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 championship 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.

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, re-consider 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
**HISTORIC OLD TOWN | HUNTER MEWS | $4,700,000**

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. 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—this home 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 & center island. The light-filled breakfast/family room has a 20ft 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 2 rooms and overlooks the private gardens. Finished lower level, family room, 6 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, 3 fireplaces, ELEVATOR and attached garage.

**BUSH HILL WOODS | $789,900**

Fabulous home tucked away in this quiet neighborhood. Situated on a beautiful .26 acre landscaped lot with patio, potting shed and carport. Light filled 4 bedroom brick home has 2.5 bath home & 2 fireplaces. Enjoy BBQ’s, yard games, outdoor activities and four legged friends.

**5319 NEVILLE COURT**

Fabulous home tucked away in this quiet neighborhood. Situated on a beautiful .26 acre landscaped lot with patio, potting shed and carport. Light filled 4 bedroom brick home has 2.5 bath home & 2 fireplaces. Enjoy BBQ’s, yard games, outdoor activities and four legged friends.

**PARKFAIRFAX | $330,000**

Updated sunny 1 bedroom end unit with amazing views overlooking green space. Just unpack your swimsuit and enjoy summer by the pool, play tennis and walk to shops and restaurants in Fairlington & Shirlington! Many updates include: updated kitchen & bathroom, ceiling fans, crown moldings, wood floors and replacement windows.

**3326 VALLEY DRIVE**

Updated sunny 1 bedroom end unit with amazing views overlooking green space. Just unpack your swimsuit and enjoy summer by the pool, play tennis and walk to shops and restaurants in Fairlington & Shirlington! Many updates include: updated kitchen & bathroom, ceiling fans, crown moldings, wood floors and replacement windows.

---

Christine Garner (703) 587-4855
It’s not just my business, it’s my neighborhood.
For additional information & photos, go to: www.ChristineGarner.com
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@alexandriava.gov.

-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

-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.

-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.
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. 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.”

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.”

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.
Nestled in the beautifully landscaped and highly sought-after neighborhood of Potomac Greens, located between Old Town, Del Ray, and Potomac Yards, this expansive brick townhome offers spacious living in a super convenient location. With four living areas including a living room, family, recreation room, and home office in addition to four bedrooms, there is a place to accommodate your every need – home office, home gym, or playroom. Chefs will enjoy the large open kitchen. Car enthusiasts will appreciate the 2-car garage and plenty of off street parking. Centrally located on Rose Square, this home overlooks the lawn, the site of summer neighborhood celebrations including a Family Fair, Rosé & Ice Cream, and a Late Summer Soirée. Neighborhood amenities include a 7-minute walk to Metro and a 17-minute walk to Potomac Yards Center, an outdoor pool, fitness center, party room, nature trail, and playground. Close to Reagan National Airport, the Pentagon, National Landing, and Washington, DC. Visit BestofPotomacGreens.com to learn more.
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-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,
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’ draft chances.

“Some of our players have excelled recently once they left Alexandria. Blake Burkhalert 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.

jfmcgrath65@gmail.com
GOODWIN, GREAT COMMUNITY

Take advantage of our limited-time spring move-in specials.

Located in Alexandria’s West End, The View Alexandria by Goodwin Living™ has stunning views of D.C. This latest senior living community from Goodwin Living offers a rental contract, a vibrant lifestyle and a wide range of floor plans.

Contact us today to discuss our move-in specials
703.293.5326 | TheViewAlexandria.org
5000 Fairbanks Ave., Alexandria, VA 22311 (conveniently off Beauregard St.)
John could pursue his MBA, Camp moved to Virginia so married within a year. They were on a blind date. They were Camp met her husband, John, called Prescriptives. ics and traveled around the joined Estée Lauder cosmetics and merchandising, in New York City. She worked on 7th Avenue for Lilly Pulitzer, then 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 Angeles, 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 offered advice for everything from balancing work and family to building a new house and finding an effective exercise routine.

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

-kerry@kbaconsulting.com
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 audience 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 performances, 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.


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.
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 subject 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 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.
KICK OFF YOUR SPRING PROJECT
with A Home Equity Loan or Line of Credit from USSFCU

Apply for a Home Equity Loan or Line of Credit between April 1 – June 30, 2023

...
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 “unattainable.” 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.

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.
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.

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 Preschool, we believe that play is the work of children. Through imagining, building, pretending, 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.

This is advertorial content

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
**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*

---

**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*

---

**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*

---

**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*
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

Advice from a therapist

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

SEE TEEN ANXIETY
TEEN ANXIETY

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 support 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 getting 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.
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 licensed 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 pet’s 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 alexandria animals.org.

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

Cat and Kitten Foster Parents Needed!

Kitten season is in full swing!
Experience not necessary if you’re willing to learn.

meow@tailshigh.org
www.tailshigh.org
www.facebook.com/tailshigh

SPECIAL KITTIES ISO SPECIAL FOREVER FAMILY

After a rough start in life, BFFs Milis and Robinson hope to find the perfect home together.

A Cat Welfare Organization
contact@kingstreetcats.org
King Street Cats
703-231-7199
25 S. Dove Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Accredited by the Alliance of Accredited Cat Facilities
kingstreetcats.org
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 communal 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

Refresh your routine
SEE SUMMER PREP | 21

Brighten your home through color.

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 showcase 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 aesthetics with its historical roots. A Dolley Madison-owned mantel, century-old moldings, original hardwood floors and carefully placed doors enhance 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.

HOMES ADVERTORIAL

HOMES OF THE WEEK

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

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

AT A GLANCE

See Summer Prep | 21
**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:**
woodlawnpopeleighy.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:**
issnca.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 to visit historic sites 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:**
manumissiontours.com

**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:**
the Carlylecommunity.com

**SUMMER PREP**

**FROM | 20**

**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 mindset. 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 family 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

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 beleguer streets stretching
down to the river;
they clamber over walls
clutching at ancient brick

with thorny tentacles,
stretching 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.

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.

Metrorail, 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 50 – Duke Street – totaled 1,822, a 50% 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 lane 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**

---

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 Burkses 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 Burkses. 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 Burkses – 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/*
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 piercings the Atlantic 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.
Weekly Words

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 Mile.
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 flowers also known as violets
69 First name in cosmetics
70 Reggae style combining vocals with a DJ's patter
71 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
81 Jouster's weapon
82 Front for center?
83 "Q: How is a chicken coop like finely stratified sedimentary rock? A: They're both full of layers," and the like?
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 Throrny tree
101 Grim ___
102 Really rankles
105 Curt
106 Fajita option
107 Language whence "catamaran" and "curry"
108 Japanese 1970 World Expo city
109 Between continents, perhaps
110 Pot starter
111 Bob of "Fuller House"
112 Carne ___
113 "On the double!"
114 Prideful look?
115 Stations for the Hogwarts Express?
116 Seventh planet
117 Partnership of outs
118 Maiden fair
119 Gp. with many conveyor belts
120 Decadent cake
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 One way Alaska ranks first among U.S. states
12 One of the "Dick Tower"
14 Caesar's time
15 "Don't Cry for Me Argentina" musical
16 Problem in an undersized aquarium?
17 Groundskeeper's tool
18 Director Ang
19 Acid, initially
20 End's opposite
21 Serif?
22 Busy as a bee
23 High-pitched barks
24 Aromas?
25 Some pledge drive rewards
26 "Are we there yet?"
27 ___ Vegas
28 Top of a trio
29 ___ and cry
30 ___ and ___ (nickname of a late Supreme Court justice)
31 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
32 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
33 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
34 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
35 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
36 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
37 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
38 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
39 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
40 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
41 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
42 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
43 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
44 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
45 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
46 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
47 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
48 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
49 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
50 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
51 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
52 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
53 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
54 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
55 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
56 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
57 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
58 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
59 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
60 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
61 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
62 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
63 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
64 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
65 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
66 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
67 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
68 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
69 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
70 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
71 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
72 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
73 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
74 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
75 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
76 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
77 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
78 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
79 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
80 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
81 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
82 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
83 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
84 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
85 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
86 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
87 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
88 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
89 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
90 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
91 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
92 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
93 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
94 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
95 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
96 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
97 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
98 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
99 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
100 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
101 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
102 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
103 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
104 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
105 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
106 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
107 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
108 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
109 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
110 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
111 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.S. salesperson)
112 ___ and ___ (name of a top U.DEATH NOTICES

SAMUEL AZIZ (78), of Alexandria, May 25, 2023

ADRIAN CLARY (98), of Alexandria, May 27, 2023

HERBERT COLENDA (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

SAMUEL AZIZ
(78), of Alexandria, May 25, 2023

ADRIAN CLARY
(98), of Alexandria, May 27, 2023

HERBERT COLENDA
(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
ALEXANDRIA PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT
NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

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.

Special Use Permit #2023-00046
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 Relief (ESSER) III Fund Plan.

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.

Use the link below to sign up to speak or submit written comments.

The deadline to sign up or submit comments is noon on May 31, 2023. https://acpsweb.wufoo.com/forms/wy82d0109gkg30/

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

CUSTOM STORAGE SHEDS

Keith’s custom built storage sheds built to your specifications. No permit required anything under 12 feet tall. Rough to finish built to your specifications. 15 x 20 10 ft. tall. Rough to finish built to your specifications. No permit required.

POTOMAC WINDOW CLEANING

Residential window cleaning inside and out. Serving the local area for 35 years. Family owned and operated. (703) 356-4459. Licensed, Bonded, Insured. The Montgomery family thanks you for your interest.

CHEVY CHASE FLOOR WAXING SERVICE

Wood floor polishing, buffing, waxing, old floor specialists

Generac Standby Generators provide backup power during utility power outages, so your home and family stay safe and comfortable. Prepare now. Free 7-year extended warranty ($695 value!). Request a free quote today!

Safe Step, North America’s #1
Classifieds

TODAY'S CLASSIFIEDS

FREE QUOTE
CALL NOW BEFORE THE
NEXT POWER OUTAGE
(844) 947-1479

FREE 7-Year Extended Warranty*

PORTABLE OXYGEN CONCENTRATOR
MAY BE COVERED BY MEDICARE!

LIMITED TIME OFFER!
60% OFF ON YOUR INSTALLATION
TAKE AN ADDITIONAL
10% OFF

FREE ESTIMATE
Expires 6/30/2023

WALK-IN TUB
COMPREHENSIVE LIFETIME WARRANTY.
TOP-OF-THE-LINE INSTALLATION AND SERVICE.
NOW FEATURING OUR FREE SHOWER PACKAGE AND $1600 OFF FOR A LIMITED TIME! CALL TODAY! FINANCING AVAILABLE. CALL SAFE STEP 1-877-591-9950

THE BATHROOM OF YOUR DREAMS FOR AS LITTLE AS $49/MONTH! BCI BATH & SHOWER. MANY OPTIONS AVAILABLE. QUALITY MATERIALS & PROFESSIONAL INSTALLATION. SENIOR & MILITARY DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE. LIMITED TIME OFFER - FREE VIRTUAL IN-HOME CONSULTATION NOW AND SAVE 15%!
CALL TODAY! 1-844-945-1631

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.

PORTABLE OXYGEN CONCENTRATOR MAY BE COVERED BY MEDICARE! RECLAIM INDEPENDENCE AND MOBILITY WITH THE COMPACT DESIGN AND LONG-LASTING BATTERY OF INOGEN ONE. FREE INFORMATION KIT! CALL 888-608-4974

FREE HIGH SPEED INTERNET FOR THOSE THAT QUALIFY. GOVERNMENT PROGRAM FOR RECIPIENTS OF SELECT PROGRAMS INCLUDING MEDICAID, SNAP, HOUSING ASSISTANCE, WIC, VETERANS PENSION, SURVIVOR BENEFITS, LIFELINE, TRIBAL. 15 GB INTERNET SERVICE. BONUS OFFER: ANDROID TABLET FREE WITH ONE-TIME $20 COPAY. FREE SHIPPING & HANDLING. CALL MAXSIP TELECOM TODAY! 1-855-970-1995

CARRING FOR AN AGING LOVED ONE? WONDERING ABOUT OPTIONS LIKE SENIOR-LIVING COMMUNITIES AND IN-HOME CARE? CARING.COM'S FAMILY ADVISORS ARE HERE TO HELP TAKE THE GUESSTWORK OUT OF SENIOR CARE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. CALL FOR YOUR FREE, NO-OBLIGATION CONSULTATION: 1-844-494-0682

PETs

US HAPPY JACK MITEX ON DOGS & RABBITS TO TREAT YEAST INFECTIONS.
AT NORTHWEST ACME HARDWARE AND SOUTHERN STATES STORES. WWW.FLEABEACON.COM

VISIT ALEXTIMES.COM TO ACCESS OUR PRINT ARCHIVES TO READ OLDER EDITIONS!
SOLD FOR $2,590,000
REPRESENTED THE SELLER

SOLD FOR $3,200,000
REPRESENTED THE BUYER

SOLD FOR $1,650,000
REPRESENTED THE SELLER

613 S ROYAL STREET
4001 BELLE RIVE TERRACE
15 E CHAPMAN STREET

703.952.0441 | kristenjones.com | kristen@kristenjones.com | Licensed in VA

DC Modern Luxury Top 50 Real Estate Agents in the DMV
Northern Virginia Magazine Best Real Estate Agent | Washingtonian’s Best Real Estate Agent
RealTrends America’s Best Real Estate Professionals | Proud sponsor of Old Town Business

McEnerney Associates, Realtors | 109 S. Pitt St, Alexandria, VA 22314 | Equal Housing Opportunity