The more the merrier?

Council approves summer pause to limits on Old Town events
BY DENISE DUNBAR

Large events of 500 or more people could be allowed in Old Town on consecutive weekends throughout this summer after City Council approved a waiver to a 13-year-old policy at its June 13 legislative meeting.

The prior policy dates back to January 2010, when City Council passed the city’s Special Events Policies and Procedures, which limited events with an expected attendance of more than 500 people to no more than every other weekend throughout the year. It defined a weekend as running from 5 p.m. on a Friday through 6 p.m. on a Sunday.

Though large events on consecutive weekends are not currently scheduled for this summer, the temporary waiver would enable the Special Events Committee to approve them, according to Diane Ruggiero, deputy director of the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities.

“This was a just in case kind of thing in case something came up at the last minute and the Special Events Committee wanted to have the event and we just didn’t want to be in violation of the policy,” Ruggiero said at the June 13 meeting.

Councilor John Chapman, who was the only member to vote against the temporary suspension of the policy, questioned why the request was being made.

“So it seems because we don’t have anything on the calendar, this seems a bit

SEE EVENTS | 8

Juneteenth in Alexandria

The Washington Revels Jubilee Voices performed songs of struggle and freedom on Monday’s Juneteenth ceremony at Market Square.
The Summer Market is Sizzling

Summer is a popular season for buying and selling real estate due to the warmer weather and increased curb appeal of properties. With inventory still low, reach out to one of our Alexandria experts on how you can take advantage of today’s market.

320 Hume Ave, Alexandria, VA 22301
5 BD | 3.5 BA | $1,995,000
Listed by The Goodhart Group

2703 Dewitt Ave, Alexandria, VA 22301
3 BD | 2 BA | $799,900
Listed by The Homes of Alexandria Team

6914 Baylor Dr, Alexandria, VA 22307
4 BD | 4 BA | $1,115,000
Listed by Pia Taylor

2105 Rampart Dr, Alexandria, VA 22308
4 BD | 3 BA | $839,000
Listed by The Rivkin Group
APD and ASO celebrate graduates

Eighteen new Alexandria Police Department officers and 15 sheriff’s deputies graduated from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy on June 16, according to a release. In addition, APD Officer Michael Mattern, ASO Deputy Derek Mainville and APD Officer Kurt Wiegand earned top honors.

 Rotary Club awards scholarships

On June 6, the Alexandria Rotary Club awarded three vocational college scholarships to Alexandria high school students. From a pool of 21 applications, the following students were chosen and each received a $2,500 scholarship: Alison Rafailan-Avelar from Alexandria City High School who will pursue a career in media studies and filmmaking at Temple University, Edison High School’s Sharvani Roy will pursue a career in information technology at the University of Pittsburgh and ACHS’ Sada Seman will pursue a career in economics and finance at the University of Virginia.

Archaeology Museum launches new exhibit

The Alexandria Archaeology Museum opened a new permanent archaeology exhibit on June 9. “A Community Digs its Past: The Lee Street Site” will display artifacts and provide information about the Lee St. site and several other waterfront sites.

“Welcome to a fascinating world of discovery. The Lee Street Site is a window into the past and a reminder of how the landscape of Alexandria has changed over time. The exhibits are interactive and educational, offering visitors a unique perspective on the city’s history,” said Dr. Eleanor Breen, City Archaeologist.

For more information on this exhibit visit alexandriava.gov/Archaeology.

Rain barrel build workshop

The City of Alexandria Transportation and Environmental Services Stormwater Management Division will host a Build Your Own Rain Barrel Workshop at Charles E. Beatley Jr. Central Library located at 5005 Duke St. on July 8 from 2 to 4 p.m. Each rain barrel costs $55 and you must register in advance. Space is limited. Building your own rain barrel reduces the upfront cost of the barrel and also creates a custom-made product unique to your property. The city recommends using rain barrels to collect and store runoff from roofs that would otherwise flow into the storm sewer network. For more information, visit nsvswcd-velocitypayment-com.3dcartstores.com/Build-Your-Own-Rain-Barrel-Workshop_p_14.html

Meet Fritter!

Not a couch-potato, Fritter is a lively, vivacious gal, ready for a party. Ideal for the Adopter in search of a running mate, Fritter is energetic enough to exercise, yet calm when playtime is over. Friendly and very sweet, Fritter is hoping for a new home and a family to love her. Could that be you?

Meet Fritter!

AlexandriaAnimals.org/Adopt-By-Appointment
703-746-4774

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“Because everyone needs a home.”
The principal benefit to this is shaving a few minutes off of bus time ... What Council needs to decide is it worth somewhere between $87 and $100 million to shave about three minutes off of bus time.”

– Frank Putzu, Alexandria resident

DUKE STREET

FROM | 1

who is blind,” O’Day shared with Council.

Molly Pugh who lives in the Seminary Hill Road neighborhood, told those present she used to walk to Alexandria Commons by herself, but would never take her children.

“The traffic flying by, the narrow, unshaded sidewalks, makes walking unpleasant and hazardous.”

However, Alexandria resident Frank Putzu said in an interview that the touted improvements in bus travel times are miniscule and the changes, particularly reducing the number of bus stops, may actually make it harder for people to get out of their cars and onto public transit.

“The principal benefit to this is shaving a few minutes off of bus time from one end of Duke to the other, right? What Council needs to decide is it worth somewhere between $87 and $100 million to shave about three minutes off of bus time. That’s really what they need to decide,” Putzu said.

“And you know, to me reducing the number of bus stops defeats the purpose of the whole thing because now you’re making it harder for people to access buses harder than it is today.”

Putzu’s concerns reference the Advisory Group’s proposal regarding station locations, which state:

“Station locations should be approximately every 1/4-1/2 miles, taking into account current and potential ridership demand, accessibility, safety, topography, and right of way constraints,” the proposal reads.

Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board Chair James Lewis, who lives directly off Duke Street, said he has always been in favor of improvements to the road, but echoed Putzu’s reservations with the proposed model.

“We all know Duke Street is broken and something needs to be done. That’s been my sort of position, my big concern here,” Lewis said. “The dedicated [bus] lane saves a couple of minutes, but almost all of the time saving is coming from reducing the number of stops ... So, now I want someone who might be disabled or might have two kids in tow to go from a quarter mile to a half mile walk. Is this still going to be equitable? Are we going to reach people or are we trading access, stop accessibility, for time?”

Transit Programs Manager Jennifer Monaco told the Times back in May that Duke Street In Motion would provide a variety of options for getting around to the thousands of people who use Duke Street daily.

“[The plan] aims to make the bus a better option of transportation, but also make Duke Street safer and more pleasant to be on,” Monaco had said.

In that story, several options for potential changes to the corridor were on the table and the voices of opposition cited concerns with fewer automobile lanes, the possible elimination of left-hand turns and the effect a project of such magnitude would have on an already congested main thoroughfare.

On May 25, the Duke Street In Motion Advisory group – a mix of representatives from various city commissions, the Federation of Civic Associations and other members of the community – submitted their updated recommen-
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DUKE STREET

JUNE 3 – 24, 2023

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PHOTOS/CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

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DUKE STREET FROM | 4

DUKE STREET

From: July 11, 2023

Editor's Note: An article appeared in the June 22 issue of the Alexandria Times about Duke Street In Motion. The following is a clarification of some of the comments made by residents and Advisory Group members who testified during the June 14 public hearing.

“City Council needs to defer this project. It’s not going to solve all of the problems on the corridor. There’s going to be regional growth and increasing demand. But, we’re seeing travel time benefits from doing this project. We think it can help things.”

Former DASH director Sandy Modell, who helped develop the bus system and then ran it for almost 30 years, said a primary concern with the Duke Street In Motion proposal is the planned elimination of left-hand turns and the impact that could have on businesses along the roadway.

“Between the consolidation of bus stops, which will force some riders to walk an extra half mile, and the elimination of left turns into at least a dozen businesses along the corridor, the negative impacts of the proposed transitway will be significant,” Modell said in an emailed comment.

Modell said she requested left turn data from the city between intersections where those businesses are located, but has yet to hear back.

Monaco hopes the plan will be approved, but knows even if it is, obstacles remain.

PHOTOS/CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

“Duke Street In Motion is important to building Alexandria as a city that is climate-conscious, a city that is livable, a city where people want to live and work and play. But, more importantly, Duke Street In Motion is the only way to make Duke Street a safe space for everybody living here,” Gosling said during her testimony.

“Duke Street In Motion is a topic of their choosing. Alexandria resident Anna Gosling said she had recently been hit by a car while riding her bike locally. Although she was in favor of the project prior to her accident, Gosling said she hopes the addition of bike lanes will ease her fears of riding in a high-traffic area.

Busway Corridor Concept A: Mostly Center-running & Mixed Traffic

Proposed Curb Concept Y (North Side of Duke Street)

Concept renderings for Duke Street in Motion.

Monaco hopes the plan will go back to the drawing board until it can be amended to address several key problems.

“City Council needs to defer this project and implement transportation improvements that will reduce the gridlock caused by the backup on the Telegraph Road ramp, before taking away traffic lanes, left turns and bus stops. Adding more density to this corridor without addressing the traffic quagmire that already exists is foolhardy,” Modell stated.

–avwill@alextimes.com
DREAM HOME LOANS

AFTER HOURS
June 28 | 6 pm – 8 pm

Kim Ta
Mortgage Expert
Sharon McDonald
Home Equity Expert
Jeremey Hill
Mortgage Expert
Phil Cefaratti
Real Estate Expert

conversations & cocktails
Join us for drinks, food and desserts.
» RSVP required to attend: ussfcu.org/mortgage «

The Loft at Lena’s
Lena’s Wood-fired Pizza & Tap
401 E Braddock Rd. | Alexandria, VA 22301

USSFCU Bowman Branch at Braddock Station | 1310 Braddock Place | Alexandria, VA 22314
Membership eligibility required. Federally insured by NCUA.
odd,” Chapman said. “Have we done this every summer, saying ‘Hey, Council is going to be gone on break. Let’s put the waiver out there just in case?’”

Ruggiero admitted that this is the first time city staff have requested a summertime waiver to the policy. She said the request is a precursor to a permanent change to the special events policy that city staff plan to bring before City Council this fall.

“We had anticipated bringing the full policy before this so this is really just a substitute for bringing the full policy forward for review and approval just in case,” Ruggiero said.

Chapman said residents have raised concerns about traffic and parking surrounding events.

“When you guys do come forward with a final proposal, is there going to be anything in it that speaks to concerns around parking and policy adjustments we can do there?” Chapman asked.

Ruggiero did not directly answer Chapman’s question or indicate that any policy changes to parking and traffic are part of staff’s planning for the final policy.

“So, we’ve added some members to the Special Events Committee from the city’s parking enforcement, and multimodal transportation folks are on there,” Ruggiero said. “So they’re working with the special events organizers and helping them get the word out for events as to how [to use] other means to get to events. Parking garages and things like that [would be] part of the event organizer’s public communications strategy and marketing efforts.”

Chapman expressed dissatisfaction with Ruggiero’s answer and with the contents of the waiver proposal.

“The reason I asked that question is I didn’t see anything in this specific docket item about that piece as well. And so if we gave that ability to have that waiver, Council would sort of be guessing what we’re doing as far as dealing with those parking impacts and people impacts as well. Not guessing, let me say that correctly, just kind of leaving that to staff with no engagement at all,” Chapman said.

Ruggiero said current guidelines should address Chapman’s concerns.

“Well, the special events policy is still in force and the guidelines around that are still in place for event organizers. So, while we might not know… each event organizer is given the same guidelines and regulations to follow for their events and we would just make sure that would happen if an event were to come up over the summer,” Ruggiero said.

Councilor Kirk McPike asked when the revised final policy proposal would come before Council.

“Do we have a timetable for that yet?” McPike asked.

City Manager Jim Parajon said a few details are still being finalized in the permanent proposal.

“I’m not sure but I think pretty soon after [the summer council] break. Quite frankly, the staff is pretty close to having it. There’s some elements that might take a bit more time to digest,” Parajon said. “Probably the end of September or into October.”

McPike said he was concerned that City Council was considering the summertime waiver before public engagement had taken place.

“We’re waiving this policy while a permanent policy is being developed. And I’m curious what sort of public discussion and input was brought in for discussion or consideration of this waiver of if people had been met with,” McPike said.

Ruggiero admitted that there had been no public engagement yet.

“We haven’t had a chance to talk about this waiver …,” Ruggiero said.

Yvonne Callahan, vice president of the Old Town Civic Association, said in an interview that OTCA leadership had received a vague email from Ruggiero about pending possible changes to the events policy. Callahan said Deputy City Manager Emily Baker then contacted her about the proposal.

“Emily, in a very professional manner, reached out and I was advised there would be a careful study in the fall,” Callahan said in the interview.

Callahan questioned whether large events bring enough spending to Alexandria to offset the disruption and costs associated with additional policing needs, trash overflow and strains on traffic and parking.

Callahan said some years ago she asked a City Council member, who she declined to name, how much money the city made from large events.

“Not much,” she said the councilor replied. “Ice cream and popcorn.”
Simpson Park renovation plan approved

**Del Ray residents pledge active resistance to save willow oak trees**

BY LEXIE JORDAN

Many Del Ray residents are enraged by City Council’s decision at Saturday’s public hearing to allow all necessary permits for the Eugene Simpson Park renovations, as that will include cutting down three historic and healthy willow oak trees.

The furor came after Council’s unanimous vote, and no residents came forward to argue for saving the trees at either the Planning Commission meeting on June 6 or at Saturday’s meeting.

Both the Planning Commission and City Council unanimously approved the renovation plan, which includes extensive overall changes to Simpson Park, with expanded parking, new bleachers, a new driveway, synthetic turf and new press boxes and dugouts.

The residents say they weren’t aware of the planned tree destruction before Council’s vote, and pledged to take extreme measures to prevent their removal.

“I am ready to chain myself to one of the three historic willow oak trees [the city] is cutting down,” Giselle McAuliffe said in a chain on the app Nextdoor.

The plan also includes an improved plaza area that will have a concession stand, picnic tables and new shaded seating. The basketball courts will move east of their current location and will have new lighting.

At the Public Hearing, City staff claimed that the plans will have an overall net positive effect on the environment.

“In the plaza, around the fields and in the northeast area of the park there will be 100 new Virginia native landscaping and trees will be planted removing the invasive species and trees’ poor health. This new development will increase the overall canopy coverage from 12% to 25%,” division chief and landscape architect Beth Znidersic said.

Hardscape trails will also be added as will an enhanced landscape buffer to screen Richmond Highway away from the residents.

However, in order to do these renovations, three healthy and historic willow oak trees that inhabit the park would be taken down.

“According to author and scientist Douglas Tallamy, native oaks support over 500 species of lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and other insects equal baby bird food,” another community member, Kim Frey, said in the chain.

Another poster noted the trees’ importance.

“The city is showing that they do not care about climate change and the city’s warming and trees’ poor health. This new development will increase the overall canopy coverage from 12% to 25%,” division chief and landscape architect Beth Znidersic said.

“According to author and scientist Douglas Tallamy, native oaks support over 500 species of lepidoptera (butterflies and moths) and other insects equal baby bird food,” another community member, Kim Frey, said in the chain.

“Another poster noted the exaggerated environmental importance of old trees.

“Old growth trees cannot be replaced. It would take another 150 years for any new tree to offer the same ecological benefits,” Alexandria resident Dominique Marsalek wrote.

Mayor Justin Wilson responded to emails from the concerned residents, including forwarding a June 5 memo from Director of Planning & Zoning Karl Moritz that addressed the issue of the willow oaks.

Planning Commissioner David Brown, during briefings on the Simpson Renovation plan, had also asked about whether two of the four willow oaks slated for removal could be saved and Moritz’ memo addressed his concerns. Moritz said city staff reexamined the plans and found they could save one of the four trees, the one located north and east of Big Simpson Field.

The group of advocates believe that showing active and public displays of resistance, such as chaining themselves to the trees, may be the only way they can save them.

“The city is showing that they do not care about climate change and the city’s warming by allowing the destruction of Old Growth Canopy trees,” Alexandria resident Karen Lenke wrote.

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**Obituary**

**Michael Angelo Marno**

January 4, 1962 – June 12, 2023

Michael Angelo Marno, 61, of Alexandria passed away on June 12, 2023 in Newnan, Georgia. He was born on January 4, 1962 in Queens, New York to the late Angelo Joseph Marno and America Cardoso Marno. He was also preceded in death by his sister Deborah Diak.

He is survived by his brother Joseph (Jeanette) Marno; nieces Jazmine Marno and Jessica (Joshua) Testa and great-niece Aubrey Testa.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date. Condolences may be expressed to the family at mckoon.com, McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory.
Amazon opens second headquarters in Virginia

BY AMY WILL

Business is up and running, 8,000 employees are already hard at work and a curious community has gotten a taste of the eclectic vibe inside Amazon’s second headquarters after its grand opening in Virginia last week.

Surrounded by executives and several elected officials from both Arlington and Alexandria, Gov. Glenn Youngkin (R-VA) snipped the orange ribbon to officially welcome HQ2 – also known as Met Park – to Arlington’s National Landing neighborhood.

“I want to thank everyone from the broad Amazon family for believing in Virginia, for investing in Virginia, for partnering with Virginia,” Youngkin said to a room full of reporters, photographers, guests and Amazon employees. “This journey began with what I think was a very smart decision by Amazon to put their second headquarters here, a 2.5 billion-dollar investment right here in Virginia.”

Youngkin acknowledged the work of the previous administration and championed the 25,000 new jobs Amazon hopes to add by 2030.

“When I have a chance to tell the story of what’s happening here, I tell it publicly. Frequently. And, guess what? People come. It’s amazing to see the flow of aspirations, the flow of talent and yes, the flow of individuals and families who want to make their home right here in Virginia,” Youngkin said.

Alexandria’s Vice Mayor Amy Jackson recalled being inside a warehouse in 2018 when the vision for HQ2 was born. That vision over the years has morphed into what is now a sprawling 2.1-million-square-foot complex.

“We put a lot of work into this. I remember I was in that warehouse in 2018 and they were making this announcement, it was so exciting. We had the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus announcement on the same day. And, both have come to fruition,” Jackson said during the tour.

Met Park is made up of two eye-catching towers, Merlin and Jasper. Merlin – named after an Amazon executive’s family dog – sets the tone for a building that feels more communal than corporate.

Inside the multi-level glass structure of Amazon’s phase 1 campus, employees have access to various restaurants, coffee shops, a billiard room and a two-acre rooftop garden and greenspace. Company executives hope a park with a dog run and ground-floor retail shops will entice not only staff, but local residents to the campus.

Addressing the crowd prior to the tour, Amazon’s Vice President of Public Policy and Community Engagement Brian Huseman emphasized the company’s dedication to the Arlington and Alexandria communities.

“We’ve partnered with more than 100 nonprofit and community organizations and many of those leaders are here today and we’re so thankful for your partnership,” Huseman announced. “Since we selected Arlington as HQ2 in 2018, we’ve committed more than 160 million dollars to local nonprofits, community organizations and schools across the region and more than one billion dollars in loans and grants.”

Along with a strong community presence, Amazon leaders also touted the building’s emphasis on sustainability.

According to a handout given to all attendees, HQ2 is tracking toward both towers becoming LEED Platinum certified. The informational pamphlet goes on to say how the use of fossil fuels was completely eliminated within the buildings for daily operations.

“HQ2 will run with zero operational carbon emissions and will be powered 100% by renewable energy,” according to the pamphlet.

Although Met Park is rooted in Arlington, Jackson says it has already made an impact on the Alexandria community and the future looks bright.

“We’ve just had great partnerships with the Arlington County Board. And I know going forward that will continue,” Jackson said.

-awill@alextimes.com

Governor Glenn Youngkin cuts the grand opening ribbon alongside Amazon Vice President of Worldwide Economic Development, Holly Sullivan, and Amazon Vice President of Public Policy and Community Engagement, Brian Huseman.
Understanding your financial preparedness before buying a home

BY JENNIFER MOLDEN

The purchase of a home is one of the most important decisions you will make. This process is an investment in your future. Follow these simple steps to be financially prepared and you will be able to determine if you are ready to purchase a home.

Home buying is much like the home building process. A home must have a foundation. In the process of buying a home, your credit score is the foundation that can help you build a home. A strong credit history can affect if you qualify for a loan. Your credit history will also determine the type of loan and the terms that are associated with that loan.

Finding and working with a lender who is right for you is important. Many myths surround your credit score, but the fact is you may only need a score of 620 for a conventional loan. The higher your credit score, the more options available to you.

The next level in your home buying process is understanding your debt-to-income ratio. This is how much debt you have in comparison to how much money you make. A percentage weighs how much you owe in debt from credit cards, car loans, rent and other expenses. This number is an important one that lenders take into consideration. How you manage your finances will determine if you are a good candidate to take on additional debt with a mortgage.

Your down payment is another piece to building your home. The initial amount paid for your home of choice is generally a percentage of the home’s purchase price. Many potential homeowners are surprised to learn they do not have to have the full 20% for a down payment.

There are loan options that will allow for as little as 3% for a conventional loan. A wide variety of options are available for all, including some for low to mid-level income buyers. The funds for a down payment on a home can come from outside sources like family members, employers or nonprofits.

Your down payment is just one of the costs associated with the home buying process. It is important to understand you will have additional costs for closing fees, utilities and moving. There are also unexpected repairs every homeowner endures.

Once you feel you have a handle on your financial preparedness, it is time to engage with a lender who can guide you. The lender will provide you with a pre-qualification for an estimate of what amount you will be eligible to borrow. Your lender is part of the team of trusted advisors who will guide you through the home-buying process.

A local realtor who is well versed in the market and its current trends is vital to a successful home purchase. This individual can assist you in finding homes that meet your needs in terms of location, features, size and functionality while keeping in mind your financial position.

The home buying process can be complicated. Purchasing a home can be incredibly overwhelming in a competitive market. Today, we are facing a particularly challenging market with low housing inventory and changing interest rates.

With preparation, education and guidance from a trusted real estate professional and lender, you can be on your way to home ownership and begin to build the home of your dreams.

The writer is a sales specialist with Coldwell Banker Realty in Alexandria.
Ten budget friendly ideas for better appeal
BY FAMILY FEATURES

Your home’s first big impression is its curb appeal. If your place is in need of some sprucing up, you may wonder how you can make some updates without breaking the bank.

These 10 ideas are easy on budgets and can make a big impact on your home’s exterior image.

Knock, knock
As long as your front door is in good condition, there’s no need to replace it completely. A fresh coat of paint can instantly update your home’s facade. Go bold or stick with a classic hue. It’s all up to you.

Window dressing
Dress up the windows. Add character and charm by enhancing your front windows. You might add wooden shutters, window box planters or both. Also look at the trim around the windows. If it’s chipped and peeling, add a fresh coat of paint. Not only does it look nice, it can protect your windows from damage, too.

Flower power
An unkempt flower bed can drag down an otherwise stunning home. Keep beds tidy and vegetation trimmed, even during the offseason. Watch for weeds. Replenish mulch or rock ground cover as needed to keep the beds looking healthy and inviting.

Light it up
Install new lighting. Re-boost curb appeal

---

Stunning modern Craftsman-style home

206 E. Randolph Avenue is a spectacular turn-key property located on one of the most coveted streets in Del Ray. Featuring 5 bedrooms, 4.5 baths and a detached ADU with over 400 square feet of living space for your guests. This home effortlessly caters to all your needs.

As you enter, 9-foot ceilings and wide plank hardwood floors greet you and welcome you into the space. The open concept kitchen and family room create a lovely atmosphere for hosting holiday dinners or inviting friends over for cocktails. Unsurpassed quality awaits you in the gourmet chef’s kitchen. Its 4-foot by 8-foot center island, Cafe series stainless appliances and custom coffered ceilings flow into the family room. Step out onto the expansive Azek composite deck and enjoy the serene view of the backyard.

Upstairs, two primary suites enjoy spa-like baths, walk-in closets and plenty of light. Two more generously sized bedrooms, a hall bath and laundry room reside on this level.

The incredible and fully finished walk-out lower-level features luxury vinyl tile floors throughout. You’ll love the light-filled rec room, 5th bedroom with en suite bath, bonus room with chic barn doors and the plenty of storage options. Easily access the fully fenced-in backyard or ADU. Relax on the oversized flagstone patio.

The exterior of the home includes Hardi siding, board and batten features at all the gables, 30-year architectural shingles and so much more!
YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH
Parents, caregivers, teachers, neighbors and other caring residents are invited. Learn how to help young individuals suffering a mental health crisis or addiction challenge. The course teaches risk factors, warning signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use disorders. Free.

**Time:** 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
**Location:** 901 Wythe St.
**Information:** apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=52158

PLANT POWER
Explore the benefits of flowering plants. Herbs help support the pollinators we depend on. Bees, butterflies, hummingbirds and other insects help to keep the ecosystems in our communities running smoothly. Help out these beneficial creatures by making your home-space a stop on their day. Paint and design an herb garden that will fit anywhere.

**Time:** 2 to 3:30 p.m.
**Location:** 717 Queen St.
**Information:** alexlibraryva.org/event/8292053

LET’S GO LEGO
Lego competition for children ages 6 to 12. Attendees will be put on a team and given a prompt with one hour to complete their build. Judges will evaluate and choose a winning team.

**Time:** 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
**Location:** 2501 Commonwealth Ave.
**Information:** alexlibraryva.org

NERDY KNOTTERS
Both beginners and advanced fiber artists are welcome. Knitting needles, crochet hooks and yarn available for beginners to use. For coziness, tea will be provided.

**Time:** 6 to 7 p.m.
**Location:** 2501 Commonwealth Ave.
**Information:** alexlibraryva.org/event/8317079

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH
Parents, caregivers, teachers, neighbors and other caring residents are invited. Learn how to help young individuals suffering a mental health crisis or addiction challenge. The course teaches risk factors, warning signs and symptoms of mental health and substance use disorders. Free.

**Time:** 2 to 3:30 p.m.
**Location:** 717 Queen St.
**Information:** alexlibraryva.org/event/8292053

CURB APPEAL
FROM | 12
placing outdated light fixtures can give your exterior an instant upgrade. There’s no right or wrong style. Choose a color and look that matches the rest of your design.

Welcome home
Replace worn welcome mats. A cheerful mat at your front door can be an inviting sight for visitors. Mats inevitably wear with time and what was once bright and charming becomes dingy and dull. A new mat can help bring back that cheery entry you once cherished.

Under pressure
Over time, driveways and sidewalks collect an incredible amount of grime. Pressure washing not only eliminates the filth, but the clean surfaces also add to your home’s visual appeal.

Landscape
Add new vegetation. Landscaping is a relatively inexpensive way to introduce more personality to a yard. Aim for a mix of pretty and practical, such as some low-flowering bushes and some trees or bushes that offer privacy and shade.

Fix it
Keep up with basic maintenance. When your home is in poor repair, it shows. Pay attention to bent or rusting gutters. Imperfections in the roof and other maintenance matters aren’t just aesthetic. If left unrepaired, they can also result in major damage.

It’s in the details
Pay attention to details. Functional items like the mailbox might not seem like much of a design element, but these small details can be a big distraction if they’re not in good condition. Update or replace as needed to keep your aesthetic in sync.

Tis the season
Add seasonal decor. There’s no need to go all out for every occasion, but some timely decorations that celebrate the holiday or season make your entry fun and festive. Coordinate wreaths, planters, signs and other accent pieces for a cohesive look that invites guests.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS FAIR
Come to the Lyceum for a free and family friendly event. More than 20 representatives will be on hand to offer health and wellness resources, free health screenings and entertainment. Kids can enjoy yoga story time and a magician’s performance around 11 a.m. Reservations are not required.

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
**Location:** 201 S. Washington St.
**Information:** mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?ogbl#inbox/VMfegzGuXmRFcKpcmJTVBphFZvnCcgxK

ART BIKETOUR
Which school has murals honoring John Lewis, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Amanda Gorman? Where in Alexandria can you find a wind kinetic sculpture that evokes white lilies? Ride to see some of Alexandria’s murals, sculptures and other public art. Riders of all ages and abilities are welcome. Tour is on a mix of streets, bike lanes and trails, including some busier streets with traffic, so everyone will need to be able to control their bike.

**Time:** 9 to 11:30 a.m.
**Location:** 1A Prince St.
**Information:** ridewithgps.com/routes/43321964

SUNDAY SOUNDS

**Time:** 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: 7 Pioneer Mill Way
**Information:** robinsonlanding.com/waterfrontevents

YOUNG HISTORIANS
Family day with young historians. Every Sunday through Labor Day, guests can meet junior docents as they share the stories of Gatsby’s Tavern. Includes historic chocolate-making demonstrations.

**Time:** 2 to 5 p.m.
**Location:** 134 N. Royal St.
**Information:** alexandriava.gov/GadsbysTavern

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Ironicist
Do your fillings contain high mercury levels?

BY DEB DERRICK

At the age of 57, I’d been on low levels of blood pressure medicine for years with good results. However, my blood pressure had begun to rise. It would take four years, a pack of doctors and a nutritionist to find a likely cause for this issue.

I stripped red meat and dairy products from my diet. I drank sludgy mixtures of berry juice and flax seeds. And I called a nutritionist.

My nutritionist Julie Wendt had me record every morsel I ate for a week and ordered mobile blood and plasma tests. The report that followed was inscrutable. Full of diagrams, arrows and nutritional markers. My diet and health were pretty good. However, I had one big problem: my blood-mercury level was exceptionally high.

“Did I have amalgam fillings?” my nutritionist asked. Indeed, I did.

I’d always thought of my old fillings as silver. In actuality, they and all “silver” amalgams are about 50% mercury. I had highly toxic metal in my mouth.

My amalgams were installed in the late 1960s. In 1990, 60 Minutes aired a program with anecdotal evidence that amalgams might cause serious health issues. The American Dental Association fought back, insisting that the amalgams’ mercury did not leach out in any substantial or harmful way. They’ve held to that line ever since, even as dentists in our country began to shy away from using amalgams.

My blood-mercury level in that first test was 10.29 mcg/L, 77% over the EPA’s presumed safe level of 5.8.

My nutritionist said that long-term exposure to mercury is associated with cardiovascular issues. Hypertension known to damage humans’ renal and central nervous systems is one effect. According to my nutritionist, the two largest sources of mercury exposure are seafood and dental amalgams. She suggested I have my amalgams removed.

I balked. Removing the fillings would cost me several thousand dollars. It might damage my teeth. Plus, the FDA’s website says there’s little evidence of health benefits from amalgam removals. The actual removal might expose patients to more mercury.

I decided to stop eating deep-sea fish as a starting point. A month later, my blood-mercury was 6.53 mcg/L. Still too high.

My nutritionist pressed me again to take my fillings out. I dug into studies on amalgams and mercury exposure. There’s much controversy here, but it’s known that dental amalgams emit mercury vapors which are absorbed through the lungs. It’s been shown that mouth-vapor levels rise with the number of one’s amalgam surfaces. Vapor levels also rise after drinking hot or acidic beverages. I drank hot tea with

The writer was referred to a dentist trained in the safe removal of mercury amalgams.

SEE FILLINGS

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lemon every morning.

The day-to-day levels of mercury vapors and their absorption rates are contested. One 1995 Canadian study suggested that adults with more than four amalgams were likely being over-exposed. The study was quickly and robustly attacked. There’s also limited data proving or disproving dental amalgams’ connections to specific diseases.

I finally decided to have my fillings out after reading that the cadavers of people with numerous occlusal amalgam surfaces had much higher mercury loads in their brains and kidneys than those with few or none.

I was referred to a dentist trained in the safe removal of mercury amalgams. I was nervous the day of the procedure. I knew I’d have a temporary bump in my mercury load. Studies suggested that I’d see a 60 to 70% reduction in my blood-mercury within three months.

Before starting on the removals, the dentist had me swish black charcoal water around my mouth. She put on a neck-to-toe protective gown. She tucked a wad of charcoal under my tongue and placed a rubber dam across my mouth, to catch stray amalgam shards. She put an oxygen tube in my nose, turned on an air vacuum and started drilling. Three hours later, she’d removed seven mercury amalgams and replaced them with white composites. I took off my protective gown, did a final charcoal-water rinse and drove myself home.

Waiting for the results felt like forever. Friends who knew my saga kept asking if the amalgam removals had actually reduced my mercury levels. In mid-March, I got my answer. My blood-mercury was 1.05 mcg/L, 84% lower than my pre-removal level.

I’d been reducing my mercury levels for nearly a year. Over the same time span, my systolic blood-pressure dropped about 20 points. I can’t tie this directly to my mercury mitigation, of course, but the Journal of Clinical Hypertension calls the “association between mercury toxicity and hypertension convincing, and recommends mercury testing for anyone with high blood pressure or vascular disease.” I’m delighted to have drastically lowered my blood-mercury level and grateful beyond measure to Julie Wendt.

The writer is a non-fiction author who’s lived in Old Town since returning from Chile in 2020.

Dr. Karl A. Smith, a Periodontist in Alexandria, VA, is currently welcoming new patients who desire a wellness focused dental office. A Periodontist is kind of like a dentist with super-powers! They are the foundation builders of your smile, the experts in the supporting structures of your mouth, and truly understand the link between periodontal bacteria and its effect on total body health. A visit to a Periodontist might just save your life.

Using advanced technology, Dr. Smith and his team of professionals invest countless hours in education and learning the latest techniques in dentistry, periodontics, and dental implants. They provide comfortable sedation for patients looking for a more relaxed and anxiety-free dental experience. You will receive effective and efficient care while at his office. He is committed to providing you with excellent dentistry in a clean, comfortable and safe environment.

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Foundations for Beautiful Smiles

FILE PHOTO

Having blood pressure measures consistently above normal may result in a diagnosis of hypertension.
Honoring today’s inspiring new generation
BY GAYLE CONVERSE

Anne Ball McCarthy (McCarty) was 21 years old when she married one of Alexandria’s founding fathers, William Ramsay, in 1743. Anne would go on to become one of the most effective and revered financial supporters of the American Revolution.

In 1796, Ona Judge, an enslaved personal maid to Martha Washington, was only in her early 20s when she made a daring and successful escape to freedom.

After attending the Arlington Institute for Girls in Alexandria, Katherine Waller, at age 19, married Rev. Robert Barrett in 1876. Among her many accomplishments, Kate Waller Barrett would eventually be asked to run for Governor of Virginia, an honor she turned down.

Throughout the past three centuries, Alexandria’s young women have been making their mark.

According to the 2020 United States Census, almost 52% of our city’s population is female. Today 18% of Alexandria’s residents are under 18 years of age.

To recognize Alexandria’s present and future female leaders, Alexandria Celebrates Women will honor six deserving young women with its 2023 Alexandria Celebrates Women Awards.

This year’s ceremony will be held June 28 at the Athenaeum. All proceeds will benefit the Alexandria Domestic Violence Safehouse.

“We are so proud to showcase these young future leaders. Each is extraordinary in their own amazing personal contributions,” ACW President Pat Miller said.

“We have a very special night planned to honor these six young ladies. Metro Voices, the women’s choir affiliated with the Alexandria Harmonizers, will be performing. Delegate Elizabeth Bennett-Parker will honor the girls by serving as emcee for the event,” Miller added.

Alexandria Celebrates Women empowers women of the past, present and future. From the following resumes, it appears to be an easy task this year.

Alexandria Celebrates Women 2023 Award Winners

Betty Amron
Betty is a student at Alexandria City High School with a GPA greater than 4.4 and membership in four honor societies. She serves as co-president of the Alexandria Art Honor Society, captain of the field hockey team and is an active member of GirlUp. She has served as the Alexandria Commission for the Arts student representation and is an accomplished artist.

Eliza Gwin
Eliza is a student at Alexandria City High School and has a passion for music and song writing. She founded an all-girl band named Indigo. Eliza is a member of the National Honor Society, the French Honor Society and the Musicians Club. She has donated her time to Volunteer Alexandria and helped provide meals for the Carpenter’s Shelter.

Elizabeth Rutter
Elizabeth is a recipient of the Alexandria Library Love of Country award. At school, she is an admissions advisor, a theater critic, a leader of the performing arts board and serves as a tutor to younger students. Elizabeth has organized summer camps with a concentration on the arts for neighborhood children. Among other contributions to her community, she donates her babysitting money to St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital.

2023 CELEBRATE WOMEN AWARDS

When: 7 to 9 p.m.
June 28, 2023
The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St., Alexandria

Tickets:
alexandriacelebrateswomen.com

All proceeds benefit Alexandria Domestic Violence Safehouse.

Ariana Attidore
Ariana excels academically and volunteers her time and resources to organizations that serve those in need. She mentors younger members and helps to plan and organize events for the Boys and Girls Club. Through her commitment to community service, Ariana has proven to be a role model making a significant impact in her community.

Sarah Porter
Sarah is the student representative on the Alexandria Commission for Women where she has been a member of the Commission’s Reproductive Rights Subcommittee. She developed a resource hand out regarding sexual and reproductive health services for the Teen Wellness Center. Sarah worked with ACPS to ensure the free menstrual product dispensers were filled at Alexandria City High School.

The writer, along with Pat Miller, is founder of Alexandria Celebrates Women, a non-profit that highlights influential women throughout the city’s history. Contact them at AlexandriaCelebratesWomen@gmail.com.
Weekly Words

BUSINESS NEWS by Rebecca Goldstein, edited by Jeff Chen

Solutions from last week

DEATH NOTICES

TAD
UCLA
PACTS
SWIFT
ALIT
FLAPE
EERIE
MACAO
MAGIC
CARPET
RIDE
ELECT
PIANO
SUSAN
MEDIA
KITS
ANTELOPE
TALE
CROC
AOL
TIMES
INKNESS
BLURRED
LINES
SOYABPA
FEBS
GRANTS
FOR
FRAIL
FIELD
ASTO
ELBA
COBRA
FREEUP
FLEAS
SWAYED
PAPERBACK
WRITER
SHRED
ERIC
TUSKED
HEIRS
SCAM
SLRS
TEXAN
RINSE
PIG
CLAIMS
AMP
UGG
ASAP
SLEDGE
HAMMER
GLOP
CREO
PI
SANO
FISH
CAMP
ADMITONE
LEFT COAST
BOONE
MORAN
EVITA
BLOWIN
IN THE
WIND
SIREN
CAPON
LIEU
NONA
SLED
SWING
SERB
NYT

DEATH NOTICES

FREDERICK DELUCA (95), of Alexandria, June 16, 2023
LAURA HEIDY-HALBERSTEIN (71), of Alexandria, June 17, 2023
FRANCES HARRISON (70), formerly of Alexandria, June 10, 2023
MAJORIE KEHLER (70), of Alexandria, June 6, 2023
MICHAEL MARNO (61), of Alexandria, June 12, 2023
JACQUELINE (JAKI) MCCULLOUGH (73), formerly of Alexandria, June 9, 2023
BARBARA “BARBIE” MILLER (74), of Alexandria, June 12, 2023
GLORIA SAVET (88), of Alexandria, June 2, 2023
LOUISA SMUCKER (98), of Alexandria, June 16, 2023
KATHLEEN SOBER (58), of Alexandria, June 14, 2023
RONALD (RON) TESORERO (89), formerly of Alexandria, June 3, 2023
COLA THRASH (92), of Alexandria, June 6, 2023
ADA WILSON (88), formerly of Alexandria, June 6, 2023

Solutions from last week

1. Tweet, for one
2. Love, in Bolivia
3. Camilla of England
4. Legal aid
5. Beads (Abbr.)
6. 60s, maybe
7. Despair
8. Counting book
9. Golden retriever
10. Nominated for a Nobel Prize

Extra:

BUSINESS NEWS by Rebecca Goldstein, edited by Jeff Chen

ACROSS
1. Private areas in a modern office
2. Blah
3. Capital of Kansas
4. Facebook, briefly
5. Float, as an aroma
6. From the top
7. Float, as an aroma
8. Ride with a chauffeur
9. Inconsistent way to pay
10. Makeup of bath bubbles
11. Inconsistent way to pay
12. Private student
13. Skateboarder's sneaker brand
14. No. on an invoice
15. Improvements?
16. Incremental iPhone
17. Improvements?
18. Counterfeit products sent
19. Central dogma of biology
20. Also
21. Scull
22. Opera solo
23. Improvements?
24. Improvements?
25. Improvements?
26. Improvements?
27. Improvements?
28. Improvements?
29. Improvements?
30. Improvements?
31. Improvements?
32. Improvements?
33. Improvements?
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50. Improvements?
51. Improvements?
52. Improvements?
Juneteenth: A time of reflecting and rejoicing

On June 19, 1865, two months after Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House and two and a half years after the Emancipation Proclamation, the good news that all slaves were free reached the western reaches of the former confederacy upon the arrival of Union troops in Galveston, Texas.

Although the subject of local and regional commemorations ever since, particularly by Black Americans, this past Monday was only the third Juneteenth since Congress made it a federal holiday in 2021. The relative infancy of Juneteenth as a day of national celebration means that it is still being invested with tradition.

How should we best remember a day that is so resonant with different and conflicting meaning? With jubilation at the promise of freedom. With humility that freedom’s promise is not self-fulfilling – a lesson from Galveston that throws in tragic relief the distance still between equality at law and equality in fact. A day that stings from the shame of America’s history of chattel slavery, but which in its enshrinement as a national holiday offers hope that by generations and increments the arc of history is actually bending toward justice.

Is Juneteenth celebratory or solemn, festive or decorous? A party or a church service? Maybe it is all of these.

On Monday, a crowd gathered in the afternoon sun of Alexandria’s Market Square to listen to members of Washington Revels Jubilee Voices offer a performance to meet the occasion. Presented by the Office of Historic Alexandria and co-sponsored by Washington Revels and the Alexandria Black History Museum, the Jubilee Voices shared “Singing the Journey: Juneteenth Joy,” a collection of traditional music and spoken word.

Stories, poetry, gospel hymns and work songs echoed through our public square. A cultural inheritance born amid slavery’s desolation, but which in its beauty, courage and faith gave the lie to those that would deny through bondage the humanity of Black women, men and children.

As the audience began to participate, some tepidly and then more confidently, in the call and response rhythms of a Black gospel choir something thrilling happened. An assembly of strangers became a community. Clapping together and singing as the Voices ended their performance with “In that Great Getting Up Morning,” it was the sound of victory.

Do no harm

To the editor:

Last week Mayor Justin Wilson quoted a stream restoration expert on why City Council voted not to do Strawberry Run’s restoration: “… the stream has reached its hard clay bottom … the channel evolutionary phase is coming to an end.” This was the community’s recommendation last year, with one caveat: “Do nothing … except protect one home with wood” – which Council denied.

Three city engineering structures have failed to restrain Strawberry, which runs like an unbridled horse. Like a stallion, it shoots out a large culvert up to 22 feet per second, throwing askew more than 165 large boulders in its path. At the finish it gallops into a cement wall surrounding a too-small exit culvert. The vicious recoil forms a lake covering residents’ yards, destroying the Natural Channel Design which a city staffer described 10 years ago as “bad and downright ugly.”

But in the backstretch of Strawberry’s run, the steed charges right through a private property’s back yard – that’s why we asked Council to reclaim the person’s lost property.

Wilson asked, “What is the ‘public good’… [of] mak[ing] improvements on private properties that are adjacent to [Strawberry] run versus many other private properties that run off into similar streamways? I’ve got erosion problems in my back yard, so why would we spend city tax dollars for that?”

But no “improvements” were asked for any back yards covered by the lake which then erodes away. It was solely for the property now permanently occupied by a 12 foot-deep channel that replaced its missing back yard, and soon will test the mettle of the house itself.

Commensurate to the duty of public good is Council’s duty to correct – or avoid – public harm. It’s why Alexandria reimburses $2,000 to 3,000 when a public tree...
Racial Equity Toolkit

To the editor:
Our city government has hailed the recent introduction of the Racial Equity Toolkit to "promote racial equity" and "enhance marginalized communities" in our city. Based on the results of the selection process for the new principal for Alexandria City High School, it appears ACPS as well as the marginalized Hispanic community might mutually benefit from the use of this miraculous Racial Equity Toolkit. The two finalists for ACHS principal are both African American educators – despite the fact that the student population of both the high school and the entire school system is becoming increasingly majority Hispanic.

This must be sadly disappointing to the marginalized Hispanic communities of Arlandria/Chirilagua and the West End, whose self esteem would significantly benefit from seeing a member of their heritage in a leadership position. For example, according to the most recent ACPS annual report:

- In the entire ACPS, Hispanics comprise 38% of students, while Blacks are 25% of students.
- In the last high school graduation class, Hispanics made up 35% of students, while Blacks were 27% of the class.
- Only 10% of ACHS staff is Hispanic, while 33% is Black.

The results of this critically important leadership selection appear to contradict ACPS' highly publicized mantra of "Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity." Disappointingly, the marginalized Hispanic residents, which make up 38% of the student population, continue to make up only 10% of the administration, leadership and employees of ACHS while the African American population is disproportionately represented. Perhaps enrollment in the Racial Equity Toolkit Program will bring the ACHS administration, leadership and employees into a more equitable racial balance.

-Gerald B. File, Alexandria

Ethical Reflections

Pride cometh before a fall

BY REV. IAN S. MARKHAM

This famous text from Proverbs 16 is at the heart of Christian theology. The fall is preceded by pride. Two ancient Christian myths — and myth is simply a poetic vehicle to capture truth that transcends the scientific or historical — embody this claim: the first is the fall of Lucifer. Lucifer was the chief of angels who wanted divine authority; and as a result of his pride, he fell from heaven to hell to become Satan.

The second is the fall of Adam and Eve. Through an act of disobedience, they wanted to be as God — knowing both good and evil — and out of that assertion of pride, they found themselves cast out of the garden.

Pride is an assertion of self that assumes an excessive sense of self and with it an entitlement that is inappropriate. This was the sin of Lucifer and the sin of Adam; and it is the continuing temptation of anyone with even a modicum of power. The fall is the consequence of that uncontrolled pride: you imagine that you can get away with anything and then you discover that this is not the case.

Other religious traditions have a similar idea. In Hinduism, for example, the doctrine of karma is a moral law of cause and effect. Bad actions have bad consequences, which are inescapable. In the end, life catches up with us either in this life or the life to come.

From the business traveler who claims inappropriate expenses to the person who totally embellishes their resume to get elected to Congress, the Christian claim is that pride is at work here.

The ethical rules that apply to those who are less significant in the system do not apply to me. I am allowed to live differently because of who I am. Power is a temptation; it is also, often, an illusion. The powerful have less power than they realize. And the fall, or karma, finally comes about.

Jeffrey Epstein, the sex trafficker and financier, was finally arrested and jailed. Harvey Weinstein, the Hollywood mogul, despite appearing untouchable for decades, is now serving a 23-year jail term. Elizabeth Holmes, CEO of Theranos, the blood testing startup, is now in prison for fraud. Now granted Russian dictator Joseph Stalin managed to get away with his many sins; and of course, following Immanuel Kant and our Hindu friends, one trusts in the life to come there will be some accountability for his actions.

In Britain, the fall of Boris Johnson has been dramatic. He became Prime Minister in 2019 and delivered the largest General Election win for the Tories since 1987.

Then, during the COVID pandemic, his government created a set of COVID-19 rules that he ignored. “Partygate,” as it became known, evolved into lying to the House of Commons, which culminated in his resignation from the House of Commons. Pride really did come before the fall; his assumption that the rules did not apply to him led to an unfolding saga that culminated in humiliation.

America is following closely the saga of the former president’s legal travails, and that of the current president’s son. A person is innocent until proven guilty; so, we must wait until the courts have done their work.

But the Christian mythos has a resonance even here. Anyone with any power needs to tread carefully. Power is given for a season; it is never a lifetime appointment. Even in places where lifetime language is used, one must still tread carefully. Please note Supreme Court Justices.

Rules do apply to us all. To be a morally serious person is the safeguard. Such a person should think long and hard about why they are an exception to this or that rule that others are required to follow. And almost always, such a person should decide that they are not an exception to that rule.

For truly, pride really does come before a fall.

The writer is dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary.
Commentary | Denise Dunbar

I like Bryce

BY DENISE DUNBAR

Why do people boo at sporting events?

And why do Washington Nationals fans, who are generally polite and appreciative of current and former players, boo Bryce Harper with such vitriol in 2023, his fifth season as a Philadelphia Phillie?

I pondered both questions while attending two of the Nats-Phillies games the first weekend of June. I saw that the booing really bothered Bryce. His body language exuded a mixture of anger, frustration and, I think, sadness. He clearly would have loved nothing better than to hit a 500-foot home run. He didn’t.

Why do we boo at sporting events? It’s not just because we resent the salaries that modern-day athletes make. Boosing at sporting events has been around since way before professional athletes began making ridiculous money. Perhaps it dates back to the Romans and gladiators. Maybe boosing is a remnant of prehistoric life, where clearly distinguishing between “us” and “them” was a matter of survival.

Why do we reserve this practice for sports though?

We don’t boo our minister at church if they give a lackluster sermon. We don’t generally berate the cashier at Safeway for an apathetic checkout. We don’t boo the actor whose misfortune is to perform Hamlet less exquisitely than Sir John Gielgud.

Perhaps local psychologists or anthropologists can explain the roots of boosing.

I’m particularly intrigued, and saddened, by the treatment Harper gets on each trip here to play the Nationals. Nats fans are normally better behaved than our Northeastern counterparts in Boston, New York and, yes, Philly.

Maybe we’re not as pleasant as St. Louis Cardinals fans—who I’ve found to be unfailingly well-informed and nice—but we’re not normally mean.

Except to Bryce.

Yes, when he debuted with the Nationals in 2012, Bryce was brash and immature. He was also 19 years old when he was thrust onto a national stage. How well would any of us have handled that?

Harper won the National League MVP in 2015 at age 22, and left us with many great on-field memories. And he made the phrase, “That’s a clown question Bro” part of the lexicon. He’s one of the greatest players of his generation.

Harper was the best player on those powerhouse Nationals teams of the 2010s. He’s the best Nationals position player in franchise history and the best overall except for the incomparable Max Scherzer. Barring catastrophic injury, he’s a likely first-ballot Hall of Famer.

Yes, the Nationals won their one and only World Series the year after he left, with one of their weaker overall teams of that decade. They got hot at the right time and ran the table—just as Harper’s Phillies, also a wild card team, almost did last year.

I was discussing the booing—Harper phenomenon recently with a friend. Why, I asked, is Harper booed so heartily, while other former Nationals, particularly Juan Soto and Max Scherzer, are showered with adulation, not boos, when they return to Nats Park? She speculated it’s because Bryce left of his own free will, he chose Philly over D.C., whereas Juan and Max were traded.

Maybe.

But the offer the Nationals made to Harper after the 2018 season was considered well below his market value. He apparently wanted to stay here, but got a better deal in Philly. Whereas the Nats only traded Soto last year because he rejected their offer of a reported $440 million—which would have been the largest free agent contract ever. Juan rejected a better offer from Washington than in August. I encourage all of our students to take pride in who you are and what you have achieved and remain confident to tackle what’s yet to come.

Over the summer months, I am heartened to see many of our ACPS students will be taking advantage of our free summer learning enrichment programs being offered for all current PreK-8 students. These programs help enrich a student’s learning experience while keeping them engaged educationally and ready to take on a new school year.

Summer reading is another way for our students to stay academically connected. Alexandria Library offers reading incentives through SummerQuest 2023 to include rising kindergarteners and rising first to fifth graders. SummerQuest Teen reaches out to rising sixth and 12th graders. Alexandria Library also offers programs for students of various ages to learn from and enjoy.

Another educational experience awaits in Washington, D.C. at the Smithsonian Institution museums, the world’s largest museum, education and research complex. Throughout its museums, the arts and culture, history and science are brought to life in its many exhibits.

As I look ahead to the 2023-24 school year with great anticipation, it is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey is truly an honor that my life’s journey.

The 2022-23 academic year has drawn to a close in Alexandria City Public Schools. While our students closed out the school year realizing their growth, academically and personally, they look forward to what lies ahead and the impact they will all make in the world.

Members of the Alexandria City High School Class of 2023 have shown tremendous resilience and acquired life skills that will enable them to succeed no matter what challenges they may face. As interim superintendent, this is my first graduating class and it will forever have a special place in my memories. Next year, I look forward to my first class of graduating seniors as I take on the role of permanent superintendent. New beginnings are in abundance.

On graduation day, our ACHS students celebrated their many accomplishments while in high school and look forward to what their future may hold. Many of our graduating seniors will be college-bound or attending a technical school come fall. Others have plans to join the military.

Some of our students will take a gap year or enter the work force. These are among the first major life decisions the Class of 2023 will make and I know our graduates will take the lessons learned during their years at ACPS and apply them to the various paths they choose to follow.

The growth our graduates have realized during their years at ACPS is also shared by each student within the school division as they move on to the next grade. As each year passes, our students not only learn academically, but they also experience social and emotional growth that will carry them through their lives.

Our students on every grade level can draw inspiration from our graduates as they see what success can look like. We also look forward to welcoming all of our new students who will join us
The man behind James Bland Housing

BY LAUREL SPEAR

Born in 1854 in Flushing, New York, James “Jimmy” Bland was a free African American musician and songwriter. Best known for composing more than 700 songs, Bland wrote “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny” which was named the official state song of Virginia from 1940-1997. Bland was inducted into the Songwriter Hall of Fame because of his revolutionary songwriting and for helping to break down racial barriers in the music industry.

At the age of 12, Bland discovered his love of music in Philadelphia, and built his own banjo. After moving to Washington D.C., 15-year-old Bland began composing short pieces of original music and earning money playing on the street. His father was one of the first African Americans to graduate from college in the U.S., and Bland followed in his footsteps by attending Howard University.

After graduating at age 19, Bland began looking for work with minstrel groups, but they turned him down because groups preferred to hire white men in blackface. In 1875, he found employment with Billy Kersands’ “All Negro Minstrel Group” and toured with them for the next few years.

In 1881, Bland traveled to Europe where he spent 20 years singing with Callender-Haverly’s Minstrels and later touring as a solo artist. While in Europe, Bland found financial success, and even performed for Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales. Although he prospered while in Europe, in 1902 he returned to D.C. penniless. After he died from tuberculosis in 1911, he was buried in an unmarked grave.

In 1940, The Lions Club petitioned for “Take Me Back to Old Virginny” to be named the official state song of Virginia, and six years later, the club found Bland’s grave and erected a marker in his honor. Because the song contained stereotypical lyrics and was written from the perspective of a former slave reminiscing about being enslaved, in 1997 it was removed as the state song.

Because of his prominence in the music industry and the popularity of “Carry Me Back to Old Virginny,” the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority constructed the James Bland Complex in 1954 to 1959. Located on the North-west end of Alexandria’s Historic District, this complex housed low-income African American residents.

Before the housing was constructed, a World-War-II-era trailer camp occupied the site. When ARHA finished building the James Bland Housing, many of the trailer park residents moved into the newly constructed housing.

In 2008, the Alexandria City Council approved a redevelopment of the complex that would replace the existing James Bland Housing with a mix of affordable and market-rate housing. This redevelopment included the creation of 218 new mixed-income townhomes and multi-family dwellings as well as open spaces and additional parking.

Although many Alexandrians do not know the story behind the James Bland Housing, as former Bland resident James E. Henson Sr. explained in an interview with Oral History by the Office of Historic Alexandria:

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Weekly Poll

**Last Week**

**Do you think the new principal of Alexandria City High School should be someone from inside ACPS or an outside hire?**

- 62% Just hire the best person.
- 22% Outside for a fresh perspective.
- 11% Inside for continuity.
- 5% I’m not sure.

**This Week**

**Did you attend any city Juneteenth events?**

- A) Yes, I went to as many as I could.
- B) No, I wasn’t able to attend.
- C) I celebrated privately.
- D) I don’t celebrate Juneteenth.
LEGAL NOTICE

Board of Architectural Review
LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing will be held by the Board of Architectural Review on Thursday, July 6, 2023 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chamber, room 2400, second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314 on the following applications:

BAR#2023-00211 OHAD Request for alterations at 211 Prince Street Applicant: Andrew Warrell

BAR#2023-00235 OHAD Request for alterations at 720 King Street Applicant: Glynn Jones Salon

BAR#2023-00242 OHAD Request for alterations at 318 N Alfred Street Applicant: Kulinski Group Architects, PC

ARCHITECTS, PC
Applicant: Kulinski Group
Request for alterations at BAR#2023-00242 OHAD

Applicant: Glynn Jones Salon
720 King Street
Request for alterations at BAR#2023-00235 OHAD

Applicant: Andrew Warrell
211 Prince Street
Request for alterations at BAR#2023-00211 OHAD

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Alexandria, Virginia 22314 on the floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, 7:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Thursday, July 6, 2023 beginning at Board of Architectural Review on
A Public Hearing will be held by the

LEGAL NOTICE

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 #2023-00050
1003 North Vail Street
Administrative Special Use Permit request for a New Use for a Child Care Home; zoned: RA/Residential Multi-Family
Applicant: Shazia Asim
Proposed Business Name: Blooming Babies Daycare 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 July 13, 2023.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Trust Bank, located at 301 Duke St, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, is in possession of assets owned by the following decedent, Laurence Schlegel, who at the time of his death was domiciled outside of Virginia. In accordance with Va. Code Ann. § 64.2-609(A), Trust Bank hereby gives public notice of its intention to deliver the decedent’s assets to the Administrator of decedent’s estate, Mark A. Cooper, who has qualified as Personal Representative in accordance with the law of the decedent’s domicile. Delivery is to be made after the lapse of thirty (30) days from the completion of due publication of this notice, pursuant to the Code, once a week for four successive weeks. Inquiries, including any notice of the appointment of a personal representative for decedent in Virginia or legal notice of any lien or encumbrance upon decedent’s assets, should be directed to Trust Bank at the address above.

FICTITIOUS NAME NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Rebecca Young Greven (sole owner), desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of <Cruise Planners> located in Washington D.C. intends to register said name with the Division of Corporations, Florida Department of State, pursuant to section 865.09 of the Florida Statutes. This business will relocate to Alexandria County, Virginia in August 2023.

ACQUIRING BUSINESS

Auction#: NCAL#561
Rapids, NC. Info: https://sampowell.dairyrd.com

POND AND TIMBER. 4108 +1576 SF. BEAUTIFUL 5-ACRE TWO TRACTS HOMESITE - SATURDAY JUNE 24, 2023

For further information, call (703) 484-4666. City’s website at www.alexandriava.gov/planning or call (703) 746-4666.

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Margaret Stevens
mstevens@alextimes.com

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As a resident of Alexandria since 1989, I love living, working and giving back to the community I call home. Please help make a difference by supporting three of my favorite Alexandria organizations in July and August.

Food Drive for ALIVE! in conjunction with Volunteer Alexandria  
SATURDAY, JULY 15 | 10 AM - 1 PM  
Old Town Village Roundhouse | 343 S. Fayette Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Clothing and Housewares Drive for The TWIG (The Junior Auxilary of Alexandria Hospital)  
SATURDAY, AUGUST 5 | 10 AM - 1 PM  
Old Town Village Roundhouse | 343 S. Fayette Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

Shop and Support the Board of Lady Managers at Sara Campbell (Supports Inova Alexandria Hospital)  
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9 | 10 AM - 7:30 PM  
Sara Campbell | 320 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314