment.

St. Paul’s Episcopal Preschool is a wonderful place for preschool learners to develop a foundation for a love of learning through a socially and academically lively learning environment.

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PHOTO/ST. PAUL’S EPISCOPAL PRESCHOOL

AT A GLANCE

- School name:** Saint Paul’s Episcopal Preschool
- Address:** 228 S. Pitt St., Alexandria, 22314
- Established:** 2020
- Number of students:** 65
- Grades:** 18 months to 5 years
- Student programs:** Art, chapel, library, music, resource, science and weekly field trips.
- Principal:** Kristin Teeters
- Website:** stpaulsalexandria.com/preschool
- Contact:** 703-548-6089

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GARDEN STORYTIME Read outdoors! Join for stories, songs and music. Children from 0 to 5 welcome with an adult.
Time: 10:30 to 11 a.m.
Location: 5005 Duke St.
Information: alexlibraryva.org/event/8511291

GIRLS WHO CODE Inspire future programmers. Perfect for girls interested in computer coding. Ages 8 through 14 are welcome to attend.
Time: 6 to 7:30 p.m.
Location: 5005 Duke St.
Information: alexlibraryva.org/event/8511118

JUNE 2

SNEAKER BALL Charles Houston Recreation Center will host its first Sneaker Ball. The event is free to all and participants are asked to wear their most stylish dress and coolest pair of sneakers. Games, music, mocktails, a photobooth and more will be available. Donations of men’s and women’s clothing and shoes will be accepted. Teens ages 13 through 19 are invited.
Time: 8 to 10:30 p.m.
Location: 901 Wythe St.
Information: alexandriava.gov/rpca/events or call 703-746-5552

JUNE 3

PARK CLEAN UP Join for a tour and clean-up of Four Mile Run Park. All are welcome. The area can be rocky and steep, so sturdy shoes with traction are recommended.
Time: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Location: 3700 Commonwealth Ave.
Information: alexlibraryva.org/event/8554919

JUNE 5

PAWS TO READ Calling all dog lovers. Kids in grades first through sixth are invited to read to sweet pups. Even stories about cats are okay. Please call 703-746-1783 to register.
Time: 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Location: 2501 Commonwealth Ave.
Information: alexlibraryva.org/event/8428413



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FILE PHOTO

Focus on experiences that offer joy and community to help manage academic pressure.

Advice from a therapist

Helping teens cope with anxiety and pressure

BY ADELE STUCKEY
AND MATTHEW BROOKS

Post pandemic, adults talk about figuring out the “new normal.” As teenagers, you have an even harder job. You

have to navigate the new normal with your own interests in mind. How do you have autonomy after this intense period of no autonomy?

The way you act socially is different now compared to life before 2020. Let’s say you were 10 when the pandemic started and now you are 13.

That’s a huge difference in your social world. You didn’t get to move gradually through the transition.

We learned solely how to interact through the digital world for a significant amount of time. Now we’re asking you to navigate in-person social interactions and to get out in

the world independently.

It’s common to feel alone and experience challenges connecting with others. It’s going to take some practice to cope with the anxiety of learning how to emerge from a pandemic while also emerging into your independent self.

One thing our teenage clients talk a lot about is pressure. There was pressure to learn in lockdown, but it was

hard to learn while the stress of the pandemic raged around you. There’s an unrealistic learning curve where you’re supposed to meet expectations aligned with the old system. During the pandemic, everything stopped and the system stayed the same. You’re expected to meet academic standards and pass tests, but we’ve

SEE **TEEN ANXIETY**

| 18



PHOTO/SARAH SCHMIDT

Clinical director and art therapist Adele Stuckey makes art at Alexandria Art Therapy.



PHOTO/SARAH SCHMIDT

The Alexandria Art Therapy office.

TEEN ANXIETY FROM | 17
all changed.

If you feel anxiety about being unprepared, know that while it's hard to catch up and change, it's not impossible. Rather than thinking of the expectations around you as pressure to leap forward, remind yourself that you are in transition. Get clarity on what the expectations are for assignments in school. Ask for sup-

port and extra help when you need it.

When stress builds up in our bodies, it can make us anxious and sick. We can cope by finding community. Talking with others can help you feel less alone. First, identify your support system. Who are people who are safe and whom you trust? This could be friends, family, school staff or a therapist.

We process stress through

movement and joy. Having fun and laughing are crucial to your mental and physical health. Teenagers feel so much pressure to succeed in academics and extracurriculars. Allow yourself time to seek out joy.

One joyful experience is not enough. Seek joy, movement and connection every day to manage stress and anxiety. Anxiety's grip will loosen as this becomes a practice.

Be mindful about social media. We love TikTok because it makes us feel less alone in our struggles. But some TikTok videos try to convince you that you may have one disorder or another. Keep in mind what you're experiencing doesn't have to be labeled.


School start times are not set up for what's actually best for teenagers. We realize telling you to go to bed early is not as easy as it sounds. But get-

ting a full night of sleep will make a difference in your ability to cope with the pressures you face. Sleep deprivation can present as anxiety, depression and a whole host of other problems.

We focus a lot on the damage that the pandemic has done and the trauma you've endured. It is important to remember that while trauma can disrupt your ability to cope, it can also be a launchpad for resilience.

Your generation has endured a huge, hard thing at an early age, but that doesn't make you broken. It makes you tough and well-equipped to manage difficult times ahead. You have clear eyes about the world and that's an asset.

Adele Stuckey is a licensed professional counselor, Board-Certified art therapist and the owner and clinical director of Alexandria Art Therapy. Matthew Brooks is a licensed professional counselor and registered art therapist at Alexandria Art Therapy. Visit alexandriarttherapy.com to learn more.




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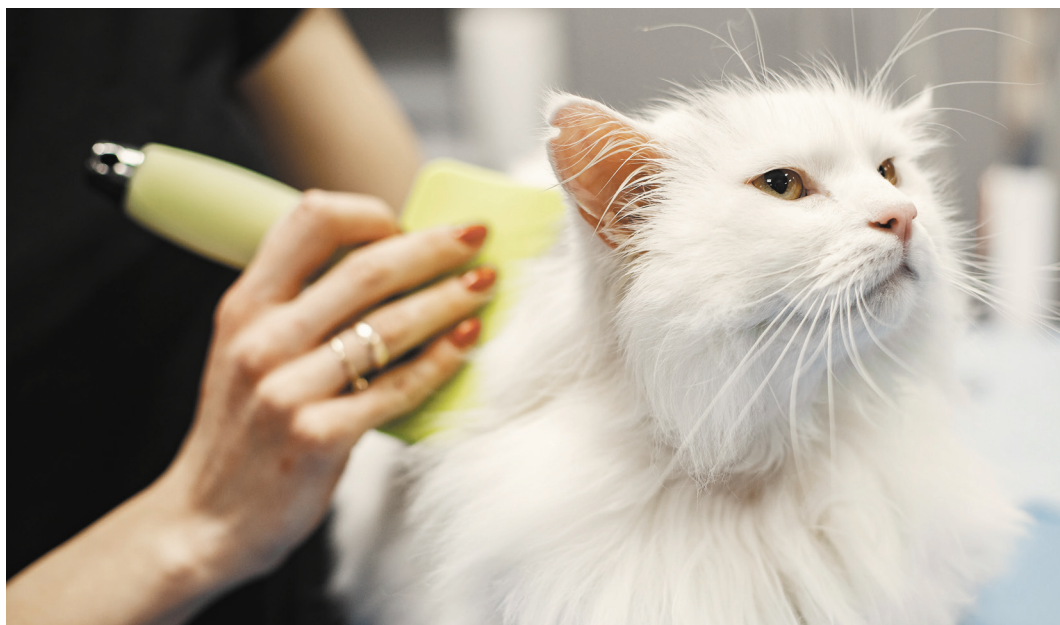




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FILE PHOTO

Properly grooming your pet can prevent pain, sores and infections.

Happy, healthy pet checklist

Follow these steps to ensure the best for your pet

BY ERIN SHACKELFORD

Pets bring us so much joy, companionship, and unconditional love.

According to Forbes, over the past 35 years, the percentage of pet owners in the U.S. has increased. As of 2023, 66% of U.S. households (nearly 8.9 million homes) own a pet.

Dogs are the most popular pet (65.1 million U.S. homes own a dog), followed by cats (46.5 million homes) and finally freshwater fish (11.1 homes).

In honor of all they provide for the many of us who love them, follow this checklist to help you make sure you keep them as happy and healthy as possible.

Identification, please

While no one wants to think their pet will go missing, accidents happen. Properly identified pets ensure a quicker reunion when they're found. This means making sure your pet has a registered microchip, pet ID tag with up-to-date information and is li-

censed according to your city or county's requirements.

Microchip tips

Microchips can be used to quickly contact you if your dog is brought into a shelter or veterinary clinic as a found pet. If you're unsure about the status of your pets' microchip, here are a few things you can do. First, if you don't know if your pet is chipped or what the number is, any veterinarian or shelter can scan your pet for a microchip and provide you with the microchip number. You can use the number to look and see if the microchip is registered (and with what company) using universal pet microchip lookup websites, like the one provided at aaha.org.

Once you determine the registration status, you can login to an existing account or register the microchip for the first time. There are a variety of companies that offer registration. While some do offer paid subscriptions with extra benefits, basic lifetime registration with companies like 24Pet-watch are free.

Remember to keep the login information, so you

can easily update the microchip if you move, change phone numbers or if the pet's ownership changes.

Just a note, not all rescues, shelters, or veterinary offices register your pet's microchip for you at the time of implant, so it's important to double check that the microchip is registered and that it is registered with the correct information. Please note, microchips do not function like GPS devices. They cannot be used to track the location of your pet, however if your pet has a propensity to escape, adding this additional tool can be useful.

Prioritize prevention

To keep your pet healthy and protected from illnesses, diseases and parasites, they must stay current on vaccines and preventions. Visit with your veterinarian about which ones are suitable for your pet.

Mind, body and soul

All pets require certain levels of daily activity, whether that's a game of fetch, playing with a feather wand or a long hike or walk. Senior pets usually do not need the same level of activity as youngsters,

but regardless of age, all pets benefit from mental and physical exercises. Dogs, especially, need physical exercise and are usually entirely dependent on their owner to provide them with it. Besides physical exercise, inexpensive, DIY treat and food puzzles and games can keep pets mentally active and beat the day's doldrums.

Nutritious food

Determining what is best to feed your pet can be confusing. The two biggest things to consider are feeding your pet a nutritionally balanced diet and feeding your pet the right amount based on their size and weight.

Different pets may require different things due to age, allergies, nutritional deficiencies or other reasons. It's best to check with your pet's veterinarian for recommendations. Do your research on any specialized diets you may be considering.

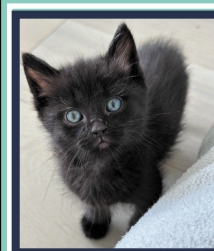
Grooming and training

Pets are as unique and special as the people who adopt them. It's important to remember your pet's individual needs. Grooming is more than making sure they look their best. Improper or inadequate grooming can result in discomfort for your pet and in serious cases, pain, sores and infections. Training is also a key part of making sure your pet lives a happy, healthy and well-balanced life. Training can improve and modify your pets' behavior for a peaceful and harmonious coexistence with other pets and people. Make sure to seek out trainers who use positive reinforcement methods.

For more tips about pet care and ownership, visit alexandriaanimals.org.

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

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HOMES



FILE PHOTO

Brighten your home through color.

Refreshing your routine

Four ways to prep for the summer season

BY BRANDPOINT

Warm weather and blue skies are here, which means it's time to put aside your old habits and refresh your routine. Registered dietitian and nutritionist Dawn Jackson Blatner shares four tips to help you start on the right foot.

Add color

Brightening your home is a fun and easy way to make your space feel refreshed, while also boosting your mood. Colors affect emotions and bright colors in particular can help you to feel happy and energized. Bright, warm colors like orange, coral, pink and yellow can make your com-

munal areas like kitchens, entryways and living rooms feel cheerful.

You don't need to repaint your home to add color to its rooms. Try bringing in fresh flowers, colorful pillows and blankets to brighten up your space and reap the rewards.

Work out while running errands

It can be difficult to fit a workout into your routine when you're busy running errands. However, you can tackle these activities together by doing both simultaneously. If you live in an apartment on an upper level, skip the elevator and take the stairs with your shopping bags for a quick strength

SEE **SUMMER PREP** | 21

HOME OF THE WEEK



PHOTOS/PETER PAPOULAKOS AND PIERS FREEZER

Left: Tremendous views of Alexandria. **Middle:** Dolley Madison-owned mantel. **Right:** 10-foot ceilings and historically restored windows.

Waddy Wood Colonial revival

Perched atop a ridge in the highly sought-after Braddock Heights neighborhood of Alexandria stands a magnificent colonial-revival home. The home was designed by the renowned Kalorama architect Waddy B. Wood in 1918. The property boasts breathtaking views of the surrounding area and sits on a lush 0.55-acre triple lot. Terraced gardens show-

case a stunning collection of hardy, flowering, rare plants and trees. A two-car garage and a second private driveway are easily accessed off Orchard Street. With 10-foot ceilings, eight-foot French doors, carved antique mantels and exquisite moldings and cabinetry, this four-level frame-stucco home exudes classic Washingtonian style.

The home boasts a recently renovated kitchen blending contemporary design and practicality. Five bedrooms, three and a half bathrooms and a fully finished walkout basement offer plenty of space. The home balances modern aesthetic with its historical roots. A Dolley Madison-owned mantel, century-old moldings, original hardwood floors and carefully placed doors en-

hance natural airflow throughout. The light and bright library with built-ins is a historian's dream. The primary suite has a renovated bath and romantic Juliet balcony overlooking Alexandria. Recently updated with character-defining architectural elements, such as historically restored 100-year-old windows and new premium storm windows. This home boasts a multitude of recent updates such as two new HVACs, light fixtures and more.

AT A GLANCE

Address:

1512 Stonewall Road,
Alexandria, 22302

Neighborhood:

Braddock Heights

Price: \$2,395,000

Square feet: 4,012

Bedrooms: 5

Bathrooms: 3.5

Year built: 1918

Contact:

Shaun Murphy
Compass Real Estate
shaun.murphy
@compass.com
(703) 868-5999

CALENDAR

JUNE 3



ARTS AND CRAFTS FAIR
Local and regional artists and crafters display their creations. Free. All are welcome.
Time:
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Location:
1 A Prince St.
Information:
volunteeralexandria.org


WRIGHT GOOD TIME

Celebrate Frank Lloyd Wright. Join to celebrate the 156th birthday of the American architect. Learn about and tour his Pope-Leighey House. Enjoy activities related to his life and work. Stay for a bite of cake. Tickets required.
Time:
11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Location:
9000 Richmond Hwy.
Information:
woodlawnpoppeleighey.org

PRIDE FAIR Drag queen story hour, pride swag, music, food and face painting. Learn

about LGBTQ+ inclusive programs in Alexandria. Free health services and vaccines. All are welcome.
Time:
2 to 5 p.m.
Location:
301 King St.
Information:
alexandriava.gov/LGBTQ

JUNE 4



IT'S ELECTRIC Join this rescheduled Earth Day event. Come look at different electric vehicles. The Office of Climate Action will showcase electric buses, cars, and micro-mobility vehicles, such as e-bikes and scooters. All are welcome. Free.
Time:
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Location:
3210 King St.
Information:
apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=51983

TASTE OF DEL RAY A festival for food lovers. \$25 per adult

and \$10 per child under 12. Ticket holders will have the opportunity to enjoy delicious bites from an assortment of chefs from restaurants in Del Ray.
Time:
1 to 3 p.m.
Location:
2701 Commonwealth Ave.
Information:
visitdelray.com

JUNE 9




REFUGEE DAY There are nearly 32.5 million refugees around the world. Celebrate the tenacity of refugees. Help support their need to heal, learn, work and thrive. We will have soccer games, kite building kits, friendship bracelets, coloring pages, food trunks with Afghan halal options, games and more! Free and welcome to all.
Time:
6 to 8:30 p.m.
Location:
2400 Russell Road
Information:
lssnca.org

JUNE 16 & 17




SUMMER FESTIVAL
Free festival offering live music, local craft beer from Port City Brewing Company, local food, readings by Alexandria poets. All are welcome.
Time:
6 to 9 p.m. (Fri), 1 to 9 p.m. (Sat)
Location:
1 A Prince St.
Information:
PortsideFestival.com

JUNE 17



JUNETEENTH TOUR Join a 90-minute bus ride tour to visit historic sites in Alexandria and learn more about African Americans experiences in Alexandria. Some sites include the Alfred St. Baptist Church, Freedom House and more. Ticket required.
Time:
11 a.m. and 1 p.m.
Location:
902 Wythe St.
Information:
manumissionstours.com

JULY 8



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ALX!
Gather to wish Alexandria a happy 274th birthday. The Alexandria Symphony Orchestra will perform. Fireworks will be displayed at 9:30 p.m. Live music. Free.
Time:
6 to 9:45 p.m.
Location:
100 Madison St.
Information:
alexandriava.gov

JULY 29



BEATS, BITES AND BREWS Enjoy a full day of entertainment. Food, music, shopping and more. Local bands, wineries and breweries will be on site for tastings with purchase of ticket. Admission is free. Pet friendly. Rain or shine.
Time:
11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Location:
300 John Carlyle St.
Information:
thecarlylecommunity.com

SUMMER PREP

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workout. If you happen to live near stores that you frequent, try riding your bike or walk to and from home with your purchases.

Add citrus

Citrus fruits like lemons and oranges are great for cleaning your home while also getting you into a fresh mind-set. A solution of lemon and vinegar can degrease your stovetop or act as an all-purpose spray cleaner. Lemon and coarse salt can also scrub tough, stuck-on food off dishes. Since lemon and lime are also natural bleaching agents, you can use them to clean laundry stains. And the smell of citrus can lift your mood.

Meal prep

Meal prepping is a great way to make sure your fam-



Meal prep ahead of time to ensure a week full of balanced and nutritious meals.

FILE PHOTO

ily is getting the nutrition they need. This will also help you to take on the week's meals with ease. On Sunday, sit down and plan your meals for the week ahead. Shop and prep your menu for the week. This will take the pressure off for the rest of the week and ensure you have a balanced and nutritious meal every time.

Our View

A needed respite

Will we ever get beyond damage caused by the COVID-19 pandemic? It seems that ill effects from the global pandemic continue to swirl around us, sometimes in plain sight, other times invisible until a tragedy occurs and, by closely focusing, we see the connection.

The past couple of years at Alexandria City Public Schools, at least at the high school level, have been a trial. One former substitute teacher told us the Minnie Howard campus was constantly chaotic and like a scene from “Lord of the Flies” – the story of an isolated group of boys who turn to savagery.

ACPS’ problems with teacher retention is surely, at least in part, related to the ongoing safety threats within city schools. We have heard repeated descriptions of disrespect toward teachers and staff. We ran a detailed story about a student-described “Big-ass fight” in which student-made videos clearly show an administrator being knocked to the ground as he was trying to keep the peace. We heard multiple credible reports, which ACPS neither confirmed nor denied, that this administrator was knocked unconscious.

A year ago last week, an ACHS senior, who was weeks from graduating, was tragically killed in a melee at Bradlee Shopping Center just outside the McDonald’s – during school hours when ACPS rules state students are not supposed to be off campus.

All of this behavior is obviously not being caused by repercussions from COVID-19, as problems with learning and behavior at then T.C. Williams High School, now Alexandria City High School, have existed for years.

We have long thought that one contributing factor is simply the size of ACHS, and we know some school board members share this concern. ACHS is just too large, at 4,500 students and growing. Simply put, Alexandria needs multiple high schools, not one mega facility – even if it’s on two campuses.

Neighboring Arlington County, where universally respected ACHS Principal Peter Balas has accepted a job to lead Wakefield High School, is an example of high schools well done. While Arlington is also dealing with problems with fentanyl – which is a growing danger as it flows across our southern border – the learning environment there seems vastly better than at ACHS.

Notably, all three Arlington high schools – Wakefield, Washington-Liberty and Yorktown – each have just over 2,500 students per school, a much more manageable number than ACPS.

When the under-construction Minnie Howard campus of ACHS is finished, and both campuses house all four grades rather than congregating all ninth graders at Minnie Howard, the situation should improve. But another, separate high school at a different location, bringing our main high school campuses to three like Arlington, is what we think is needed – and should be a focal point of long-range ACPS planning.

We hope that newly confirmed ACHS superintendent Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D. spends the summer working with school board members and talking with parents about ways to tackle these enormous problems.

The first priority should be remediating the gaps in both academic achievement and social behavior that widened during Alexandria’s lengthy school shutdown. And the solutions should not be rooted in ideology, but in learning process and behavioral coaching designed to close the gap by lifting all students up.

We can’t undo the mistakes that were made during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as widespread shutdowns of in-person learning in many – but notably not all – U.S. school districts. These shutdowns left our students, particularly those from at-risk home environments, further behind both socially and academically. Those decisions were as anti-equitable as anything that’s been done in this city in years.

We continue to reap the bitter harvest of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the bad decisions made in response. The advent of summer brings a much-needed respite. But there is much work to be done.

Opinion

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

- Thomas Jefferson

Photo of the Week



PHOTO/DICK CHAIT

Wedding preparations in the gazebo at historic Carlyle House.

Your Views

Enjoy Alexandria’s roses

To the editor:

Recently my husband and I attended a musical performance based on the “Alexandria Suite,” a setting of poems about Old Town by Jean Elliot. The music was commissioned by the Alexandria Choral Society in 1987. At this time of year, and for some reason they seem particularly bountiful, I’d like to share her poem, ‘Assault of Roses:’

Assault of Roses

“This city is beset by roses:
roses beleaguer streets stretching
down to the river;
they clamber over walls
clutching at ancient brick

with thorny tentacles,
stratching palings
from scarred picket fences.
Roses barricade mouldering mansions,
reaching to the dormers
exploding torpedoes of color
into every crevice.
Smothered, submerged,
strangled and snarled with roses,
Old Town grows fragrant,
fragrant as attars
steeped in Damascus
for the delight of rich califs.”

Please enjoy and take the time to stop
and smell Old Town’s roses.

-Ivy Whitlatch,
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.

My View | Sandy Modell

Duke Street in Motion needs re-evaluation

BY SANDY MODELL

Alexandria is fortunate to have an excellent DASH bus system. However, while DASH has experienced phenomenal ridership since its inception in 1984, reaching more than four million annual trips in 2017, it has not reduced traffic congestion as regional population growth has spiraled. The reality is that most people still need their cars.



**SANDY
MODELL**

The Duke Street transitway project has been discussed since 2008, and current justification for this project comes from several outdated studies. A recent City of Alexandria staff memo states that since adopting the 2012 Feasibility Study, “transportation priorities, land use plans, and (more recently) a major change in home-to-work travel patterns have created the need to re-evaluate the transit plans for the Duke Street Corridor.”

Although city staff have conducted a series of community meetings and public outreach, a fundamental re-evaluation of this proposed project has not happened.

Metro rail, Metrobus and DASH started experiencing declining ridership even before the pandemic. Since COVID-19, many people are still working from home. Although DASH has implemented free fares and a new transit network, increasing service by 25% between FY18 and FY22, ridership decreased by 27% during the same period. In FY22, average weekday trips on DASH Route 30 – Duke Street – totaled 1,822, a 30% decrease from its height in FY17.

Although Route 30 is seeing some impressive ridership gains in the past few months, April showing 2,800 trips, not all buses are operating with automated

passenger counters and data is lacking on where riders get on or off the bus. Passenger origin destination studies and also knowing where the car traffic is traveling to and from are critical pieces of data. Knowing who’s riding and when – and where they’re going – are pretty important facts to know before embarking on such a costly and disruptive project.

This \$100 million capital project would significantly impact travel on the corridor both during and after construction. Changes proposed include eliminating unprotected left turns and forcing cars to make U-turns at protected left turn intersections, often in complete gridlock. This change would be a recipe for disaster, as it would impact access to businesses along the corridor and make these already burdened intersections even more unsafe.

The elephant in the room is the congestion, gridlock and unsafe driving resulting from the Telegraph Road interchange back-ups. The busway design purposely avoids the Duke Street/Telegraph Road area by moving the transitway to center running lanes at that location. Unfortunately, going from curb lanes to center to mixed traffic defeats the idea of an efficient and effective service.

There are an average of 30,000 to 40,000 daily car trips on Duke Street. A survey conducted by the city about 10 years ago estimated that 60% of the vehicles traveling the corridor are non-city residents. These are not potential transit riders going to the King Street Metro or Old Town.

The city is planning and implementing lower-cost transportation initiatives separately from

SEE **MODELL**

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About Alexandria
with Mark Eaton

A correction and a plea for more Harry Burkes

BY MARK EATON

Reader responses are part of the fun of writing this column.

Communications from readers can be delightfully diverse. A typical example of a comment from a reader would be, “Your last column confirms that you are clearly [a craven apologist for] [a chronically clueless critic of] the [wonderful] [terrible] people managing the [city government] [Alexandria City Public Schools]. I am writing to set you straight so you will not bungle this issue in the future.”

Last week, a story I wrote ran in the Times on what it was like to use, and enjoy, the now-gone Johnson Memorial Pool, the swimming pool opened in Alexandria in 1953 for use by African Americans. The story tried to make the point that the pool, though an artifact of segregation, was also a treasured place of enjoyment for many people.

The story asserted that ACPS’ Harry Burke Award for excellence in special education was named after Harry Burke, a community activist and the widely-esteemed aquatics director of the Johnson Memorial Pool, a fact I had confirmed in an interview with a knowledgeable source.

Late last week a reader thoughtfully wrote me as follows:

“The Harry Burke award is named for former ACPS Director of [Special Education] Harry Burke, not for the Harry Burke in this piece. The ACPS Harry served from the late 1970s until the early 1990s. I had the privilege of knowing both Harrys – working with one and getting to know the other through [a colleague at work.]”

This reader, and ACPS documents, provide information that contradicts my source and appears accurate. Accordingly, a correction is in order.

Reporters and editors sometimes shy away from corrections, or issue them reluctantly or in terse language buried in the back pages. **[Publisher’s Note: The Alexandria Times’ policy is to always run corrections on page 3 of the next issue after learning of a mistake.]**

I have a different view, which I tried to pass on to students in my journalism classes during my time teaching at what was then

T.C. Williams High School: Corrections are a part of journalism.

A correction affirms that the journalist’s duty to seek to provide the best available

version of the truth does not end with the publication of a story. Moreover, corrections provide a psychological or moral benefit: a correction acknowledges the inevitability and permanence of human imperfection.

Alexandria is fortunate to have had both Harry Burkes as long-time community contributors. Their work in the community lives on in the memories of

many and in continuing recognitions and memorials such as ACPS’ Harry Burke award or Alexandria’s African American Hall of Fame.

Alexandria has some important public amenities named after citizens who did significant work on important public concerns very different from those addressed by the Harry Burkes. Two examples of this are the Richard B. Leibach Bridge and Ben Brenman Park, both in the West End. Richard Leibach and Ben Brenman were stalwart and sustained contributors to land use planning efforts aimed at making Alexandria a better place to live.

The city’s website says, “Colonel Brenman contributed his time and talent as an Alexandria community activist for over 30 years. His involvement in scores of projects, including acquisition of this parkland, has enriched the quality of life for citizens of Alexandria.” The same is true of the Harry Burkes – they enriched our quality of life and deserve to be remembered.

We end where we started, by soliciting reader reactions. How should Alexandria remember or memorialize the substantial contributions to the common good made by former Mayor Kerry J. Donley, who died last summer?

Your suggestions are appreciated.

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 subscriptions to his newsletter are available free at <https://aboutalexandria.substack.com/>.



**MARK
EATON**



Denise Dunbar

Publisher & Executive Editor
ddunbar@alextimes.com

Leslie Golden

Editor
lgolden@alextimes.com

Margaret Stevens

Sales Director
mstevens@alextimes.com

Brianne McConnell

Reporter
bmccConnell@alextimes.com

Kaitlin Murphy

Reporter
kmurphy@alextimes.com

Amy Will

Reporter
awill@alextimes.com

ADVERTISING

Margaret Stevens
mstevens@alextimes.com

Marty DeVine
mdevine@alextimes.com

Patrice V. Culligan
pculligan@alextimes.com

Tina Franco

Office Administrator
tfranco@alextimes.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Jessica Kim
graphics@alextimes.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Kerry Boyd Anderson
Olivia Anderson
Kim Davis
Andrew Dunbar
Thompson Eskew
Aaron Kopp
Hannah Docter-Loeb
Mark Eaton
Kim Gilliam
Mae Hunt
Kim Jackson
Louise Krafft
Jim McGrath
Gwen Peace
Dr. Vivek Sinha
Dr. David Weintritt

ALEXTIMES LLC

Denise Dunbar
Managing Partner

The Ariail family
Suzanne Brock
William Dunbar

HOW TO REACH US

1199 N Fairfax St. Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-739-0001 (main)
www.alextimes.com

The Return of D-Day to Alexandria

On June 4, Alexandria commemorates D-Day for the 13th annual time. This year's commemoration features swing dancers, a 1940s Jazz Band, the U.S. Army Fife and Drum Corps, the Alexandria Citizens Band and a short formal ceremony with the mayor and city officials.

Alexandria's modern-day memorialization of June 6, 1944 events, is tied to its Sister City relationship with Caen, France, the capital of Normandy. Since 1991, Alexandria and Caen have exchanged cultural and educational delegations, including student exchanges, intern exchanges, lecture series and annual D-Day commemorative events.

Caen's history predates the invasion of Normandy, of course. Its limestone, Pierre de Caen, is world-renowned as a carving material. The limestone is featured in Westminster Cathedral. Caen's ties to England strengthened when its ruler William of Norman invaded England in 1066 and took the name William the Conqueror. In 1593, Henry IV converted to Catholicism in a ceremony at the Church of St. Pierre, ending the French religious wars.

More than 160,000 Allied troops invaded Normandy, France on June 6, 1944, giving them a significant foothold in continental Europe. The Battle for Caen spanned from June 6

to August 6, 1944. The battle destroyed 80% of Caen and the city took 18 years to rebuild.

Today, the capital of Normandy has an approximate population of 100,000 residents within the city limits and around another 50,000 in the surrounding areas. With a student body of 28,000, the Université de Caen Normandie plays a prominent role in Caen's culture.

This year's commemoration includes a lecture by historian Kim Bernard Holien, Ph.D., today, which is sold out. Holien's lecture, titled "Women Spies of D-Day," highlights the contribution of Allied women to Allied intelligence in piercing the At-

lantic Wall maintained by National Socialist forces. The Alexandria History Museum at the Lyceum will host Holien's lecture.

The commemoration continues June 4 at Market Square from 1 to 4 p.m. The aforementioned swing dancers, jazz band, U.S. Army Fife and Drum Corps, the Alexandria Citizens Band, and World War II reenactors highlight the free program. The City of Alexandria invites you to commemorate this momentous event in our Sister City's history.

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

MODELL

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this project that could address the daily Duke Street traffic nightmare and help DASH operate more reliably. The goals should improve pedestrian and vehicle safety without cutting off Duke Street businesses and reducing travel lanes.

I believe the following should be implemented and evaluated before the planning, design and construction of such a significant transit project as Duke Street in Motion:

1) Construct a new Tele-

graph Road access point.

2) Implement Adaptive Traffic Signal Control and modernize the city's traffic controllers to improve signal timing and traffic flow, which can move cars and buses more effectively and efficiently along the corridor.

3) Implement Transit Signal Priority on all DASH buses, already slated for completion by 2025. Transit signal priority allows for extended green or shortened red time to improve the on-time performance of buses and increase

service reliability.

4) Implement a "Don't Block the Box" initiative at Duke and Quaker and Duke and Roth to reduce the gridlock at these intersections. The city could accomplish this quickly and at the cost of some paint, signs and an information campaign.

The above-referenced projects would reduce congestion, increase safety and gain efficiencies while improving our quality of life, air quality and the long-term success of businesses in the corridor.

In time, these changes would provide new conditions by which the transitway and other initiatives could be analyzed to further enhance mobility for all modes of travel on Duke Street.

The writer is owner of the Wholistic Hound Academy and served as CEO of the DASH bus system for 28 years. She helped start the system in 1984, serving as the lead transit expert for the City of Alexandria for more than 33 years.

Weekly Poll

Last Week

Did you attend any of the events in Alexandria this weekend?

62% I don't like events.

13% The Festival of Speed & Style.

10% The Alexandria Old Town Art Festival at John Carlyle Square.

8% The Potomac Yard Metro ribbon cutting.

8% More than one.

This Week

Take the poll at alextimes.com

Have you or someone you know experienced mental health issues following the pandemic?

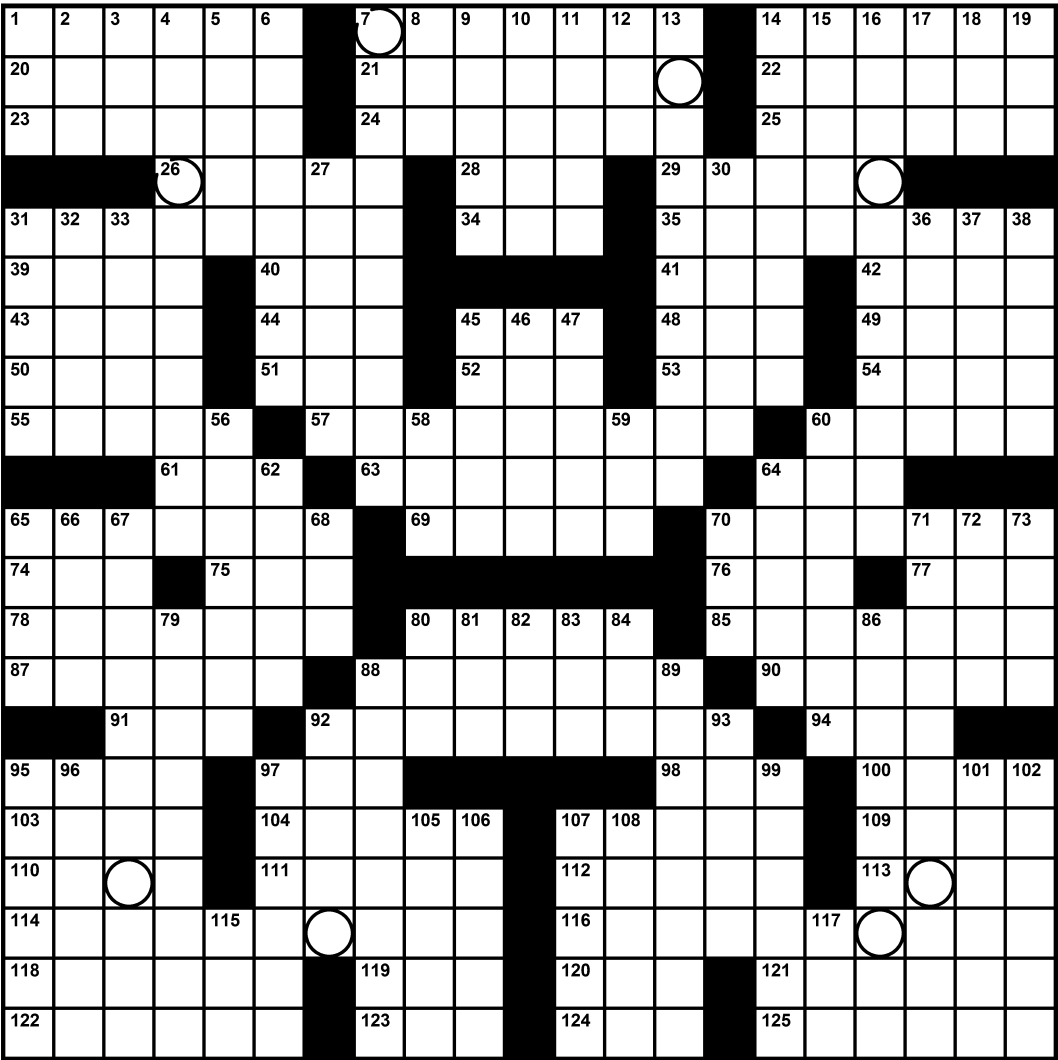
A) Yes, and I sought professional help.

B) Yes, but I cope privately.

C) No, I feel the same as before.

D) What, me worry?

Weekly Words



DEATH NOTICES

- SAMUEL AZIZ** (78), of Alexandria, May 25, 2023
- ADRIAN CLARY** (98), of Alexandria, May 27, 2023
- HERBERT COLEND**A (94), of Alexandria, May 24, 2023
- WALTER DENHAM, JR.** (89), of Alexandria, May 17, 2023
- KEITH MCCOUBREY** (68), of Alexandria, May 17, 2023
- EDWIN SHERIDAN III** (87), of Alexandria, May 10, 2023

Solutions from last week



COIN FLIPS by Alex Eaton-Salners, edited by Jeff Chen

- ACROSS**
- 1 Bolts and hitches?
7 Gives a hard time
14 Dine-in drink freebie
20 Porto d'Italia
21 Words of grave importance?
22 Sheep
23 Dirt, so to speak
24 Michelle's successor
25 Didn't hit
26 "Leap onto Grandma's lap!"
28 Hobbit hunter
29 Reluctant
31 ...
34 Canonized Mlle.
35 "The Man Who Knew Too Much" actress
39 Key point?
40 Hammarskjold of the UN
41 Average fellow
42 Capable of performing
43 Alum
44 Four quarters
45 Ripken of the Orioles
48 Bobby of the Bruins
49 Exam for an aspiring doc
50 "___, Brute?"
51 Dreidel letter
52 Hullabaloo
53 Hawaii's Mauna ___
54 Hawaiian dish of sliced-up fish
55 Guide lines?
- 57 Rubbed some elbows
60 Ceremonies
61 Metric measure of speed (Abbr.)
63 Rich, materialistic workers, colloquially
64 "I'm so good at sleeping, I can do it with my eyes closed," say
65 Flowers also known as violets
69 First name in cosmetics
70 Reggae style combining vocals with a DJ's patter
74 Bird on Australia's coat of arms
75 Codon carrier (Abbr.)
76 Hobbit helper
77 Seventh Greek letter
78 Writing in the sky?
80 Peons on a manor
85 "Are we there yet?" setting
87 ___ value
88 Banned boxing move
90 Gorges
91 Driver's licenses, say (Abbr.)
92 "You some kind of smart aleck?"
94 Squeeze (out)
95 Trigonometric function
97 Small songbird
98 "Don't ___ stranger!"
100 Bronte heroine
103 Teeth on a gear
104 Apartment building divisions
107 Matter
- 109 Between continents, perhaps
110 Pot starter
111 Bob of "Fuller House"
112 Carne ___
113 "On the double!"
114 Proudful look?
116 Stations for the Hogwarts Express?
118 Maiden fair
119 Grp. with many conveyor belts
120 D-Day commander's nickname
121 One way Alaska ranks first among U.S. states
122 [Achoo!]
123 Word screamed while jumping
124 ___ Vegas
125 Nobel-winning Einstein
- DOWN**
- 1 Liberia's official lang.
2 Mekong River native
3 Photo ___
4 More extravagant NBA jams?
5 Author T.S.
6 Savored, as wine
7 Pot shop?
8 Chimpanzee, for one
9 Farm buildings
10 End's opposite
11 Jousting's weapon
12 Front for center?
13 "Q: How is a chicken coop like finely stratified sedimentary rock? A: They're both full of layers," and the like?
- 14 Caesar's time
15 "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" musical
16 Problem in an undersized aquarium?
17 Partners of outs
18 Director Ang
19 Acid, initially
27 Seventh planet
30 Smelly
31 Groundskeeper's tool
32 Decadent cake
33 Central American animal with a ringed tail
36 Disney's ___ Center
37 Tent securer
38 Some pledge drive rewards
45 David and the like
46 Take in, as a rescue dog
47 Sarge's superior
56 Corkscrew shapes
58 ___ and cry
59 Board game reviewer Garcia of "The Dice Tower"
60 Frolic without limits
62 Three-time Olympic gold-medal-winning skater Sonja
64 Rice ___
65 Fleshy fruit
66 French female friend
67 Unabridged Nightingale
- 68 Mule working the Erie Canal, in song
70 "Hang on a ___!"
71 British dairy cattle seller?
72 Busy as a bee
73 High-pitched barks
79 Sounded reasonable
80
81 Fleecy mama
82 Notorious ___ (nickname of a late Supreme Court justice)
83 Seasonal scourge
84 Edamame essence
86 Try
88 Go a-courtin'?
89 Surfing spots?
92 ___ all costs
93 Swiss miss
95 Burns
96 Ithaca's sea
97 Little skirmish
99 Thorny tree
101 Grim ___
102 Really rankles
105 Curt
106 Fajita option
107 Language whence "catamaran" and "curry"
108 Japanese 1970 World Expo city
115 Remarks, slangily
117 NBC hit skit show

LEGAL NOTICE



The following request has 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.

121 East Maple Street
Administrative Special Use
Permit request for a New Use for
a Child Care Home; zoned: R-2-5/
Residential Single- and Two-Family
Applicant: Alexia Acho
Planner: Mavis Stanfield –
mavis.stanfield@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 **June 22, 2023**.

PUBLIC NOTICE



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

The public hearing will be held on **June 1, 2023, 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.

The deadline to sign up or submit comments is noon on May 31, 2023.
<https://acpsweb.wufoo.com/forms/w1v82d0109g4g30/>

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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RETAIL LICENSE APPLICATION -- PART 2 (POSTING AND PUBLISHING)

PUBLISHING NOTICE

Please publish the following item in the **legal notice** section of your newspaper.

[Full Name(s) of Owner(s):] National Beer & Wine Llc

If **general partnership**, enter partners' names or name of partnership. If **LP, LLP, LLC, or corporation**, enter name as recorded with the State Corporation Commission. If **association or tax-exempt private club**, enter name. Only if a **sole proprietor**, enter first, middle, and last name.

Trading as: Department of Beer and Wine
(Trade Name)

2724 Richmond HWY, BLDG
(Exact street address of where business will trade)

Alexandria
(City/Town)

Alexandria City	Virginia	22301
(County)	(State)	(Zip + 4)

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL AUTHORITY (ABC)


for a ABC Internet Retailer Application - Wine, Beer, Consumed
(Type(s) of license(s) applied for)

license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

(Name and Title of Owner/Partner/Officer authorizing advertisement)

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

Objections should be registered within 30 days at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.



**Virginia Alcoholic Beverage
Control Authority**

www.abc.virginia.gov/licenses | 804.213.4400 | 7450 Freight Way • Mechanicsville VA 23116 | PO Box 3250 • Mechanicsville VA 23116

PART 2: POSTING AND PUBLISHING

PUBLISHING NOTICE

Please publish the following item in the **legal notice section** of your newspaper. Please refer to the instructions provided on page 16.

Full name(s) of owner(s): FOSSAL INC
If general partnership, enter partners' names or name of partnership. If LP, LLC, LLP or corporation, enter name as recorded with the State Corporation Commission. If association or tax-exempt private club, enter name. Only if a sole proprietor, enter first, middle and last name.

Trading as: EL CUSCATLECO RESTAURANT
(trade name)

3819 Mount Vernon Avenue
(Location where business will trade)

Alexandria
(city/town)

Virginia, 22305
(county) (state) (zip + 4)

The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL (ABC) AUTHORITY for a Beer & Wine, and Mixed Beverage on premises **license**
(type/s) of license/s applied for

to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages.

Oscar O. Salinas, Director/President
(name and title of owner/partner/officer authorizing advertisement)

NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or (800) 552-3200.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date received: _____	Referred to: _____	Application fee: _____
Postmarked date: _____	Date referred: _____	License fee: _____
Receipt no.: _____	Region: _____	CBC fee: _____
License no.: _____	Territory no.: _____	Total: _____

(Rev. 03/2023) This is an official state document and all information contained or submitted therein is public information.
Refer to Privacy Statement on the bottom of page two regarding personal information.

Part 2: Retail License Application | 23

Classifieds

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SERVICES

DIVORCE-Uncontested, \$475+\$86 court cost. **WILLS**-\$295.00. No court appearance. Estimated completion time twenty-one days. Hilton Oliver, Attorney (Facebook). 757-490-0126. Se Habla Espanol. BBB Member. <https://hiltonoliverattorneyva.com>.

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PROBATE CITATION File No. 2023-28

SURROGATE'S COURT – FULTON COUNTY
Supplemental CITATION
THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK,
By the Grace of God Free and Independent

TO Robert Harding, address unknown
John Harding, residing at 27 S. Williams Street, Johnstown, NY 12095
Jamie Harding, address unknown

NYS Attorney General, on behalf of distributees whose whereabouts are unknown
Jeremiah Wood, Esq., as Guardian Ad Litem on behalf of distributees whose whereabouts are unknown.

A petition having been duly filed by Michael Rose, who is domiciled at 47A Brampton Lane, Ganevoort, NY 12831

YOU ARE HEREBY CITED TO SHOW CAUSE before the Surrogate's Court, Fulton County, at Johnstown, New York, on July 11, 2023 at 9:30 o'clock in the fore noon of that day, why a decree should not be made in the estate of Ann H. Adore lately domiciled at 9 Woodside Avenue, Gloversville, NY 12078 admitting to probate a Will dated August 1, 2019 (a Codicil dated (a Codicil dated a copy of which is attached, as the Will of Ann H. Adore deceased, relating to real and personal property, and directing that

☐ X Letters Testamentary issue to Michael Rose
☐ Letters of Trusteeship issue to
☐ Letters of Administration c.t.a. issue to.

(State any further relief requested)

Dated, Attested and Sealed May 23, 2023 Hon. Chad W. Brown Surrogate
Christopher M. Stanyon, Esq. 518-773-8225 Chief Clerk
Attorney for Petitioner 147-149 N. Main Street, Gloversville, NY 12078 Telephone Number
Address of Attorney

[NOTE: This citation is served upon you as required by law. You are not required to appear. If you fail to appear it will be assumed you do not object to the relief requested. You have a right to have an attorney appear for you.]
P-5 (10/96)

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