Help!

**Police plead for community’s help as gun violence spikes in Alexandria**
**BY AMY WILL**

Alexandria has recently experienced an alarming rise in gun violence and other violent crimes, with many felonies being committed in broad daylight. Murders, carjackings and brazen auto theft have our city’s residents, and leaders, on edge.

“Crime at this level – the amount of crimes being committed with guns. I’ve never seen it at this multitude,” Alexandria Police Chief Don Hayes said candidly in a phone interview on Tuesday about the current climate in the city.

On July 24, 29-year-old father Eric Holmes, Jr. was shot and killed at approximately 11:30 a.m. in the 800 block of West Glebe Road. The incident happened at a playground in the neighborhood, and according to police, Holmes died after being transported to a hospital, making it the fifth homicide this year.

Don Hayes

Dispatch calls available on openMHz.com detail the critical moments during the officers’ pursuit of the suspected gunman, believed to be driving a silver Nissan Rogue with an “Enterprise Car Sales” placard.

El Mac attack

**Visionary mural artist brings inspiration to Alexandria**
**BY LEXIE JORDAN**

Bare walls are no fun. That’s why Mike Dameron of Windmill Hill LLC, the owner of the up-and-coming apartments at 901 King St., decided to reach out to world renowned artist El Mac about painting the side wall of the white brick building.

The idea originally was supposed to be a very generic “901” written on the side. However, as the planning process began and the advisory board approved of the sign, Dameron decided to dream bigger.
Join Us!
Our Alexandria City Public Schools Donation Drive

It’s no secret we love Alexandria and are always actively seeking out ways to contribute to our amazing community. As we step into the second half of the year, we are excited to provide an opportunity to give back by supporting Alexandria County Public Schools in their efforts to collect backpacks and school supplies, now through August 14th.

We’ve made it easy to donate using the steps below to purchase supplies through the ACPS Amazon Wishlist and have items shipped or dropped off at our Compass office in Old Town.

Thank you in advance for your donations!! We look forward to working together with you to set every student up for a successful school year.

- Contact us to receive the ACPS Amazon Wishlist
- Purchase items from the Wishlist and have them shipped or dropped off to our Compass office:
  ATTN: Sam S.
  1004 King St
  Alexandria, VA 22314
  OR we can coordinate to pick them up!
- Notify us when you’ve sent your donation!

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Proud sponsor of the Alexandria Lacrosse Club
Chinquapin Wahoos win three titles

PHOTO/MARISHA GOLDFIEMER
Chase Conjura (blue cap) and Bennett Sherry swim in the boys 8 and under 25-meter breaststroke at the Colonial Swim League’s Cory Young All-Star meet.

Alexandria Aces lose in championship

After an unprecedented regular season, during which the Alexandria Aces set a Cal Ripken Collegiate Baseball League record with an .833 regular season winning percentage, the Aces fell to the Bethesda Big Train in the league championship series last week.

Bethesda defeated the Aces in Alexandria on July 25 by a score of 16-10, then won the next night in Bethesda, 7-3 to secure the title. Alexandria and Bethesda have traded off winning the championship the last three years, with the Aces prevailing last year and the Big Train winning in 2021.

Aces highlights during the 2023 season included a regular season record of 30-6 and a 17-game winning streak, both league records. All Aces players have left Alexandria and returned to their homes in Ohio, Indiana Alabama, New Mexico and other locations around the United States, according to Aces owner Frank Fannon.

“We look forward to the 2024 season under the leadership of Coach Berret as we assemble another great team over the winter that will report to Alexandria on June 1, 2024,” Fannon said.

National Night Out comes to ALX

On Tuesday Alexandrians joined with the Alexandria Police Department and other emergency medical service members during the 40th annual National Night Out. National Night Out is a yearly opportunity for police to interact with the community. The Carlyle neighborhood’s council hosted a national night out event featuring lawn games, a DJ, tables from local partners, kids checking out a fire engine and free food.

David Mammel, co-owner of Sweet Fire Donna’s and Tequila and Tacos, provided food for the event. As he watched firefighters danced the cha-cha slide with residents, he remarked on the increase in size from last year’s celebration.

“We served about 400 people last year. I’d guess it’ll be more like 500 this year,” Mammel said.

According to Jeremiah Sisler, lieutenant from the Alexandria Fire Department, National Night Out is an opportunity for community-building.

“100% it’s a relationship builder. We get to shake hands and say hi,” Sisler said.

He’s been attending NNO with the department off and on for 11 years and leads tours through the fire house.

“It’s good for first responders and community members to meet when they aren’t in an emergency,” Sisler said.

At the Charles Houston Recreation Center first responders mingled with local residents and their kids while hotdogs sizzled on a grill in the parking lot.

APD Lieutenant Biruk Dessalegn, who has been participating in NNO for 15 years, discussed the chance to connect with the community.

“I got to play basketball with a couple of kids. You don’t get to do that on patrol,” he said.

The evening provides an opportunity for candid talk with law enforcement as well.

“We have those conversations every day, it doesn’t have to be National Night Out. We’re trending in the right direction with that dialog,” Dessalegn added.

In a time where discussions around policing in America are in flux, NNO offers an opportunity to bridge the political divide. It’s a chance for police and emergency first responders to build relationships with the community and improve their ability to serve with public trust.

Meet Coco!

AlexandriaAnimals.org/Adopt-By-Appointment
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“Because everyone needs a home.”
“[We] are outraged about the senseless crime that is taking place in our city ... We are waiting for your call. We cannot do this without you.”

– Don Hayes,
Alexandria Police Chief

CRIME

from: 1

in the rear license plate holder. At one point, in the openMHz.com recording, an officer indicates the vehicle was possibly heading northbound on 395, but the pursuing officers lost sight of the vehicle.

Hayes confirmed the investigation is ongoing and the department continues to pursue any information that may result in a lead.

A video produced and posted to the City of Alexandria YouTube page following the incident includes messages from Hayes, City Manager Jim Parajon and Mayor Justin Wilson encouraging witnesses to share any information they may have about the case.

“I’ve been doing this job for a long time and we are outraged about the senseless crime that is taking place in our city,” Hayes said in his video message. Urging people to come forward, he continued, “We are waiting for your call. We cannot do this without you.”

Hayes later explained in his interview on Tuesday that the video – which has more than one thousand views and was shared to various social media sites – has delivered some helpful information, noting the importance of outreach across all platforms.

“We want people and these perpetrators to understand we are not set apart from the community,” Hayes said.

Wilson, who shared in the YouTube video that he was “deeply concerned, shocked, frustrated by the violence that is impacting our city and impacting our entire region every day,” explained in a phone interview last week that “there’s definitely a problem,” resounding Hayes’ plea for citizens to speak up.

“I think a real challenge for us – and I think this is part of what the chief’s message was – is we are not getting a lot of information,” Wilson said in the interview. “Folks are not coming forward and telling us what they’ve seen and assisting the police department in their investigation. ... I think we’re trying to get that message out. Make sure folks understand that you know the leadership of the city, the leadership of the police department is concerned about this violence.”

A staggering number of the recent crimes are being committed by teenagers.

“Almost exclusively the people who are perpetuating this violence are 14- to 25-year-old males. These are
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teenage to young adult males who are perpetuating most of this violence around our community and around the region,” Wilson said.

On July 25, the day after the murder of Holmes, Jr., a 14-year-old male was taken into custody after police responded to a 9-1-1 call from an Alexandria resident around 9 a.m. In a release from July 26, APD stated that a woman reported being forcefully removed from her vehicle as it was being stolen. With help from the Metropolitan Police Department, the vehicle was located hours later in the District of Columbia.

Although the suspect was unarmed in that incident, the mayor said the city is lobbying at the federal level for assistance in keeping guns out of the hands of minors.

“We're going to continue to work with the legislators and the federal side to try to advocate for cutting the tide of the flow of guns into our community,” Wilson said. “You know, these are guns that are flowing from other states that are becoming very accessible. A teenage boy should not be able to get a firearm; but, we're seeing teenage boys show up at scenes of crimes with firearms and that's just, that's unacceptable.”

In a previous Times article from March discussing the Alexandria Police Department’s annual review, it was reported gun violence cases had doubled in the city year-over-year from 2021 to 2022 – from 76 cases to 152.

APD is currently working on a Times request for information on the total number of gun-related crimes in Alexandria this year; those numbers were not available in time for this story.

There have been approximately 11 stolen vehicle cases since the July 25 carjacking – which is just over one week. The crimes, according to the department’s online database, all occurred between the hours of 6:40 a.m. and 2:20 p.m.

Both Hayes and Wilson touched on the challenges Alexandria’s understaffed department faces. In March, APD stated it was “operating at minimal sworn staffing levels,” indicating the department was stretched thin.

In June, however, APD and the Alexandria Sheriff’s Office announced the graduation of 18 police officers and 15 sheriff’s deputies from the Northern Virginia Criminal Justice Training Academy, making it one of the largest graduating classes the city has had.

Although adding a robust group of new officers to the streets is a step in the right direction, Hayes also emphasized that partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions are essential to solving crimes and arresting perpetrators. Hayes specifically cited the assistance APD received from Metropolitan Police in last Tuesday’s carjacking arrest.

Wilson also acknowledged the importance of transparency.

“The fact is we can do a better job – and we will do a better job of communicating with the public through every medium,” he said.

Wilson added that continuing to engage with youths and giving the police department the resources they need will hopefully lead to change.

Focused on outreach and strengthening the department’s relationship in the community, Hayes wants the city to know safety is top priority and a collaborative effort.

“We need you to help us so that we can help you and help all of us have the community in Alexandria that we are used to,” Hayes said.

–awill@alextimes.com

Gregory Bruce English

Obituary

Gregory Bruce English, 76, passed away on July 12, 2023 after a life full of travel, commitment to his health by working out and dedication to the law.

Known for his quick wit and love of people, Greg relished learning greetings in over 20 languages during his travels to 49 countries. His favorite destinations included Kenya, India, Russia and Nepal, where he found it fascinating to ride elephants in Chitwan National Park.

Born in Lynchburg, Virginia in 1946, Greg considered his time training as a Marine at Parris Island one of the toughest and most formative experiences of his life. After serving in the Marine Corps Reserves, Greg attended the University of Virginia School of Law graduating in 1975. He began his legal career prosecuting cases as a captain in the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps, followed by appellate work.

After his discharge from the Army, he joined the D.C. Army National Guard where he was senior legal officer.

Greg later joined the Department of Justice as a senior trial attorney focused on prosecuting major drug trafficking organizations. Known for his innovative spirit, he pioneered the use of joint agency task forces and aggressive prosecution tactics to combat kingpins. In private practice he was board certified in Virginia, Maryland and primarily Federal court in the District of Columbia.

Though proud of this work, Greg was most proud of his subsequent career defending the disadvantaged as a criminal defense attorney in Alexandria. He will be remembered for his commitment to justice and providing the best defense for even the most infamous clients.

Above all, Greg cherished the life he built with his wife Saundra. They shared a passion for immersing themselves in diverse cultures during their travels together. For many years they also sponsored foreign exchange officers from countries around the world fostering lifelong friendships. Greg was dedicated to passing his sense of exploration and care for others on to younger generations. He often brought along his grandson on trips overseas, helping shape his worldview.

Greg lived life to the fullest, with an insatiable curiosity towards people and ideas. His readiness with a joke and a story will be deeply missed by all who knew him. He is survived by his wife Saundra English Prince and son Erik Todd English.

Arrangements for his burial at Arlington National Cemetery are pending.
“It’s really such a unique corner and we thought something more special, more unique than a traditional stencil would be best,” Dameron said.

Upon doing a bit of research, Dameron came across El Mac.

El Mac, whose real name is Miles MacGregor, is an artist born and based in Los Angeles. He works in various mediums, from acrylics to prints to pencil sketches to murals. He has been asked to paint murals in several different countries and for many well-known companies and establishments such as Northeastern University, University of California San Diego, the Groeninge Museum in Belgium and the Mexican secretariat of Foreign Affairs.

According to his website, elmac.net, for the past 20 years El Mac has aimed “to uplift and inspire through careful, perfectionist renderings of both the sublime and the humble.”

Dameron reached out to El Mac in the spring of 2023 and to his surprise received a response rather quickly. El Mac had never been to the D.C. area before and was interested in the offer. It took three to four months to get the project started and the contracts signed. Then, finally in the last week of June, El Mac was able to come to Alexandria. He rented an Airbnb in Old Town and brought his wife, child and videographer Eric Heights with him.

When asked about the inspiration, Dameron said that the piece was left entirely up to the artist.

“He got to make the decision on it because he is such a talented artist. He really tries to highlight and create his art around the ordinary person. In [El Mac’s] words, ‘no single person is more important than others,’” Dameron said.

Dameron and El Mac hashed out the details over a coffee at Misha’s at the beginning of the week-long trip. El Mac wanted to go for something more muted and neutral, and Dameron was all for the vision.

“It was absolutely his vision, his work, his time schedule. We would have a conversation pretty much every other day. Very casual, candid,” Dameron said.

The project itself took him under a week to complete, and he would only work at night.
and into the early hours.

According to Dameron, El Mac doesn’t stencil his art, all he uses is an iPad, his paint and a lift.

The final product is a woman with glasses looking south down Alfred Street. While there are some blue accents in the mural, the art is mainly drawn in black and white. It has a vibrant and flowy aspect to it as El Mac used straight and wavy lines to contour and express shadows in the woman’s face, hair, clothes and hand.

According to Dameron, the piece is a hit with the public.

“I have received a few dozen text messages about positive feedback and a lot of people will stop, take pictures and talk about it,” Dameron said.

This type of art is not a new thing for El Mac. The majority of his murals are of human characters, highlighting his belief that the average person is just as important as anyone else. He has some magnificent pieces in public places and even some similar ones such as “La Abuelita” which is on The American Hotel in the Los Angeles Arts District and “An Enduring Spell” located on Argo Hall at UCSD.

El Mac has been around art his entire life, as one of his parents was an artist and the other an engineer, according to widewalls.ch.

“El Mac has been creating and studying art independently since childhood. He was inspired at a young age by classic European painters such as Caravaggio, and Vermeer and Art Nouveau symbolists such as Klimt and Mucha,” according to the widewalls.ch bio of El Mac.

Per his website, El Mac has also been influenced by social realism, symbolism and devotional art, as well as the Chicano and Mexican culture he grew up around.

“I think there’s a lot of great street art here in the region like in Richmond, Baltimore and even D.C. has a bunch. Alexandria has some but it’s not to that same extent,” Dameron noted when recalling why he wished to do street art instead of that original “901” sign.

“El Mac was my top choice. He is the elite of the elite in his field,” Dameron said.

Now Alexandria residents and visitors can enjoy his work too.

Dameron said that the art was quite a victory, but meeting El Mac and his family and hanging out with him was an equally special experience.

“El Mac himself is an incredible human being, and he is amazingly humble,” Dameron said.

According to Dameron, El Mac said he really enjoyed his time in Alexandria and appreciated how kind and welcoming everyone was toward him and his family. When bystanders would address him while he was working, El Mac was always ready to come down from the lift and talk to people about his art.

The apartments at 901 King St. are set to open at the end of 2023 and beginning of 2024.

To learn more, visit https://elmac.net
Alexandria Celebrates Women

Women going the extra mile

Trek follows historic route from Alexandria to Richmond
BY GAYLE CONVERSE AND PAT MILLER

March 3, 1913
Washington, D.C.
Following the same route Woodrow Wilson’s inaugural parade would take the next day, thousands of women marched 1.2 miles along Pennsylvania Avenue.

The procession, organized by the National American Woman Suffrage Association, was designed to present the accomplishments of women in the nation and around the world. The demonstration played out before more than 250,000 onlookers. Behind the marchers, bands played patriotic songs and elaborate floats illustrated the beauty and competence of women.

It was the first suffragist parade in Washington, D.C. It was also the first large, organized march on Washington.

With perhaps not quite so much hoop-la, but containing many more miles, our nation’s centuries-old journey for women’s equality will continue from Alexandria, Virginia this August as Alexandria Celebrates Women leads the way.

August 5, 2023
Alexandria, Virginia
Beginning at 8 a.m. on August 5, with a severe weather date scheduled for August 6, ACW Vice President Gayle Converse will lead “Women Going the Extra Mile:” a 133-mile trek from Alexandria to Richmond, Virginia to raise awareness for many women’s issues.

“We are walking for women’s equality – in health care, at the ballot box and everywhere else. We honor women and girls of today and throughout history who have broken tradition, social norms, glass ceilings and gone the extra mile,” Converse said.

Walkers will follow the East Coast Greenway, a developing 3,000-mile network of protected pathways from Maine to Florida.

Converse will lead walkers from the steps of the Kate Waller Barrett Library, past additional women’s historic sites in Alexandria City to Mount Vernon. The route proceeds to the Lucy Burns Museum at the Workhouse Arts Center, followed by Occoquan Regional Park which is home to the Turning Point Suffragist Memorial.

The journey will end on August 26, Women’s Equality Day, at the Virginia Women’s Monument on Capitol Square in Richmond.

Join us for this once-in-a-lifetime expedition, for one step or the entire route, as Alexandria Celebrates Women “Goes the Extra Mile” to bring increased awareness to women’s health, history and equity.

For more information, visit eventbrite.com/e/women-going-the-extra-mile-tickets-681045404137

The writers are founders of Alexandria Celebrates Women, a nonprofit that highlights influential women throughout the city’s history. Contact them at AlexandriaCelebratesWomen@gmail.com.
‘Freaky Friday’ at LTA

New production of a fan favorite rarely misses a beat
BY THOMPSON ESKEW

The Little Theatre of Alexandria’s production of “Freaky Friday” opened on Saturday, offering a modern retelling of the well-known narrative while focusing on the central story around familiar elements that longtime fans of the premise will appreciate.

Mary Rodgers’ 1972 novel by the same name was the original story. It was eventually adapted into three movies in 1976, 1995 and 2003, as well as an official musical in 2016, all produced by Disney.

Each previous rendition has followed the basic story structure set by the novel, focusing on the strained relationship between a mother and daughter who refuse to see eye-to-eye until an ambiguous force has each live the other’s life for a day. In this, LTA’s production is true-to-form.

“I just love the whole theme: What would we be like if we got to live in someone else’s world for a day? How much more understanding and empathy would there be?” the production’s director Joanna Henry explained in an interview.

Set in the modern day, LTA’s “Freaky Friday” most closely resembles the 2016 musical production, following the annoyed daughter Ellie Blake, who is up in arms against her mother Katherine as the latter prepares to get married.

Sofia Cruz delivers a fantastic performance as Ellie, bringing a powerful presence to the stage with her voice. Cruz makes the audience truly understand her grievances with her mother, fueling a divide which many parents and teenagers can relate to.

The mental switch-up that the story revolves around also enables Cruz to explore her range. When she plays Katherine in Ellie’s body through most of the musical, a fun mixture of humor and heart shines there. In the new mannersms, Cruz exhibits a mature woman experiencing the chaotic life of her teenage daughter firsthand.

Similarly, Kristina Friedgen brings an equally powerful act to the stage in her motherly role with her physical and vocal performance. Matching the energy of Cruz throughout the play, the dynamic shifts as she goes from playing a stressed-out mother and soon-to-be bride to portraying a teenage girl trapped in her busy mother’s body. The irony of the situation is never lost on the audience thanks to her humorous performance as teenage Ellie in Kristina’s body.

The rest of the cast also deliver energetic performances that liven up Ellie and Katherine’s surroundings. Paul Caffrey and James Campione, who portray the soon-to-be stepdad Mike and Ellie’s little brother Fletcher respectively, are each given their own time in the spotlight. They provide the audience with a greater understanding of the dynamics within the family, as well as the hilariously confused perspectives of those closest to Ellie and Katherine.

Naja Bates also executes her role as the bully Savannah with her voice and antagonistic attitude, providing the audience with the closest thing to a true villain as the story allows. Ellie’s love interest is depicted as a mildly oblivious but well-meaning Adam through Joshua Mutterperl. Their enthusiasm and that of other tertiary characters is enhanced by the many ensembles who play multiple supporting characters.

LTA’s production also follows the general story beats that best portray the lives of average teenage girls today. From the inclusion of mobile phones that guide their every move to the heartwarming messages about body-positivity, these additions are meant to reflect the constant pressure society often subjects young women to while providing the audience with a catchy musical number to boot.

Equally heartfelt and comedic, the production presents its audience with a variety of musical numbers of separate genres. These range from the lighthearted “Women and Sandwiches,” which reflects the views of one character on the complexity of women, to the grounded “No More Fear,” which explores the culmination of another character’s journey throughout the musical. Each number engages the audience with a bright choreographical display from the cast and the stage crew.

Overall, LTA’s “Freaky Friday” is a fun over-the-top musical that rarely misses a beat in its storytelling, with both the cast on the stage and the crew behind the scenes having clearly put everything they have into this production. When sitting among the spectators within the theatre, it is difficult not to want to sing along and dance to the beat.

“Freaky Friday” will run until August 12.


Disclaimer: The writer of this review is related to one of the musical’s ensemble members.

(L-R) Sofia Cruz and Kristina Friedgen.

Love is no small thing

Consider adopting a big dog
BY ERIN SHACKELFORD

From huskies to shepherds, to hounds to marvelous mystery mixes, animal shelters and rescue groups all over the country are struggling to find homes for larger-breed dogs. Big dogs can be a ton of fun. You might be surprised to learn that many need less space and exercise than you think.

Sadly, due to misconceptions about the space and care they require, these loveable goofballs don’t find homes as easily as their smaller counterparts.

This is true at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, too. Sometimes, a big dog’s length of stay is longer than a small dog or puppy.

What is considered a “big” dog?

In addition to being cuddle buddies, bed warmers (and hogs), and premier walking or running partners, big dogs are generally identified as pups who weigh more than 50 pounds.

There are misconceptions about big dogs, their behavior, their temperaments and what they need to thrive in a home. Like all animals, big dogs are individuals. Each have a unique personality and preferences.

While some are giant couch potatoes, others require a lot of exercise. Some are independent. Others are glued to your side every chance they get.

Big dogs can make great companions for a variety of families. Below are some reasons large-breed dogs make wonderful pets:

• Big dogs usually bark less than small breed dogs.
• Big dogs tend to have milder personalities, greater self-control and higher tolerance for young children compared to small dogs.
• Some large dogs can make excellent pets for apartment living. Not every large dog requires a lot of exercise, so they can thrive in smaller spaces or without yards.
• Big dog breed Labrador Retriever has topped AKC’s “Most Popular Dog Breed” list for 51 years straight (until this year). Other big dog breeds also make the top 10 list.
• Many large breed dogs are great with children and make excellent family pets due to their gentle and patient nature.
• Big dogs are loyal and can be easy to train and assimilate into routines.
• According to a study by the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna, big dogs are statistically better in three categories: obedience, aggression and excitability and anxiety and fearfulness.

Love is no small thing

While we want you to seriously think about adopting a big dog, there are some other aspects of adopting a larger dog to consider.

All animals require some exercise and mental stimulation every day, but some large breed dogs need more activity than others to live a happy, healthy, stress-free life. Definitely consider the dog’s activity needs and age when adopting.

Remember, adopting any dog regardless of size is a big responsibility and requires careful consideration of their needs and your lifestyle. Proper training, socialization and care are essential to ensure a happy and healthy life for your furry friend.

Adopting from the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

We have many incredible animals available for adoption, including rabbits, guinea pigs, gerbils, cats, kittens, puppies and small dogs.

“Love large” and adopt a big dog.

*The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria does not euthanize for space or length of stay. Animals can stay with us for as long as needed to find them a suitable and loving home.

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

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PHOTO/AWLA

PHOTO/AWLA
A mudroom is a must for organization

BY FAMILY FEATURES

Often positioned near the primary point of entry, mudrooms are a popular addition to many family homes. These organizational dynamos are the perfect place to catch muddy boots, backpacks, sports equipment and dirty paws before they make it all the way into main living areas.

Luxurious mudrooms in high-end homes can sometimes boast custom cabinetry, full bathrooms, laundry facilities, showers for pets and direct pantry access.

Regardless of whether your mudroom is an actual room or just a small space near the front door to hang bags and jackets, the organizational basics are the same.

Corral clutter
One of the most important items in any mudroom is storage for shoes, pet supplies, backpacks, sporting equipment and other items. If built-in storage isn’t in your budget, put up a sturdy shelving unit with a bin or basket for each family member.

Get hooked
Securely anchor a row of strong hooks along the wall for coats, hats, scarves or other seasonal accessories that may otherwise find themselves dropped on the floor upon arriving home.

Mud happens
Mudrooms are meant to handle dirt so nix the carpet Mitigating mayhem

SEE

MUDROOM | 13

FILE PHOTO

Mudrooms are the perfect place to catch muddy boots, backpacks and sports equipment.

HOME OF THE WEEK

Expansive historic home in the heart of Old Town

Currently comprised of three separate units, this home offers nearly 7,000 square feet of finished living space, with an additional 2,650 square feet available in the unfinished basement. It offers the possibility of rental income, multi-family living or a conversion to one residence.

The main home’s entrance on 219 Prince Street welcomes guests into a spacious entry foyer with a beautiful stair-case. Formal living and dining rooms are awash with natural light from the numerous windows. The second and third levels which house 5 bedrooms and two and a half baths boast exceptionally high ceilings.

The entrance at 126 S. Fairfax Street leads to two separate apartments, each featuring a living room, dining room, kitchen, laundry, full bath and two bedrooms. The charming European-style rear garden is private and serene. Just two blocks from the Potomac River, waterfront restaurants, parks and a short drive to Reagan National Airport, Amazon HQ2 and Washington, D.C.

Contact:
Lauren Bishop
McEnearney Associates
Realtors, Old Town
laurenbishophomes.com
lbishop@mcenearney.com
202-361-5079

AT A GLANCE

Address:
126 S. Fairfax St.,
Alexandria 22314

Neighborhood:
Old Town

Price: $2,495,000
Bedrooms: 9
Bathrooms: 4 full, 2 half
Year built: 1800
**AUGUST 5**


Time: 12 to 4 p.m.
Location: 121 N. Fairfax St.
Information: novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park

BEST OF THE WEST The West End Business Association invites all to the inaugural Best of the West event. Tastings from local restaurants, vendor booths, entertainment. Free, but pre-registration is recommended.

Time: 1 to 5 p.m.
Location: 4653 Taney Ave.
Information: alexandriaweba.com

**AUGUST 6**


Time: 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Location: 100 block of S. Alfred St.
Information: alexandriav.org/museums/the-annual-friendship-firehouse-festival

GO THE EXTRA MILE Join for a kick-off event to start a 133-mile trek from Alexandria to Richmond. Aimed at raising awareness for women’s issues. Join "Women Going the Extra Mile" by walking, running or cycling a few steps or for the entire journey. In conjunction with the Office of Historic Alexandria.

Time: 8 a.m.
Location: 717 Queen St.
Information: alexandria-celebrateswomen.com

**AUGUST 8**

REMEMBER BENJAMIN THOMAS Join for the unveiling of an historic marker. Participants are invited to solemnly follow the path to the lynching of Thomas where a wreath will be laid and an acknowledgement of this act will be acknowledged.

Time: 6 p.m.
Location: Corner of Princess and N. St. Asaph streets
Information: alexandriav.gov/Historic

**AUGUST 9**

SIDEWALK SALE One of the longest running seasonal summer shopping events.

Time: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Location: 100 block of S. Alfred St.
Information: alexandriav.org/museums/the-annual-friendship-firehouse-festival

**AUGUST 10**

BandS and BREWS Come to Del Ray for live music and specials on beer, cocktails and food. Tickets are required. Age 21+ to participate in the bar crawl, but children are welcome at family-friendly establishments. Proceeds will benefit the Friends of Duncan Library.

Time: 12:30 to 6 p.m.
Location: Mt. Vernon Avenue
Information: visitdelray.com

**AUGUST 11**

River FARM Picnic A free event. Open to the public. The American Horticultural Society celebrates 50 years at River Farm. Live music. Guests are encouraged to pack a blanket, food and drink. Enjoy terrific tunes in the beautiful gardens overlooking the Potomac.

Time: 8 p.m.
Location: 7931 East Boulevard Drive
Information: eventbrite.com/e/river-farm-anniversary-picnic-featuring-soulfire-tickets-6795586

Take command
Create a family command center by adding a small cabinet or desk with a corkboard above. It makes for a perfect spot to stash keys, charge cell phones, open mail, sort school papers and post the family calendar.

Tired of your website giving you a headache
LET US FIX IT

FILE PHOTO

Pick a stylish rug to catch dirt, while also adding a design element to the space.

MUDROOM FROM | 12

and lay down tile or hardwood flooring. Pick a stylish rug to catch dirt in its tracks while also adding a design element to the space.

Shoe space
Editorial

We’re in this together

The breathtaking increase in armed, violent crimes, and of felonies of all kinds in Alexandria in recent weeks has left our city shaken and scared.

Our car might be stolen when we stop for gas – or from in front of our home in broad daylight. We might be shot and killed if we take our child to a playground. We might find ourselves surrounded by robbers in a retail store when we’ve just stopped by to purchase makeup.

Unfortunately, the above scenarios are not hypothetical, but are real crimes that have been committed in Alexandria this year. Violent crime, which has been ticking up in recent years, has exploded in 2023 in Alexandria and elsewhere.

Maybe we are still experiencing residual effects of the COVID-19 shutdowns, though it’s been two years since schools reopened for full-time, in-person learning – and almost three years since most businesses reopened after the initial government-mandated shutdowns. So that explanation is getting a bit stale.

Our page 1 story, “Help!” examines a spate of crimes that have taken place in the past 10 days in Alexandria, ranging from murder to violent carjacking to grand theft auto.

The theme, echoed by a trio of city leaders – Police Chief Don Hayes, City Manager Jim Parajon and Mayor Justin Wilson – is that public safety officers need our help in solving crimes.

There’s a natural instinct to duck when bad things happen. We duck into our shells when tragedy touches our personal lives. We duck behind a counter when a robber enters a store. We think not getting involved might protect us from the criminals if they caught sight of eyewitnesses. Or we just don’t want to get involved.

But it takes a village to live together as a community, not just to help children flourish.

Our country was founded on the very concept of standing together. E pluribus unum means “out of many, one.”

The notion of responding to calls for help is also deeply rooted in most religious traditions.

Rabbi Hillel famously asked: “If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am not for others, what am I? And if not now, when?”

One of the most beautiful Christian hymns of the last half decade describes the response of a believer to a call for help:

“Here I am, Lord
Is it I, Lord?
I have heard You calling in the night
I will go, Lord
If You lead me
I will hold Your people in my heart”

And, of course, help was a recurring theme in music of The Beatles, arguably the most influential rock band of all time.

So, if you see something, even if you’re not sure, let the police know. Use social media to let fellow residents know about suspicious activity nearby. Share Ring recordings of criminal actions. Do what you can by reporting what you see.

We’re all in this together, and we’re all called to help.

Opinion

BISD needs to make its case

After reading your recent article about the proposed BISD, I was curious to find out more. I went to the Old Town Business website to see what was being proposed and learn how the BISD was going to benefit businesses in Old Town. What I discovered was a concerning lack of any business case analysis to show that the benefits of the BISD will outweigh its costs.

While the costs of the BISD were presented with exacting precision, there was no analysis to show how the BISD would provide any tangible benefits to businesses in Old Town. The proposed cost of the BISD is 9% increase in the property taxes that BISD zone businesses will pay every year.

The estimated size of the benefits, and who will receive them, is not described. How can businesses possibly make an informed decision without seeing, at least on paper, that the BISD benefits, to them, will outweigh its costs?

Without this analysis, how can anyone have confidence that the BISD knows where to focus their efforts to provide real benefits to businesses? If there is no return on investment, the BISD is just another tax.

The BISD presentation does identify some lofty aspirations and a notional list of services to be provided. But, again, without any analysis to show that these are addressing the needs of businesses and to show how these activities could translate into tangible benefits – and how much, to whom – there is no reason to assume that they will.

The decision to create a new entity with the power to tax cannot be taken lightly. One must assume this entity will exist into perpetuity, regardless of the results it provides. One would also reasonably assume that it will seek to enlarge its budget year over year to engage in more activities, and likewise will seek to increase the depth and breadth of its tax revenues in order to fund its expanding aspirations.

A business case analysis is standard practice when contemplating a major, high stakes initiative like the BISD. Without one, no one can make an informed decision. The BISD needs to make its case.

-Thomas Wise, Alexandria

Letters

Photo of the Week

A tree on Queen Street that was destroyed in the severe storm that came through Alexandria late afternoon on Saturday.

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

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.
Letters

Preserve historic north Old Town

Old Town is one of America’s most historic villages, witness to the entirety of our history. People from all over the world come to see our historic homes, walk streets first paved by cobblestones brought by English ships. Blessed with this rich inheritance, we must preserve it for our children’s children.

A major threat has arisen. Densification is at the gates of Old Town – north and south. Now Hoffman & Associates plan a four-story, 48-unit, 100,000 square foot monstrosity at 301 N. Fairfax St. It would tower over the 19th-century homes of Queen and Fairfax, forever degrading this colonial-era neighborhood. It would be a mortal blow to the aesthetic harmony and architectural coherence of our inheritance. It will fuel a fire of densification that will surely envelop all of Old Town. Mayor Justin Wilson and City Council, the Board of Architectural Review and the Planning Commission must all reject this plan!

Our local history is at stake, written just steps from 301 N. Fairfax. In 1749 the Virginia House of Burgesses asked a young George Washington to survey a new port city. He then named every street from Duke to Oronoco, from Royal to the Potomac River – including the four streets that surround 301 N. Fairfax.

On those streets we hold our annual Washington’s Birthday Parade, with its turn at 301 N. Fairfax at Queen. Our oldest home is Ramsay House, built in 1751, at N. Fairfax and King. It was the residence of William Ramsay, one of the Scottish merchants who founded Alexandria. Thus, we hold our annual Scottish Christmas Walk. These parades on colonial streets in front of colonial homes remind us each year what we steward today.

As Cicero wrote, “Not to know what happened before one was born is always to be a child.” Injecting a 48-unit condominium into this colonial neighborhood is a civic sacrilege.

In 1755 the “Congress of Alexandria” was convened by Gen. Edward Braddock, Commander of the British Army in North America. Governors of five British colonies met with the General in John Carlyle’s house at 121 N. Fairfax to plan an attack against New France.

George Washington was among the volunteers who marched west on what is now Braddock Road to attack Fort Duquesne. After Washington’s victory at Yorktown, a celebration was held in his honor at Duvall’s Tavern at 303 Cameron St. In the 200 block of Cameron is a plaque where the first lot was sold to create our town in 1749. Both are one block from 301 N. Fairfax.

On April 16, 1789, a dinner was held at Wise Tavern at 201 N. Fairfax St. to wish Washington well on his journey to New York to be sworn in as Commander-in-Chief. “There he was for the first time addressed as Mr. President.” In November 1799, Washington gave his last military review at Gadsby’s Tavern, at the intersection of Cameron and Royal streets, where in 1801 Jefferson held his Inaugural Dinner. Both taverns are steps from 301 N. Fairfax.

The two first deaths of the Civil War occurred at Marshall House at 480 King St. See MAIBACH

About Alexandria

Renaming Minnie Howard?

BY MARK EATON

The massive structure reaching skyward at the Minnie Howard Campus of Alexandria City High School is convincing evidence of the new school’s substantial (560,000 square feet) size. There will be nothing “mini” about the new building which is scheduled to open in about a year. Alexandria will still have one high school, but it will also have a new high school building. A common question in the city is, “Well, who was Minnie Howard?”

Here is a brief biographical sketch of Minnie Howard from the city’s website:

“Minnie Stansbury Howard wasn’t a teacher but she devoted much of her life to the welfare of children. Minnie Stansbury was born in 1869 and lost her parents before she was 15. She lived with her brother and his family before marrying Thomas Clifton Howard. As she raised seven children to adulthood, Minnie Howard founded a children’s home and served as Alexandria’s first juvenile probation officer. She was founder of the City’s first PTA, president of the Alexandria playground association and helped establish Alexandria’s first public playground at the Washington Street school. She used to sell cherries during George Washington’s birthday to help raise money for playgrounds. Like Cora Kelly, Minnie Howard’s namesake school opened just a few years after her death in 1950.

Howard was an admirable person. The current building that bears her name has served Alexandria as an elementary school, a school administration building and as ACPS’ ninth grade center. The question, which is not asked to denigrate Howard or her legacy, is whether the new building should continue to be named for someone who passed away more than 70 years ago and with whom many Alexandrians are unfamiliar.

The question is about more than simple rebranding. The educational plan for the joint operation of the new building and the King Street Campus involves major changes to how high school education will be delivered in Alexandria. The ACPS website says that the new building will include, “new and expanded CTE [Career and Technical Education], science, and art resources around exciting new dining and extended learning spaces, as well as interdisciplinary ‘neighborhoods’ featuring flexible classrooms, and teacher collaboration areas organized around extended learning spaces.” These new approaches suggest that a new name may also be appropriate.

The naming and renaming of public buildings, particularly schools, has become a difficult issue. Virginia high schools formerly named for prominent Confederates are now named for values, such as Freedom and Justice high schools, or bear modified names – Arlington’s Washington-Lee High School has become Washington-Liberty High School.

The impetus to change the name of T.C. Williams High School, named in 1965 when it opened, to Alexandria City High School came from students and community members who rejected the shameful legacy of long-time Superintendent Thomas Chambliss Williams. Reporting in the Alexandria Times and elsewhere revealed much that was negative about Williams’ attitude about race. For example, he fired Blois Hundley, an African-American cafeteria worker, for joining a federal civil rights lawsuit.

The decision to change the name of the Minnie Howard Campus is a first step. If the name is to be changed, what should it be changed to? If ACHS has a King Street Campus, should it also have a Braddock Road Campus? This is uncontroversial, like “Alexandria City High School,” but also uninspiring. It should be possible to find a name that reflects ACPS’ high aspirations for the new campus.

There may be no consensus to rename the Minnie Howard Campus. If none exists, then as part of the opening of the new building there should be a community education effort to familiarize Alexandrians, particularly students, with Howard and to rekindle appreciation for her legacy.

It would be a missed opportunity to open Alexandria’s long-awaited and newest high school building without considering whether a name change is appropriate or renewing the community’s understanding of Howard’s contributions.

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.
Historic Alexandria and the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project invite the public to join us on August 8 at 6 p.m., in front of 401 N. St. Asaph St. for the unveiling of a new historical marker that tells the story of Benjamin Thomas.

At 7:30 p.m., participants will solemnly follow the trail of terror the mob took down St. Asaph Street to King Street and then to the intersection with Fairfax Street, where we will lay a wreath and acknowledge the lynching of Thomas and the actions the white community took against him, his family, and the Black community in 1899. A shuttle bus is available for those who cannot easily walk the half-mile from 401 St. Asaph St. to the lynching location. Please email acrp@alexandriavva.gov to reserve a seat on the bus by August 5.

The new marker tells the history of the Old Jail at the corner of Princess and St. Asaph Streets through the perspective of Alexandria’s African American community. Long before the lynching of Benjamin Thomas, the building incarcerated enslaved people who had escaped their enslavers but were captured. Some, whose enslavers did not want them or were deceased, were auctioned off at this site.

The sign also notes the execution of Jenny Farr in the jail courtyard in 1858 for killing the abusive wife of her enslaver. The new historical sign includes a description of the murder of Benjamin Thomas, including the attempts of the local African American community to protect him after his arrest and incarceration in the building. The sign also includes a 1919 aerial map of the route the lynch mob took from the Old Jail to the murder site on the corner of King and Fairfax Streets.

On Aug. 8, 1899, a lynching mob hunted, tortured and killed 16-year-old Benjamin Thomas, an African American boy and native Alexandrian. On Aug. 7, 1899, Thomas was arrested for allegedly assaulting a white girl, but this was never proven. On the contrary, a minister later stated that the mother of the girl who Thomas was accused of assaulting insisted on his innocence.

That night, Black community leaders warned police and the mayor that another lynching might occur, like the lynching of John McCoy two years earlier on April 23, 1897. When the authorities refused their entreaties, the African American Alexandrians tried to protect Thomas themselves, standing guard near where he was being held. The police arrested them, and the next morning, they were tried, fined and sent to the chain gang. None of Thomas’ murderers faced accountability in a court of law.

The Alexandria Community Remembrance Project is a citywide initiative dedicated to helping Alexandria understand its history of racial terror hate crimes and to work toward creating a welcoming community bound by equity and inclusion.

The ACRP is part of the African American History Division of Historic Alexandria. This division, formed in 2023, will ensure the continued inclusion of Black History in city museums and public programming, as well as advancing the city’s goal of building a welcoming community through equity and inclusion.

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Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.
Weekly Words

ACROSS
1 Road rescue
4 Everglades plant
9 President who became Chief Justice
13 Via, briefly
17 Eisenhower's nickname
18 On a staycation
19 Betelgeuse's constellation
21 Chomsky of linguistics
22 "Deck the Halls" syllables
23 "Please don't trouble yourself"
24 Value
25 Go bad
26 Govt. air quality watchdog
27 Burrowing mammal with a distinctive snout
30 ___ Speedwagon (rock group)
31 Ancient Andean
33 In favor of
34 "Brokeback Mountain" director Lee
36 Richard Henry ___ Jr. ("Two Years Before the Mast" writer)
38 Latin dances
42 Prohibition-era rule
45 Swiss miss name
46 Has a yen
47 Marked down
48 "Friday the 13th" genre
49 "You can take this job and shove it!"
50 "Schindler's List" star Liam
51 Deteriorate, in slang
52 German conjunction
53 Talk smack about
54 "I'm so frustrated!"
55 Person who might do the Electric Slide
56 Even if, briefly
57 Abound
58 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
59 Farm animal?
60 Palindromic Nabokov title
61 Delivery vehicle
62 Mex. miss
63 "___ boy!"
64 Sch. in La Jolla whose mascot is King Triton
65 Seemingly forever
66 Coasted at the Olympics?
67 Combat vet's affliction, perhaps
68 Person who might do the Electric Slide
69 "___ boy!"
70 Superstar squads
71 "___boy!
72 Rip out the interior
73 As of yet undecided (Abrbr.)
74 Balaam's beast
75 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
76 Spot on a domino
77 Beauty pageant wear
78 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
79 Exhibits endurance
80 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
81 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
82 Deserved
83 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
84 Male deer
85 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
86 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
87 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
88 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
89 Tendon
90 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
91 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
92 Chinese food general
93 Key sometimes below "X"
94 Where to find FBI HQ
95 Stonehead's stat
96 Whimsical Edward Lear specialty
97 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
98 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
99 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
100 The latest
101 Blackthorn plum
102 Cork's country
103 Caesar's "I conquered"
104 Brio
105 Carnival attraction
106 Falling flakes
107 Balaam's beast
108 Work, to make bread
109 ___ mater
110 Pub pick
111 Find at a dig
112 Not doing so hot
113 Fig. on a transcript
114 Command to a dog
115 Cursed a blue streak
116 1975 NBA MVP Bob
117 Long, long time
118 Clio or Erato
119 Sibyl or Nostradamus
120 Tendon
121 Avg.

DOWN
1 Scrabble piece
2 Animal with striped legs
3 "Rushmore" director
4 Little brat
5 European erupter
6 Person who takes action
7 Broadway star Verdon
8 Historical transition point
9 Eddie Murphy/Ben Stiller 2011 caper film
10 Longtime Yankee nickname
11 Al dente
12 Baum barker
13 Atlanta-based station
14 Old timer ... and what's depicted in the middle of today's grid
15 Pink, as a steak
16 "Yeah ... hard pass"
17 Longtime Yankee nickname
18 Tricks of the trade
19 Balaam's beast
20 The Blues are played in it (Abbr.)
21 Dad's footwear that evokes eye rolls
22 Where "Aida" premiered
23 Nasdaq competitor
24 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
25 Ado
26 "Love It or List It" channel
27 Aida's anticipated title for today's puzzle
28 Dad's footwear that evokes eye rolls
29 Deserved
30 Where "Aida" premiered
31 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
32 History
33 One of many at O'Hare
34 Where "Aida" premiered
35 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
36 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
37 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
38 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
39 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
40 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
41 Common ID
42 Jake Gyllenhaal film about a sleepwalking teen
43 Balm ingredient
44 Took off
45 Ado
46 "Love It or List It" channel
47 In a snit, in old slang
48 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
49 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
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109 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine
110 "Spy vs. Spy" magazine

Solutions from last week

SARA BOSSONG (84), formerly of Alexandria, July 17, 2023
ROBERT BOVEY (85), formerly of Alexandria, July 8, 2023
GEORGE COMBS (62), of Alexandria, July 7, 2023
GREGORY ENGLISH (76), of Alexandria, July 12, 2023
EMERSON TEER (47), of Alexandria, July 26, 2023
CUSTOM STORAGE SHEDS

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Double Depth Lawn Crypt located in Garden of Devotion (#440) at Mount Comfort Cemetery. $14,500 OBO- I will pay $500 quickclaim transfer fee. Contact me at 304-268-0354 or stevenkimhoward@gmail.com if interested.

BURIAL PLOT

4 plots together 2,3,4,5 section monticello lot 270 mount comfort cemetery Alexandria va south kings highway 6,000 apiece or 20,000 for all 4 buyer pays all fees. Kevin Cox (615)548-4467.

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Hilton Oliver, Attorney
757-490-0126.


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OFFER!
After Time
Facebook). 757-490-0126. Se
days. Hilton Oliver, Attorney


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“Third party financing is available for those customers who qualify. See

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