‘A fresh perspective’

Sophia Moshasha hopes to clinch Republican win in VA Senate
BY CAITLYN MEISNER

Sophia Moshasha, Republican candidate for the District 39 Virginia Senate seat, said if elected she plans to focus on crime, education and the economy.

Moshasha is a native Virginian and has a background in technology – mainly educating others on new virtual or augmented reality tools – which she hopes will assist her in addressing current economic challenges in the district.

“I want to ensure our district continues to thrive by leveraging the opportunities that technology presents to both drive prosperity and ensure that all voices are also heard in the decision-making process,” Moshasha said.

Dealing with the threat posed to residents by rising crime in Alexandria would be one of her priorities in the state senate.

“I’ve heard many horror stories from businesses and residents alike of things that are continuously happening to them, their personal property and themselves,” Moshasha said.

“I want to prioritize public safety by advocating for accountability for criminal activity to prevent repeat offenses, and we have to support our local law enforcement agencies to be better at it, and I want to make sure that we have representation in place to cultivate that understanding and compromise in order to meet the needs of all the people in District 39.”

– Sophia Moshasha, Republican candidate

SEE MOSHASHA | 6

‘The easy choice’

Incumbent Adam Ebbin aims to help Democrats retain control of VA Senate
BY CAITLYN MEISNER

Adam Ebbin, Democratic incumbent running for reelection in the District 39 Virginia Senate seat, said he hopes to maintain the seat and help Democrats preserve their slim majority in the state Senate.

Ebbin is a native New Yorker, but has represented Virginians since 2004 when he was elected to the House of Delegates. He served there until 2012 when he made history since his start in politics. He’s the first openly LGBTQ person elected to the House of Delegates. Then, in 2011, he became the first openly LGBTQ person elected to the state senate.

Ebbin said he feels there is more he can help accomplish in the district, which has a different district number this election, 39 instead of 30, after redistricting.

“I feel like I’m in sync with the views of the people of the 39th district and like many jobs, after a while, you get better at it, and I want to prioritize public safety by advocating for accountability for criminal activity to prevent repeat offenses, and we have to support our local law enforcement agencies to be better at it, and I want to make sure that we have representation in place to cultivate that understanding and compromise in order to meet the needs of all the people in District 39.”

– Sophia Moshasha, Republican candidate

SEE EBBIN | 10

ELECTION DAY IN ALEXANDRIA

- Election Day is November 7. Polls in Alexandria will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Early voting began on September 22 and continues until 5 p.m. Saturday.
- Early in-person voting takes place at two locations: the Office of Voter Registration & Elections at 132 N. Royal St., #100 and at the Charles Beatley Central Library at 5005 Duke St.
- The deadline for requesting a ballot to vote by mail has passed. If you have a mail-in ballot, you may drop it off at the Office of Voter Registration & Elections through 7 p.m. on November 7.
- This year’s election is for the Virginia State Senate and House of Delegates. Redistricting has changed the district numbers in Alexandria for both the Senate and House of Delegates.
- There are three candidates for District 39 in the Virginia State Senate: incumbent Adam Ebbin (D) and challenger Sophia Moshasha (R).
- There are now three districts in the Virginia House of Delegates that represent parts of Alexandria, all with Democratic incumbents. Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, in House District 5 is running unopposed, as is Charniele Herring in District 4. In House of Delegates District 3, incumbent Alfonso H. Lopez is being challenged by independent Maj. Mike Webb.
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Fabulous brick row home with inviting front porch, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, hardwood floors, Living room with gas fireplace, dining room, updated kitchen, partially finished basement with outside entrance. HEATED patio, secure parking with garage door and alley access! Blocks to King Street METRO, shops, restaurants and bike path!

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For additional information & photos, go to: www.ChristineGarner.com
A 15-year-old boy was shot Saturday at 11:47 p.m. at the 300 block of South Whiting Street and later died, according to the Alexandria Police Department. The victim was transported to a hospital where he was pronounced dead. APD is investigating this case as a suspicious death, and those with information can contact Detective Jason Marable at 703-746-4444 or via email at jason.marable@alexandriava.gov.

There was a shooting at the 3800 block of Florence Drive Saturday around 1:30 a.m. according to an APD notification. A victim sustained non-life threatening injuries, and APD is still investigating the incident.

There was a robbery at the 600 block of Montgomery Street Saturday around 2:30 a.m. according to an APD notification. No injuries were reported and APD is still investigating the robbery.

A male was stabbed while riding his bicycle at the 4000 block of Mount Vernon Avenue Sunday around 10:45 p.m., according to an APD notification. The block was briefly swarmed by police cruisers after the incident and APD is still investigating.

Alexandria City High School’s King Street campus was evacuated at around 11:50 a.m. Wednesday after a bomb threat was received by ACPS, according to an email sent to ACHS families. Students were evacuated to designated areas on the football field and brought to warming stations on buses provided by the Office of Transportation. Students were dismissed for the day around 1 p.m. and loaded onto buses to be taken home. According to an alert sent by the Alexandria Police Department, officers arrived at the scene with K-9 units to investigate.

- cmeisner@alextimes.com

Framebridge, a Washington, D.C.-based custom framing store, celebrated the opening of its new store in Alexandria on October 26 according to a press release from the company. The store opened its doors to the city earlier in October. The store is located at 1508 King St. and specializes in framing of photos and paintings.

-livanpate@alextimes.com

For even more holiday events and things to do, check out: VisitAlexandria.com/Holidays
Citywide street resurfacing continues

Street resurfacing continues this week after breaking ground October 23, according to a city press release. Streets being worked on this week include West Timber Branch Parkway, Sylvan Court, Ruffner Road, Oakley Place, Hermitage Court, Cloverway Drive and Cameron Mills Road. For questions or concerns, residents can call Alex311.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Murky water problem fixed in Holmes Run

Murky water was discovered and caused by a water main break on North Paxton Street and Cloudes Mill Drive. The problem was fixed by a utility company, Virginia American Water, Friday and left some residents with low to zero water pressure around the Holmes Run area.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Black History Museum to host conversations

In partnership with the Alexandria Bahá’í Community and Community Remembrance Project, the Black History Museum in the city will hold conversations into March 2024 about racism. All conversations will be held at 902 Wythe St. and center around a different topic each month. The upcoming conversation on November 16 will discuss the shared humanity between African Americans and Indigenous Peoples. Each conversation will be from 7 to 9 p.m. on the following dates: December 14, January 25, February 29 and March 28.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

The Little Mermaid, Jr. final weekend

Alexandria Children’s Theatre is performing its final shows this weekend of The Little Mermaid, Jr. Costumes are encouraged to be worn to the showing and ticket prices range from $10 to $16 depending on age. The show runs until Saturday with multiple show times. Visit actheatre.com for more information and ticket purchase.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Friends of Guest House celebrates 26 graduates

Friends of Guest House, an Alexandria-based organization specializing in helping previously incarcerated women, celebrated the graduation of 26 members Saturday at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, according to a press release from the organization. The ceremony symbolizes the women’s successful completion of a one-year residential and aftercare program.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Office of Arts welcomes new member

The Office of Arts welcomed new member DeWitt Godfrey to the city’s Public Art Program Thursday at the Lee Center according to a press release from the city office. Godfrey was hired to design a site-specific, permanent work of art for a new city park at the corner of Eisenhower Avenue and Holland Lane. Godfrey, a large-scale sculptor from Hamilton, New York, is a graduate of both Yale University and Edinburgh College of Art in Scotland, and served as senior advisor for the Terra Foundation of American Arts program in Giverny, France.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

ADOPTABLE PET OF THE WEEK

Rita’s grin and personality light up a room. Her happy-go-lucky attitude and stylish ears give her quite an adorable look. Rita is a wonderful dog with impeccable manners. She’s very easygoing and calm. She knows sit, stay and several other tricks and is house trained. She’s a big gal at 60 lbs and she has a big heart to match.

Meet Rita!
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Mid-Century but not Modern, this traditional South Lee Street residence takes its place among its historic peers and with its open floor plan, broadly welcomes friends and family. Four finished levels offer 3 bedrooms plus a primary suite sitting room and three full baths. The deed parking, unique to Yates Gardens, comes as an added benefit to those lucky enough to call Lee Street home. The lower level offers a dedicated Home Office and Family Room plus excellent storage. Move-in ready.

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Moshasha said she wants to explore innovative crime prevention programs to create opportunities for the formerly incarcerated. “Because that’s the end goal, right? [Incarceration] is not to just punish people,” Moshasha said. “You need to make an example, of course, and to also prevent repeated offenses, but at the end of the day, you want them to become productive members of society.”

Moshasha plans to help boost Alexandria’s economy by making it easier for businesses to operate in the city. “I want to work with educational institutions to target growing industries [and] attract this new talent and essentially, [bring] job opportunities to our district,” Moshasha said. “I want to also enhance our workforce development ... to better equip our workforce.”

Moshasha said education has to be a priority because a good education system benefits not only the next generation, but future generations. “I want to ensure that our schools are equipped to provide quality learning experiences that set them up for future success in line with our rapidly developing and evolving economic and workforce landscape,” Moshasha said. “I want to make sure that there’s an even playing field for both people and children to compete in the workforce.”

She cited the national economy and identity politics as reasons to focus on education, as well. “China and other countries are really ramping up on teaching students they need to be competitive on a global scale, and I just want to make sure that’s aligned with that,” Moshasha said.

Moshasha officially announced her campaign this summer to run against 20-year incumbent, Senator Adam Ebbin, a Democrat. She said it’s clear that there is an agenda in place and the district could benefit from a “fresh perspective.” “I feel like we need to prioritize the needs of our existing residents who’ve invested in our community,” Moshasha said. “I want to make sure that we have representation in place to cultivate that understanding and compromise in order to meet the needs of all the people in District 39.”

Constance Cantrell, president of the Commonwealth Republican Women’s Club in Alexandria, said she agrees with Moshasha. “What we’ve had is what we’ve long had,” Cantrell said. “Things have changed: the economy has grown, the economy has changed, our perspectives have changed and yet we’ve had the same people in office we’ve had forever.”

Cantrell said Democrats are taking their voters for granted and will continue to do so as long as they have “complete control.” She said another Republican in the senate to
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MOSHASHA

potentially tip the scales in the party’s favor would be beneficial for the whole state.

“We need Republicans in the senate in order to get these things moving, these things that we voted for two years ago that the majority of Virginians voted for,” Cantrell said, referring to the 2021 election, in which Republicans swept Virginia’s governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general races.

Moshasha said Alexandria’s at-large election system was made to sustain majority power and needs to change.

“Right now, the system of representation that is in place feels like it silences the minority communities and doesn’t allow for all neighborhoods to have a say in what happens in their communities,” Moshasha said. “I want to make sure that every neighborhood has a say and has a place at the table. ... That includes potentially implementing a ward system where every neighborhood has a representative within City Council.”

Moshasha said if elected, she would prioritize communications with constituents. She said she hopes to be proactive in soliciting feedback via mass texting campaigns, social media and email newsletters.

“My commitment is to open communication, active engagement and data-driven decision making,” Moshasha said.

Cantrell said Moshasha’s tech-savvy background is exactly what the Republicans in Northern Virginia need.

“She is a Republican. She holds Republican values and advances them, but she’s also got that ‘extra thing,’” Cantrell said. “And I think that’s what’s needed here these days.”

Moshasha’s call to residents was to focus on policy, not partisanship. She said she hopes Alexandrians can see beyond her Republican title and vote for her refreshing perspective on government.

“’I’m not a career politician,’” Moshasha said. “I believe that our politics today is too divisive, and I see a clear need in electing a representative that wants to be the bridge in connecting diverse views that will actually drive positive outcomes that aren’t fueled by political agenda.”

“... Our politics today is too divisive, and I see a clear need in electing a representative that wants to be the bridge in connecting diverse views that will actually drive positive outcomes that aren’t fueled by political agenda.”

– Sophia Moshasha, Republican candidate

SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COALITION OF ALEXANDRIA

During this youth-led event, teams of youth and adults placed stickers on multi-packs of alcohol to highlight the legal consequences of providing alcohol to persons under 21.

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1476 Beauregard St.
2801 Park Center Dr.

BJs Wholesale Club
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Community Market
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Deli for the Belly
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Department of Beer & Wine
2724 Richmond Hwy

El Paisa Grocery
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Food Star
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Giant
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3131 Duke St.

Global Food
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To report concerns regarding the sale or provision of alcohol to persons under age 21, call the Alexandria Police Department’s non-emergency number at 703.746.4444. Learn more at PreventItAlexandria.org

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Old Town Mini Mart
822 King St.

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500 S. Royal St.

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2922 Duke St.

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3680 King St.

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Ebbin said in the next session, he wants to focus on protecting reproductive and LGBTQ rights, as well as opposing some legislative priorities of Republican Governor Glenn Youngkin.

“There are a few things we can do without the governor,” Ebbin said. “I’d like to see voting rights in the Virginia Constitution and finally repeal the ban on marriage equality; it’s been in the state constitution since 2006. [Youngkin] has been silent on that, but he doesn’t have a role in amending the constitution.”

He continued, saying he will make protecting gains made on LGBTQ rights a priority if reelected.

“There’s a real danger in stepping backwards now, and I don’t want there to be any backsliding on my watch,” Ebbin said.

He noted the debate within the Republican Party about whether to leave laws regarding reproductive rights to the states or to push for federal limitations affects Virginians.

“It’s very much on people’s minds,” Ebbin said. “It is not just the people of Alexandria who don’t want that. I think it’s the people of Virginia, but particularly in this district, there’s a real strong feeling among people who protect their personal liberties.”

Sandy Marks, chair of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, said Ebbin is a strong voice in the legislature and can easily advocate for Alexandrians in the state capital.

“Everyone in the state legislature knows it and Glenn Youngkin knows it,” Marks said. “He is a brilliant and intelligent and effective lawmaker.”

Marks said legislative priorities were aligned between Ebbin and Alexandrians, adding that Ebbin and other Democrats are the “brick wall” halting Republicans from banning books and removing environmental protections.

Marks also said a Democrat, like Ebbin, aligns more closely with Alexandrians than a Republican and is the clear choice. She expressed confidence Democrats would retain the seat.

An issue that resonates

COURTESY PHOTO

State Senator Adam Ebbin said he is an advocate for public education.

City of Alexandria
Second Half
2023 Real Estate Tax, Refuse Fee, and Stormwater Utility Fee Are Due November 15, 2023

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

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

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

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

For payment questions or to request a tax bill, please call the Treasury Division at 703.746.4800, or email payments@alexandriava.gov. For assessment questions or to change a mailing address, please email realestate@alexandriava.gov. For questions on refuse fees or stormwater utility fees, please call Alex311 at 703.746.4311 or submit questions online at alexandriava.gov/Alex311.
with Ebbin is gun violence; he said it’s a substantial issue that affects lives on a daily basis.

“We’re losing a lot of people to gun violence and whether it’s through suicide or homicide, they both should be reduced,” Ebbin said.

Ebbin also said his role on the senate finance and appropriations committee is essential to progressing legislation he deems important.

“No freshman Republican or Democrat is likely to be on the finance committee,” Ebbin said. “I’ve been able to deliver. I would like to ensure that continues, but without Senate Democrats, there would’ve been substantially less funds for public education.”

Ebbin also chairs the general laws and technology committee, and serves on the Senate privileges and elections committee and the Senate rules committee in this most recent session.

Marks said experience is valuable and is a positive of Ebbin’s candidacy.

“To negate the value of experience is short-sighted,” Marks said. “Ebbin has not been in office too long.”

He admitted to be an optimist, which goes hand-in-hand with his progressive policies and statements both on his website and in speeches.

“To me, progressive progressivism is about moving forward and making progress in society,” Ebbin said. “We made a lot of progress, and there’s more to be done.”

Ebbin mentioned the annual spending on public transit; he said in 2004, when he was first elected to the General Assembly, the state was spending $255 million per year. Now, Virginia spends more than $1 billion.

He said as the Democratic Party aims to lower carbon emissions and place more public electric vehicle charging stations around the state, he wants to be a part of that progress.

Ebbin also said he feels as though he aligns with the priorities of Alexandrians and is deeply aware of the community’s needs.

“I’m a tenacious advocate for the values of our community,” Ebbin said. “I think that besides being in sync with [the community], I’ve helped people with their individual situations, whether it was change in Virginia’s adoption laws … or [ensuring] you didn’t automatically lose your driver’s license because of a marijuana conviction.”

In his time in the senate, Ebbin has introduced progressive legislation, including protections for marriage equality, protected organ donation leave and prohibition of carrying assault firearms in public areas.

-cmeisner@alextimes.com

Senator Adam Ebbin giving a speech to constituents.
The leaves are falling and the temperature is starting to drop, which means one thing: cold and flu season is upon us.

Dr. Vivek Sinha, a board-certified family physician in Alexandria, said he is already seeing an increase in the number of sick patients coming into his practice.

“I’ve seen a lot of people come in who are sick and have respiratory viruses and not all of them are flu. I’m just seeing a large number of people and it could be that people are now more sensitive to it and if they are sick, they want to make sure it’s not Covid. That’s possible,” Sinha said.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “Respiratory Disease Season Outlook” released in October, this fall and winter are not expected to be more severe than last season. As of mid-October, the CDC reported respiratory virus activity is at a low nationally.

Although COVID-19 remains the primary cause of a majority of the respiratory virus hospitalizations, cases continue to decline in many areas of the country. The CDC also reported that the virus has not resulted in any rapid disease surges so far.

The Virginia Department of Health also released data between October 24 and Tuesday, which showed there were 5,255 reported cases of COVID-19 across the state and four COVID-related deaths over the same time period. In Alexandria, 30 cases of COVID-19 were reported and no deaths.

While the numbers give a glimpse into the case rate, they do not give the entire picture since many people are using at-home tests, which likely go unreported to the state or CDC.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention “Respiratory Disease Season Outlook” released in October, COVID-19 is not the only respiratory virus people need to worry about this season. RSV – or respiratory syncytial virus – cases increased last year and experts predict it will return to normal season patterns this year. RSV usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms and can be more dangerous for infants and young children.
older adults.

This year, there are new prevention tools available for those at-risk populations, including a vaccine for adults 60-years-old or older and an antibody immunization for infants. Sinha said he recognized the hesitation to get vaccinated, as he has heard from many the flu vaccine makes them feel sick.

“It is safe to get the flu vaccine,” Sinha said. “You can get an immune response [from the vaccine], but that means your immune system is working.”

Still, health officials say vaccination remains the best way to protect yourself against serious complications when it comes to many of these respiratory illnesses.

Sinha points to a recent alert from the Virginia Department of Health about a rare outbreak of meningitis in a part of the state to show how a breakdown in the vaccine process could lead to serious outcomes.

Since June 2022, there have been 29 confirmed cases of meningitis disease, including six deaths. A majority of the cases were reported in eastern Virginia with one in Fairfax. Most of those who became ill were not vaccinated against this strain of meningitis, according to the VDH. The state health department recommends teenagers should get a first dose of the vaccine before entering seventh grade and a booster before they graduate from high school.

Sinha said healthy habits are the best defense against cold and flu season. Proper handwashing, getting plenty of rest and staying away from work and school when ill will help keep infection rates low this season.

-bmconnell895@gmail.com

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COVID-19 Vaccinations in Virginia

Total Doses Administered
19,247,871

% of the Population Vaccinated with Primary Series
74.1%

% of the Population with Up to Date Vaccination
18.2%

Recent data from the Commonwealth of Virginia shows vaccination rates and reported COVID-19 cases.
Leaf politics out of your portfolio

BY JACOBSON TREUX

We are about a year away from another presidential election and are already watching drama both across the aisle and within respective parties with a backdrop of increasingly tense geopolitics. Republicans recently appointed a new House Speaker after a 22-day stalemate, just in time to deal with a looming government shutdown.

In a world that seems more divisive each year, our clients are increasingly – and understandably so – emotionally agitated with the government. As a financial advisor, I help clients achieve their financial goals while trying to minimize risks. In pursuing this mission, it is crucial to emphasize one fundamental principle to investing: politics should not influence portfolios.

While politics impact the economy and financial markets, allowing political biases to steer investment decisions often leads to disappointing outcomes.

The investing world is complex, ever-changing and subject to countless variables and uncertainties. Investors face a constant stream of news and information and much of the headlines intertwine with politics. It is tempting to react emotionally to political events, especially when they seem poised to affect financial markets negatively; however, basing investment decisions on political sentiments can be a recipe for regret.

Of the many reasons why politics should be kept at arm’s length for your investment portfolio, here are a few of the main points one should consider.

**Emotional biases**
Politics tends to evoke strong emotions and personal beliefs. Allowing these emotions to drive investment decisions can lead to impulsive and irrational choices. Emotional investing often results in buying at market peaks due to excessive optimism and selling in panic during downturns.

**Focus on the long term**
Political events tend to be short-lived. Successful investing requires a long-term perspective and the discipline to weather short-term fluctuations. When politics infiltrate investment decisions, it becomes harder to stay the course and adhere to a sound investment strategy.

**Investment objectives**
Your investment decisions should align with your specific financial goals, risk tolerance and time horizon. Political considerations are typically irrelevant to these objectives. Focusing on your personal financial circumstances rather than political ideology or negative headline bias is the prudent path to long-term financial success.

As part of my role in helping my clients achieve success, I help guide my clients through the noise and emotions that often accompany political events. An election is only one of many influences – both positive and negative – that affect markets. Because there are so many variables, one cannot accurately predict the proportional impact.

I encourage clients to maintain a disciplined approach, focus on their long-term objectives and avoid making hasty decisions based on politics. By doing so, we believe investors can achieve greater financial stability and success in this ever-changing world.

**Unpredictability**
Politics can be notoriously unpredictable. Even the most well-informed and seasoned pundits often get it wrong when predicting election outcomes or policy changes. Attempting to time the market based on political developments is akin to gambling with your hard-earned money. Especially in a world where disinformation looms large and negatively charged news creates more clicks and views.

**Hit the history books**
Throughout history, markets have faced and overcome various political challenges and uncertainties. The long-term trend of markets has been one of growth, despite periodic setbacks and regardless of which political party is in power. Staying invested for the long haul has historically been a winning strategy.

**Diversification is key**
This is a fundamental strategy for reducing risk in a portfolio. When political beliefs heavily influence investment choices, it can lead to an undiversified portfolio that is overly concentrated in specific sectors or assets. This lack of diversification can expose investors to significant risks if political fortunes change unexpectedly.

While politics undeniably impact financial markets and the economy, allowing political influences to dictate your investment decisions is generally ill-advised. A well-structured and diversified portfolio, aligned with your financial goals and risk tolerance, is the key to long-term success in investing.

The writer is a vice president and financial advisor at McLaughlin Ryder Investments.
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Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail work together to benefit environment

by Laura Van Pate

Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail is a nonprofit organization helping the Alexandria community by keeping the beloved trail clean for all to enjoy.

The organization was created in September 2018 after a group of people realized work needed to be done on the 18 mile-long trail after visiting. During the pandemic, the Friends signed a philanthropic partnership to officially be recognized as a nonprofit by the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

“A couple of Alexandrians and I started Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail because we wanted to make the trail as beautiful as we could,” Judd Isbell, president and one of the founders of Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail, said. “We wanted to both clean up the trail and create new features to it that could enhance its use. We noticed how much work the trail needed after people started complaining about the maintenance of it at trail stakeholder meetings that were conducted by the Parkway.”

A pillar of the Friends’ activities is removing invasive plants, including bush honeysuckle and English ivy. These plants prevent the growth of new trees and pollinator plants. The Friends also ensure the roads are clear and safe for visitors who either bike or walk. Volunteers trim overgrown branches, remove grass and dirt from the edges of the road, and remove potholes.

The organization also tries to make the trail appealing to the eye by removing graffiti and trash left on the trail.

Years of dedicated volunteers have contributed a total of 7,482 hours and fixed 604 issues this year alone, according to Isbell. Since 2018, almost 3,000 volunteers have donated their time and the organization has nearly 200 financial supporters.

“Alongside the 3,000 volunteers we have, we also have six Board of Directors and a group of 14 people that lead our weekly volunteer trail maintenance events,” Cameron Taylor, a two-year volunteer leader for Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail, said.

The Friends’ work is being noticed by Alexandria residents, as they won the 2023 Ellen Pickering Environmental Excellence Award, which is an award given to those who

see MT. VERNON | 25

Ten Thousand Villages is more than a store. It’s a local non-profit, maker-to-market movement that helps break the cycle of generational poverty. For 29 years, Ten Thousand Villages has been empowering Alexandrians to shop with intention for ethically-sourced wares.

Buying holiday gifts can bring a lot of joy, but it can also bring stress. It can be overwhelming to determine whether the products you see on the shelf are ethically sourced. Every handcrafted item Ten Thousand Villages offers has a life and meaning behind it. You can trust that every purchase and donation you make directly impacts the life and community of its maker in a developing country. Your support creates opportunities for artisans to earn income by selling their products through fair trading relationships.

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Shop with us at 915 King Street to experience the stories behind products and join the maker-to-market movement. Open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PORT CITY PROFILE

Holiday gifts that can change the world

The Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail help keep the area around the trail clean and safe for all to enjoy.
Eclectic meets Old Town in this South Royal home
BY CAITLYN MEISNER

South Royal Street holds many residences, but this quaint home stands among the hustle and bustle of the Old Town neighborhood. Especially in the autumn season nearing Halloween, the dwelling is a bystander to spooky antics and family fun.

Tony and Elizabeth — known by all close family and friends as “Beecie” or “B” — Kupersmith own the quiet home on South Royal, and have resided there since 2007. Beecie spotted the house when it was put on the market by Herbert and Patricia Beckington, who had lived in the home since 1967.

The Kupersmith family has lived in Alexandria — either in the city proper or in Fairfax County — since September 1980. They changed neighborhoods as their family grew. Their first home in the city was at 208 Wilkes St., then they moved to Belle Haven as their three children matured, but later moved back to Old Town in this three-bedroom, two-and-a-half-bath house.

Tony, an engineer, worked in Old Town since the family moved to the city for his job and always loved the neighborhood. Beecie and Tony said they could not pass up an opportunity to return to the spots they once resided in as a growing family.

The 1800 original, red-brick home blends in with the typical Old Town crowd, but upon stepping inside, the home is unlike any other. Tony and Beecie said they have done almost no major renovations since moving in, meaning much of the hardware is decades or centuries old.

“It is a perpetual sort of thing to keep stuff running, but other than a few changes to air conditioning, [it’s] the same old, same old,” Tony said. “We’ve done this and that, but we just live here.”

The stairs immediately face visitors as they walk in, but the eyes are met with paintings

SEE KUPERSMITH
Union Square

The art of imagination

Union Square is a master stroke of creativity. A unique adaptive reuse space located in Historic Old Town. With a decidedly French influence, this stunning venue showcases a selection of original paintings, prints and surrealistic fashion images by internationally recognized photographer, Rodney Smith.

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KUPERSMITH FROM | 17

adorned across the walls. Beecie is a lifetime artist and has made it her life’s work to paint the sights she sees, whether that’s in San Miguel, Mexico; Cape Cod, Massachusetts; Galveston, Texas; or her family in any capacity.

To the left is the main living room with a comfortable couch and antique loveseats. Again, the room is filled with colorful paintings – both Beecie’s and one of her family’s favorite artists, Jim Giampaoli. Above the fireplace is Giampaoli’s “Two Sisters,” which centers the room and truly showcases the couple’s décor style.

The living room has built-in bookcases next to the fireplace, which hold hundreds of books tightly shelved against one another. Underneath the tiers of books are hidden cabinets of Beecie’s sketchbooks. Lucy, one of their daughters, said there must be dozens of sketchbooks stacked in the cabinet.

“The idea about the sketchbook is that I don’t take anything out, I don’t take any of my paintings out,” Beecie said. “I’ve only done it once for a friend and I’ve regretted it ever since.”

Beecie said she often painted or drew in the sketchbook before painting the final product, almost as a “rough draft.” She detailed the story and place that inspired the piece and could speak to the difficulty or ease that came with each page.

“You see how kind of random it’s sometimes?” Beecie said to the room. “It’s good, and sometimes it’s not so good.”

Moving into the dining room is an antique, dark wooden table with matching chairs. The dark color of the table is offset by the bright paintings around the room, many inspired by the summer trips on boats and family activities.

Around a large, vertical mirror behind the table are four paintings: two by a dock, one of two large black family dogs and Beecie’s father handing a treat to his dog. Below the paintings are long-wicked candles and various blue floral vases atop a similarly dark sideboard.

Along the adjacent wall of the room is a dark fireplace with Cape Cod-esque decorations sprucing up the space. Two golden scallops sit next to a painting of a boat on the water with three identical spiky seashells below.

“(Our home) is pretty eclectic. Here’s the eclectic,” Tony said, pointing to Beecie. “I think being a painter – or having a painter – is a huge deal because all the decorative or artistic features are coming from within rather than being purchased.”

The original dining room – which now serves as an office and sitting area – is home to even more antique blue floral vases tucked behind various Beecie originals on built-in bookshelves. In one corner is a pink-and-blue-striped loveseat with two paintings of San Miguel, Mexico.

Above a desk on the right side of the room are two paintings of men playing polo, an activity Beecie said her father loved dearly. On the opposite wall are two more prints of polo players above a lived-in sofa.

Straight into the kitchen is a decades-old brick floor with dark wooden cabinets and modern appliances. A bay window faces the stovetop with comfortable pillows and a bench, along with a large table and multiple chairs. Next to the table is a large red-brick fireplace with a Mesopotamian...
mian outpost sign on one side and antique pans on the other. A large dog bed sits at the bottom, big enough for their seven-year-old Portuguese Water dog, Finny.

The kitchen then leads into the back yard, a brick-laid sitting area with multiple chairs sprawled along the space for hosting summer evenings. Beecie spoke of the plants the couple has kept for years, which shows in the expansive greenery they have in the quaint space.

Returning back to the front of the house, the small details of each painting speak to their life with three children and five grandchildren as travelers. Tony said it’s amazing to see their children grow through the years via Beecie’s paintings.

“You can go upstairs and wander around this place and find paintings of our son, Anthony, at age three, at age six or it just goes on and on,” Tony said.

On a random wall sits a piece depicting Lucy on a couch reading or writing; another wall is adorned by a Cape Cod beach and the couple’s children running toward homes; still another holds a lifelike painting of Beecie’s mother with two small dogs.

The eclectic home mixes every century it’s survived: the 1800s with its original Old Town feel, the 1900s thanks to the Beckingtons’ preservation and the 2000s, as Tony and Beecie’s family grows with the next generation of Kupersmiths.

Left: Two of Beecie’s paintings of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Right: The living room fireplace with “Two Sisters,” painted by Jim Giampaoli.

Make Your Home Less Hectic and More of a Haven

These days many people’s homes are teeming with activity, with everyone in each other’s way half the time. Tensions are high. Tempers are short.

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Deck the halls, and call your Realtor

BY KERRY ADAMS

With October in the rearview mirror, it’s time to start planning your Thanksgiving feast, adorning your home with festive decorations and tackling that gift list. But, don’t forget to add another important item to your pre-holiday checklist: calling your real estate agent.

Historically, as the holiday season heats up in Alexandria, the real estate market cools down. But for serious buyers and sellers, November and December offer unique advantages. Here are some compelling reasons to act now instead of waiting until spring to list or buy a home.

Seller advantages

It’s a seller’s market

Despite the 23-year-high interest rates, Alexandria is still considered a seller’s market, according to Realtor.com. This means there are more active buyers than available homes. Serious buyers will continue their home search even during the holidays.

Buyer advantages

Cash buyers

According to Bright MLS, there are more cash buyers than during the pandemic. In September, nearly 24% of buyers in the mid-Atlantic region paid cash for their homes. Cash buyers typically close sooner and waive financing and appraisal contingencies, making for much smoother transactions.

Festive atmosphere

Alexandria literally lights up during the holidays with beautifully decorated streets and a lineup of seasonal events like the Scottish Walk and Parade of Lights. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase your home, allowing potential buyers to envision creating their own holiday traditions.

Motivated sellers

While some homeowners may hesitate to list their properties during the holidays, those who do are often highly motivated to sell. Many sellers have reasons such as relocating for work, financial considerations or other urgent needs.

As a result, they may be more willing to negotiate on price and terms, creating opportunities for buyers to secure more favorable terms.

Tax benefits

Buyers who close before the end of the year stand to benefit from attractive tax breaks including deductions for mortgage interest, points and property taxes. Consult a tax advisor for information on your specific situation.

Scheduling flexibility

Buyers and sellers often have more flexible schedules during the holiday season. With time off work and school vacations, it’s easier to coordinate property viewings and meetings with real estate agents. This flexibility can streamline the buying or selling process.

The holidays hold different meanings for everyone and can range from joy-filled to stress-inducing. If your holiday plans include buying or selling a home, be prepared for a range of emotions, but with an experienced agent by your side they should undoubtedly be more merry and bright and less bah-humbug. Happy holidays!

The writer is an Alexandria-based Realtor with Compass, a national real estate platform with many agents across the country and in the city.
Trendy takes on kitchen and bathroom design

BY FAMILY FEATURES

Designing a new home, remodeling your own or simply rethinking aesthetics and decor all require a little imagination and a lot of inspiration. A quick online search brings up hundreds – if not thousands – of thoughtful ways to make your kitchen or bathroom match your desired style.

But, all these results can be overwhelming. Rather than having a go at it alone, rely on professionals to guide you toward looks that are all the rage and fit a variety of budgets.

KITCHENS

Let it flow

Open concepts have become quite common as it allows the kitchen to feel like one large room where loved ones and guests can intermingle as opposed to an enclosed space. This flowing openness lends continuous visibility to the area ranging from the active kitchen to gathering spaces in the dining and living rooms. An open floor plan also helps connect design aesthetics from each room to the next.

Concealed storage solutions

Pots, pans, knives and all your favorite kitchen gadgets need to be hidden somewhere. Rather than taking up valuable pantry space, turn to a stylish storage solution, such as pullout cabinets, that give you the room you need. With options ranging from pullout peg boards to sleek tray dividers, these clever contraptions can help you stay organized while making functionality beautiful.

Smart technology

Trends aren’t exclusively about aesthetics – practicality via technology is equally important for those looking to update their kitchens to the 21st century. Devices like smart refrigerators that allow you to take inventory from an app, smart lighting that brightens and dims to save on electricity and voice assistants that help you keep track of recipes are all trendy paths toward a top-of-the-line kitchen.

BATHROOMS

Poppin’ accents

Obvious accents like bold pops of color and unique patterns come to mind, but you can also make your bathroom stand out by experimenting with materials, accessories and shapes. Think eye-catching cabinet hardware, fun mirror shapes and open-shelf decor that grabs attention without overdoing it.

Wooden vanities

As an important area you’ll use to get ready for each day, vanities should be purposeful and practical but can also brandish your personal style. Types and sizes may vary but one look seeing an upward trend is the use of natural tones and textures like wood grain to complement the rise in popularity of warm colors in recent years.

Decorative lighting

The same tired light fixtures in bathrooms can feel drab and dreary. Evaluate the amount of natural light available and decide if you can go more subdued or need to effectively and efficiently illuminate the area. Bell-shaped, wall-mounted sconces next to mirrors are in style, as are glass globes to complement ample natural light. For a true touch of modern flair, consider dramatic accent lighting like underlights on a floating vanity that do double duty as a convenient nightlight.

A spa-like oasis

Organic materials, natural light, traditional decor and, maybe most importantly, an oversized soaking tub are at the core of obtaining a spa-like luxury space. While it may sound counterintuitive, you can actually create your own oasis with some simple, budget-friendly aesthetics. The first step for many is to incorporate more storage using sleek cabinets, shelves and wall-mounted hooks to achieve a decluttered look. Next, simply replace your old showerhead and faucet with spa lookalikes and stock up on plush, fluffy towels for that luxurious appearance without a complete remodel.
Captivating Ford’s Landing townhome

In the sought-after southeast quadrant of Old Town, nestled within the waterfront community of Ford’s Landing, this residence offers a captivating open floor plan and a tranquil balcony on the main level. The first level provides an inviting office and a custom wood built-in reading room. The primary suite on the next level features a luxurious bathroom and ample storage. The top floor offers a third bedroom with high ceilings and an ensuite bathroom. With a two-car garage and proximity to King Street, parks and the Potomac River, this home epitomizes Old Town’s luxurious, walkable living. With a picturesque Potomac River view upon entry, this three-bedroom townhome offers an open floor plan, an office and reading room, a chef’s kitchen and a serene balcony.

HOMES ADVERTORIAL
Your dog ate something toxic: What’s next?

BY KIM GILLIAM

With all the candy sitting around after Halloween, you may wonder what would happen if your dog found your secret stash and ate all that chocolate. Would you call poison control? Rush them to the vet? Try to make them vomit?

These are questions that most pet owners don’t ask until faced with an emergency situation, but it’s important to be prepared so you are ready to jump into action.

Each year, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals publishes a list of the most commonly reported toxins. Here are the top 10.

1. **Over-the-counter medications** – Most commonly ibuprofen and acetaminophen, which are often stolen out of backpacks and purses.

2. **Food** – Especially grapes, raisins, xylitol, onions, garlic and protein/snack bars.

3. **Human prescription medications** – Ensure medicine is stored in closed cabinets out of reach of animals.

4. **Chocolate** – The effect depends on a dog’s weight, type and amount of chocolate consumed.

5. **Plants** – Always make sure plants are non-toxic before bringing them into your home.

6. **Household toxins** – Includes cleaning, beauty and home repair products.

7. **Veterinary products** – Chewable medications are made to smell and taste good.

8. **Rodenticides** – These are made to be appealing to rodents, but your dog will be tempted to eat them too.

9. **Insecticides** – Try using pet-safe product alternatives to chemical baits and sprays.

10. **Recreational drugs** – Primarily marijuana and edibles. This was the first year that recreational drugs made the list. The ASPCA fielded nearly 300% more calls about marijuana toxicity in 2022 compared with the five years prior.

With more relaxed laws around marijuana use in the DMV, an increasing number of pets are accidentally consuming the drug and experiencing the potentially dangerous symptoms of toxicity.

The symptoms of poisoning vary depending on the substance and quantity your dog has ingested. Some common symptoms include diarrhea, vomiting, loss of appetite, increased body temperature, muscle rigidity, increased heart rate, seizures or tremors, behavioral changes, bruising or bleeding and finding unusual material in a dog’s stool.

Poisoning can cause a whole range of effects – from more immediate to those with lasting impact – some of these can only be identified by a veterinarian, e.g. irregular heartbeat or liver failure. That’s why, if you have any reason to suspect poisoning and see multiple symptoms, you need to take immediate action.

Follow these steps.

1. Remove your dog from the toxic substance, noting the situation and your dog’s symptoms.

2. Contact your veterinarian, the nearest emergency clinic if it’s after hours, or a pet poison hotline. Ask if you should come in immediately or induce vomiting at home.

3. Collect any of the remaining potential toxin and a vomit or stool sample. This will help the vet diagnose and treat your pet.

4. Follow your veterinarian’s directions, bringing your pet in as soon as possible if needed.

   In the case you can’t reach a vet right away, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is available 24/7 at 888-426-4435. The Pet Poison Helpline at 855-764-7661 charges a $59 fee per call, but offers lifetime access for $15 through AKC Reunite. The AKC Vetline enables you to contact trained pet care professionals and licensed veterinary staff 24/7 for $99 across the lifetime of your pet.

   While you would never intentionally poison your pet, accidents are called accidents for a reason and it happens more often than you think. Keeping toxic substances out of paw’s reach can decrease this likelihood and help keep your pet safe at home.

The writer is a co-owner of Frolick Dogs, a canine sports club in Alexandria.

Halloween may leave you with a surplus of candy. Take care to keep your stash in a safe and secure place where your dog can’t reach it.
The struggle for suffrage

Alexandria women mobilize to play major roles in elections

BY GAYLE CONVERSE

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” – 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution

In February 1920, Virginia voted against ratifying the 19th Amendment. But by August of that year, 36 states had approved the proposal. The ratification meant nearly 26 million American women – including those in Virginia – could finally cast their votes. Virginia delayed its ratification of the 19th Amendment another 32 years in 1952.

Individual women on the North American continent worked to gain the right to vote since the 1600s. In a time when men outnumbered women by almost six-to-one in most English colonies in the New World, an Alexandria landowner might have been the first woman in the history of North America to demand the right to vote.

In January 1648, Margaret Brent petitioned the all-male Maryland Assembly for the right to become enfranchised. She was denied her claim but admonished the Assemblymen, “I’ve come to seek a voice in this assembly. And yet because I am a woman, forsooth I must stand idly by and not even have a voice in the framing of your laws.”

It would take more than 200 years for women to mobilize as they fought to gain equality at the ballot box – but “equality” was limited: while remaining strong advocates for voting rights, Black women were not welcomed by most Virginia suffrage organizations.

Virginia had become home to a variety of suffrage groups, including the Virginia Suffrage Society, formed in 1893 and later titled the Virginia Woman Suffrage Association. A new organization appeared in 1909, when Alexandria’s Dr. Kate Waller Barrett and other activists created the Equal Suffrage League of Virginia in 1912. In November 1920, a few months after American women had won the right to vote, the ESL disbanded and its members created the League of Women Voters of Virginia.

Pamela Berg, co-president of the Arlington and Alexandria City LWV Chapter commented on this history.

“Almost 80 years ago, seventeen women formed the League of Women Voters of Arlington. At that time, the League included the City of Alexandria. The two groups later formed two separate Leagues but joined forces again in 2021. They now have a combined membership of 246, [which] also includes men,” Berg said.

Alexandria certainly played its part in the women’s movement and eventual passage of the 19th Amendment. First-time women voters turned out in large numbers to cast their ballots Nov. 2, 1920. According to an article in the Nov. 3, 1920, Alexandria Gazette:

“The women voted in large numbers and fully three-fourths of the number qualified took part in the election…. There are 4,250 qualified voters in the city, of which number 1,399 are women.”

Today, Alexandria boasts 112,109 active and inactive total registered voters. General Registrar and Director of Elections Angie Maniglia Turner reports that 60,477 of the city’s registered voters, as of Oct. 25, 2023, are female.

According to the “Commonwealth of Virginia State Board of Elections Voter Turnout Report by Age and Gender (2017-2025),” women cast their votes at a higher percentage than men in last November’s General Election in the city. To serve the 2023 General Election, Alexandria will require 30 precinct chiefs, and 14 of those chiefs will be women.

Turner also said women – and one woman in particular – have been a critical part of the city’s Office of Voter Registration and Elections.

“ ”

"Our former registrar, Anna Leider – who managed 41 elections, including four presidential elections – was a great mentor and was instrumental in putting the Office on a great path forward to serve the voters of Alexandria,” Turner said.

The writer is a founder of Alexandria Celebrates Women, a nonprofit commemorating the centennial of women’s suffrage and highlighting influential women throughout the city’s history.
contribute most to environmental work in the city.

Isbell said anyone can volunteer with the organization to move toward the Friends’ goal.

“Volunteers really help out this group with its mission. The only limit on how much better the trail can be is the number of people who show up,” Isbell said.

Taylor said the group is communal in nature.

“Many of our volunteers have found a community through volunteering as well,” Taylor said. “One of the best things about this group is seeing life-long friendships that have formed between volunteers that wouldn’t have happened if not for Friends of the Mount Vernon Trail.”

The organization also aims to one day clean up other beautiful sights in the community.

“Right now we’re focusing on the Mount Vernon Trail, but we do hope to help out other places such as the Jones Point Lighthouse because that’s also another beautiful historic sight in Alexandria,” Isbell said.

Isbell also said the Friends support other organizations that do similar work along the same stretch of land.

“We also help support our sister organizations that work on the Potomac Heritage Trail and the 9/11 Memorial Trail because both of those trails and the Mount Vernon Trail are a part of the 3,000-mile East Coast Greenway,” Isbell said.

Most of the organization’s volunteer work is conducted on Saturdays. Those interested in volunteering can register for their events at mountvernontrail.org/events.

William John Burton, affectionately known as “Dad,” “Bill” or “Billums,” 76 years of age, of Warren, Ohio, passed away October 25, 2023, in Fairfax, Virginia.

Bill was born in Warren, Ohio, to William Franklin Burton and Alfretta Frances Maguire on May 3, 1947. He acquired his bachelor of arts degree at Hiram College in 1969. He went on to obtain a masters in 1971 and Ph.D. in 1976 from Kent State University. He later married Linda Lee Burton on September 11, 2005, in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Bill held many professional roles in his lifetime. He often referred to his favorite job as being a husband and father. For him, the most notable of those roles included lifetime scholar, professor, university vice president and a U.S. government consultant. The happiest of which being a beloved member of the Barnes & Noble, Potomac Yard family, post-retirement. Bill and many others were deeply proud and moved by his dissertation “HELLISH FIENDS AND BRUTISH MEN: AMERICAN–EUROPEAN INTERACTION IN SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND, AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS,” formally published in 1976.

Bill is survived by his wife Lin Burton, eldest son Seth, wife Renee and grandson Adam; his youngest son Joshua, wife Heather, granddaughter Leah and grandson Daniel; as well as his only daughter, Alex, wife Erica and grand-dog Espresso Bean.

The Burton Family wishes to extend our sincere thanks to Alexandria Inova, Fairfax Inova, Virginia Hospital Center and Woodbine Rehabilitation Center for their careful care of Bill during his 18-month illness. With gratitude and recognition of our earthly angels, Dr. Laura Luo, Robbie Rodgers, Barbara Duff, The Williams Family, The Ballard Family, The Burdick Family and E. Nelson Friends/Neighbors. Bill will always love you all.

Celebration of Life will be held from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, November 5, 2023, at Evolly-Wheatley Funeral Home in Alexandria. The family is inviting all to come and share Bill’s eternal light and love. Repast to follow at the Burton Residence. Additional information available upon request; linlburton@gmail.com.

In memoriam, funds may be given to Lin Burton for remaining medical expenses; flowers can be sent to Evolly-Wheatley Funeral Home for the celebration of life. Donations in Bill’s honor will be received by Beth El House in Alexandria. All forms of love and support are greatly appreciated.
Editorial

Possible benefits versus certain costs

We are not convinced by the arguments in favor of the Zoning for Housing initiative, on which the city of Alexandria has spent $100,000 for a public relations campaign, according to records obtained by Freedom of Information Act requests.

As Mark Eaton states in his column on the facing page, it feels as if the city has scheduled “a meeting a day” with the public from now until Zoning for Housing is scheduled to come before City Council at the November 28 legislative meeting. Such engagement will certainly allow city leaders to say they “listened to the public” on this issue.

But what, if anything, have they actually heard? More specifically, what resident concerns have been incorporated into the initiative?

Is it being broken into smaller pieces, so that the proposal’s impact and unintended consequences can be deeply examined one-by-one? Are provisions for residents to appeal specific projects, beyond filing lawsuits, being added? Are any members of Council pausing to consider whether this initiative is actually going to make Alexandria a better place to live – for everyone?

Also unconvincing are the macro arguments being made in favor of the initiative. It’s being justified as a way to increase affordable housing, to right racist zoning laws and because other localities have implemented it.

Let’s examine those claims one by one:

**Will increasing Alexandria’s population by 50% actually lower housing costs?** It’s true that a basic premise of economics holds that greater supply generally lowers the cost of an item, while greater demand increases cost. However, common sense makes clear that higher housing costs accompany more density.

All one has to do is look at densely populated cities compared to those with less density and rural areas to see that across the board housing costs rise with added density. Not only will Zoning for Housing not lower housing prices in Alexandria, it will greatly accelerate the cost of living here. Zoning for Housing would indeed be equitable: it would increase the cost of housing for all.

That doesn’t take into account the extraordinary price tag for building out Alexandria’s infrastructure to accommodate 80,000 more residents. It is residents who will pay for this, both in money and quality of life.

The notion that racist zoning laws are still on the books in Alexandria is both silly and insulting. So we will respect the intelligence of the people claiming that racist wrongs will be righted by Zoning for Housing by assuming they mean that the effects of prior Jim Crow era laws persist. But home-buying or renting in the Alexandria of 2023 is a function of wealth, not race.

Rather than delving into a dissertation about the causes of and solutions to income inequality, it’s again a matter of costs and benefits. The ethnic demographics of Del Ray might become somewhat more diverse if more historic bungalows are torn down to build duplexes and if Mt. Vernon Avenue becomes dotted with seven-story buildings.

Loss of the Town of Potomac’s historic designation, along with overcrowding, a dearth of parking, increased flooding and a host of other ills is a really steep price to pay for an incremental uptick in diversity. The possible benefit is not worth the certain cost.

The least convincing argument for Zoning for Housing is that “everyone is doing it.” Mayor Justin Wilson recently justified Zoning for Housing in an interview with the Times, saying “This is the same solution that is being offered in almost every [place] in America.” That statement is a significant exaggeration. And just as responsible parents don’t let their children have a curfew of 3 a.m. because “everyone” is doing the risky behavior du jour, neither should Alexandria implement a transformational change on the justification that it’s been done elsewhere.

The only thing that matters is how this, or any, proposed initiative would impact Alexandria and Alexandrians.

Opinion

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

- Thomas Jefferson

Photo of the Week

A sunburst captured during a recent early morning on Prince Street.

Letters

City Charter does not authorize ZFH

To the editor:

I write in protest of the proposed rezoning of Alexandria and to ask all residents to join me in expressing their opposition to City Council.

Most people have no idea of the scope of the proposed Zoning for Housing and how harshly it may affect them. It is very difficult to understand the proposed ordinances. As an example, it is suggested that no parking may be required for new/expanded housing in enhanced transit districts.

Comments from the city lead one to believe that these enhanced districts are located around Metro stations. The reality is that 45% of the existing housing in the city, including almost all of Old Town, is in an enhanced transit district and no required parking will be required for new developments.

Council maintains their goal is to provide more housing through zoning in order to right the racial wrongs of the past. There is no authority for Council to enact zoning ordinances with that stated goal and more importantly no evidence that that goal will be achieved through zoning.

Council’s zoning powers flow from the City Charter section 9.09. That provision contains a list of considerations on zoning actions and further mandates consideration of numerous criteria, not just one. Section 9.09 of Alexandria’s charter reads: “council shall have the
We're all human, give them a break

BY MARK EATON

“I don’t know about you guys, but maybe it’s just because I’m old. As it gets late and we continue talking about the same stuff. ... It’s just me, but you all can finish up. I’m done.”

So said School Board member Willie Bailey at 11 p.m. prior to leaving an October 5 public work session. The work session, which followed a two-hour Board meeting, adjourned because of the absence of an in-person quorum.

The Board was seeking consensus on proposals to revise when and how Board members are elected and the length of their terms of office. This is a gnarly topic with numerous variables and alternatives – to fully engage with its complexities at a late hour requires concentration.

Some might see Bailey’s departure as one more example of government dysfunction. Others may admire Bailey for being self-aware and realizing that fatigue precluded his meaningful participation in the work session at a late hour. In any case, the episode reveals much about public service in Alexandria.

We want our officeholders and city staff to bring experience, insights and wisdom to their positions; however, it seems that the most important attribute might be stamina, or at least the ability to stay awake.

We expect to see elected officials, in the words of former Mayor Bill Euille, “out and about” at weekend and evening events. They are also expected to attend numerous meetings of indefinite duration. At some point, glassy-eyed brain-lock sets in.

Of course, elected officials run for their positions; meetings and communications with constituents and others are part of the job description. Even so, the question of how many excellent decisions, or insights that contribute to excellent decisions, occur after 10 p.m. could be a topic for an academic study by an enterprising political scientist. The anecdotal evidence suggests that the answer is “not many.”

Every Council or Board meeting is divided between topics which require members to act as witnesses – such as proclamations, public comments and staff reports – and topics that require engagement and debate. The former almost always occur early in the meeting when members are freshest.

Complex matters often require detailed interactions with staff or experts which leads to the proliferation of topic-specific work sessions that involve discussion, but no formal vote.

At best, a modest amount of time is dedicated to actual debate in the regularly scheduled meetings of the city’s public officials.

These realities – and the media’s tendency to cover Council and Board meetings more than work sessions – can lead to a common Alexandria reaction when controversial issues such as zoning reform surface: “Why haven’t I heard about this?”

Inevitably, there are those who assert that issues are a surprise or are being rushed to adoption. City officials anticipate, or respond to, this sentiment by scheduling more meetings, work sessions or community forums. A current example: it seems that an event relating to zoning reform has been scheduled about every other day from now through the end of this month when Council is scheduled to vote on the package of reform proposals.

In the distant past, I chaired the School Board. Once or twice, when the proposed agenda was light, I canceled a meeting which resulted in instant and unanimous acclaim from my Board colleagues and the ACPS senior staff. There are times when people reach their collective limit and progress will not be significantly compromised by omitting a meeting.

Of course, every participant is partially responsible for how long a meeting goes. Repetitive and off topic remarks take time, as do staff responses to questions from unprepared participants.

Two U.S. senators, members of the self-proclaimed “world’s greatest deliberative body” and a talk Mecca, had valuable insight on public service. The late Senator Howard Baker offered this advice: “Listen more often than you speak. Once again, as my late father-in-law, Everett Dirksen, once admonished me in my first year in [the Senate], ‘occasionally allow yourself the luxury of an unexpressed thought.’”

So, if you encounter an Alexandria elected official who seems a touch snappish or who responds curtly to a message, you might give that person a break. They were probably up late.

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/.
U.S. Colored Troops: a history and legacy in Alexandria

Halfway through the Civil War, high mortality rates and low recruitment left the Union desperate for manpower. Determined to win the war and prevent the South from having the advantage of extra troops, Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on Jan. 1, 1863, freeing all enslaved people in the states that seceded from the Union. This act, on top of freeing slaves, enabled African Americans to officially begin fighting for the Union, as many had long wished to do.

The United States Colored Troops encompassed about 175 regiments in the Union Army during the Civil War. The USCT consisted of 135 regiments of infantry soldiers, six regiments of cavalry, one regiment of light artillery and 13 regiments of heavy artillery. Additionally, 19,000 African Americans served in the United States Navy, and women served in roles such as cooks and nurses. The troops were predominantly African American, but Asian Americans, Native Americans and Pacific Islanders also served under the USCT.

For part of the war, Battery Rodgers garrisoned a company of soldiers from the USCT. Their experiences show the continual fight for freedom and equality in the tumultuous post-war period.

Upon hearing that African American soldiers were going to be buried at the new Freedmen’s Cemetery and not the Soldier’s Cemetery – now Alexandria National Cemetery – 443 soldiers at L’Ouverture Hospital signed a petition to be buried at Alexandria National and gained the support of a white Captain named JCG Lee. The men demanded that they be buried with the same honors as their white counterparts, as they served an equally important role in the war.

These USCT soldiers were here on Christmas Day 1865, more than eight months after the surrender of the Confederate Army at Appomattox, when racial violence broke out across Alexandria in what was called the Christmas Riots. In multiple incidents throughout the city, groups of white Alexandrians, many of whom were returning Confederate veterans, attacked African Americans as they celebrated the first Christmas following the Civil War.

While initial reports were much higher, at least one person, an African American man named John Anderson, was killed. Many others, including several soldiers stationed at Battery Rogers, were injured. The military was called out, and the white perpetrators were arrested and sent to the military prison at the former slave jail of Price, Birch & Co. at 1315 Duke Street – one of the slave dealers located there after Franklin & Armfield.

The U.S. Colored Troops were honored for their contribution to Alexandria and American history on October 28, as the fraternal orders Magnus Temple No. 3 and Magnus Court No. 100 organized and conducted an annual wreath-laying ceremony.

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

Weekly Poll

Last Week

How do you plan to celebrate Halloween?

40% I don't celebrate Halloween.
35% Attending a different event.
20% On Lee Street.
5% At the Del Ray parade.

This Week

What do you think of the city's outreach efforts on the Zoning for Housing initiative?

A) I'm impressed with the number of public input sessions.
B) They have ignored concerns expressed by residents.
C) I can't believe they spent $100k on consultants.
D) What's Zoning for Housing?
DEATH NOTICES

WILLIAM JOHN BURTON (76), of Alexandria, Oct. 25, 2023
THOMAS EDWARD DEVENDORF (57), of Alexandria, Oct. 22, 2023
EDWIN RUSSELL EMBREY (73), of Alexandria, Oct. 24, 2023
DOUGLAS JOHN KENNEDY (77), of Alexandria, Oct. 25, 2023
KATHRYN ANN LARKEN (78), of Alexandria, Oct. 29, 2023
GERARDINE ANN MOORE (74), of Alexandria, Oct. 28, 2023
EDGAR FRANK RAINES JR. (79), of Alexandria, Oct. 26, 2023
SHARON SHIRLEY (80), of Alexandria, Oct. 15, 2023
EM SUTTON RUSCH (88), of Alexandria, Oct. 15, 2023
DONNA JEAN ZIANTS (81), of Alexandria, Oct. 27, 2023

Solutions from last week
ADDSTOTEN OOF JARJAR BEATUP UVA APRENCAS REVAMP DAB FEENACTS AMBOZOS NEHRO KOI MELDARISTOTLEACORN DANECAVERNOLS LOLSROWEREGIMENLENASEQEXECAXECCTVNBASOUETCHHOSETOTICEDEOBUBNEREGITSTLBSALT RNA NATLSELALULUCNET LEOSDOGONEITOHSOVEXCOEXISTWWISSCREAMS NONCALLUPS COILAPARTEVERSNOTROPSOAGALIMITVISAALQOTREMELLINTERECIG PASTUREABOVEREWROTE ENTERDDEFERSLEDGERS TERNEANTYESSTEDE

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TWO PEAS IN A POD by Kelly Richardson, edited by Jeff Chen

ACROSS
1 Conjuring a rabbit out of a hat, e.g. 57 Tree with durable wood
6 Bequeathed 59 "Nothing but ____!">
10 Trod the boards 60 Leeds lay
15 "Getting warmer," for one 62 Credit with
19 Texas landmark 64 Hayworth of "The Lady from Shanghai"
20 Listing locale 65 Elisa's sister
21 Whereabouts 66 "You see?"
22 Whiff 67 “Feels great!”
23 One who's fully present for every tiny moment with his niece? 69 Dipping point?
25 Some like it hot 71 Elsa's sister
26 Hayworth of "The Lady from Shanghai" 72 “Oh, no!”
27 Unmoored 73 Stare in shock
28 Meh 74 Fire up
29 Club connected by a deep enjoyment of Carolina Reapers? 75 Word that can go with "bull's" and "eagle"
31 Pyramid scheme 76 "It's a dog-eat-dog world," say
33 Shortcut, in short 77 Take down a giant
35 Wetland 78 “Don't ask me”
36 Cartwheel across a meadow, say 80 Infamous spitter
37 Links 82 Mountains near the Shenandoah River
39 Take down a giant 85 Ever on guard
40 ___-ball 87 Math proportion
41 Space launch? 90 Short summons
43 Way up for skiers 91 Send away, as an evil stepmother might do
45 Person whose worries vanish as she captains her ship across Lake Geneva? 92 Finding bliss as a barista?
47 Missy Elliott, e.g. 95 "The ___ of Spring" (Stravinsky work)
51 Big bovine 96 Vineilke
52 Do away with 97 Radiates
53 Nudge the dial 98 Pastoral chorus
54 "Don't ask me" 100 Place for a "me day"

DOWN
1 Pupusa ingredient 110 Tablet not to be swallowed
2 "Oh, no!" 111 Against
3 Stare in shock 115 Elliptical
4 Fire up 116 State of serenity, and what six answers have in common, both metaphorically and homophonically
5 Like many politicians' answers 118 Oodles
6 Blueprints, of sorts 119 Comedian Bruce
7 Toddler's basics 120 Level
8 Pluck 121 Management class subject?
9 Word that can go with "bull's" and "eagle" 122 Like a trenchcoat or mushroom
10 Altar end of a church 123 Remnants
11 Cheer on 124 Throw out
12 Like a trenchcoat or mushroom 125 Bow's opposite
13 Quirky 126 Niagara Falls province
14 Buck 127 “Barbie” co-writer Baumbach
15 King's plot? 128 “Barbie” co-writer Baumbach
16 “It's a dog-eat-dog world," say 129 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
17 Still out 130 “Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
18 Corner 131 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
19 Texas landmark 132 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
20 Listing locale 133 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
21 Whereabouts 134 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
22 Whiff 135 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
23 One who's fully present for every tiny moment with his niece? 136 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
25 Some like it hot 137 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
26 Hayworth of "The Lady from Shanghai" 138 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
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28 Meh 140 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
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41 Space launch? 149 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
43 Way up for skiers 150 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
45 Person whose worries vanish as she captains her ship across Lake Geneva? 151 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
47 Missy Elliott, e.g. 152 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
51 Big bovine 153 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
52 Do away with 154 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
53 Nudge the dial 155 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach
54 "Don't ask me" 156 "Barbie" co-writer Baumbach

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Highly skilled 76
Shake on it 77
Takes in wise words 78
Many a downtown dream apartment 80
Cup of coffee on a Monday morning, say 81
Major studying DNA 82
Point on a maple leaf 83
Like some drivers at a red light 84
Like Manhattan during rush hour 85
How some bonds are traded 86
Texter's adieu 87
Background for policy decisions 88
Hams 93
Less risky 94
Country abode 95
Determine one will 96
Flat out 97
"The Ecstasy of Gold" composer Morricone 98
___ Dome (Yosemite sight) 99
Crumble 100
Big brand in the freezer aisle 101
11 Eleven has two
112 Laptop brand 113
Laura of "Jurassic World Dominion" 114
Wednesday's cousin 115
___ de deux 116
Highly skilled 76
Shake on it 77
Takes in wise words 78
Many a downtown dream apartment 80
Cup of coffee on a Monday morning, say 81
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Determine one will 96
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"The Ecstasy of Gold" composer Morricone 98
___ Dome (Yosemite sight) 99
Crumble 100
Big brand in the freezer aisle 101
11 Eleven has two
The VA Dept of Historic Resources will conduct a public information hearing of the Executive Office and Governor’s Residence of the Restored Government of Virginia on November 29, 2023. The meeting begins at 7:00 pm, at the Lloyd House, 220 North Washington Street, Alexandria, VA 22314. Public comment regarding the proposal will be taken at the time of the hearing or can be sent to Director Julie Langan, Dept of Historic Resources, 2801 Kensing- ton Ave, Richmond, VA 23221. This proposal has been recommended el- igible for the Virginia Landmarks and National Registers. This proposal will be presented to the State Re- view Board and the Board of Historic Resources on December 14, 2023. For additional information, contact Amanda Terrell at Amanda.Terrell@ dhr.virginia.gov or 804-482-8092.

LEGAL NOTICE

Board of Architectural Review

LEGAL NOTICE OF

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

For further information, contact the Clerk of the Board at 703-746-3810 or visit acps.k12.va.us.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Alexandria City School Board will hold a budget public hear- ing on the FY 2023-2024 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget during the Special School Board Meeting on No- vember 13, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. in the School Board Meeting Room located at 1340 Braddock Place in Alexandria.

Public comments regarding the FY 2024-2023 CIP Budget may be submitted in the following ways:

- Sign up to speak at the November 13th public hearing at: https://acpsweb.wuf.com/forms/p127g-8ta05sy9p9/
- Email written comments to the Clerk of the Board at: boardclerk@ acps.k12.va.us
- U.S. Mail: Clerk of the Board Alexandria City School Board 1340. Braddock Place Alexandria, VA 22314

Only comments related to the FY 2025-2034 CIP Budget will be heard at the public hearing. Requests to speak or to submit written comments must be submitted by Noon on November 12, 2023.

For more information, please contact the Clerk of the Board at 703-619-8316.

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SERVICES

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Classifieds

LEGAL NOTICE of Alterations

BAR#2023-00416 OHAD
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 734 N Saint Asaph Street
Applicant: ARP Royal OPCO, LLC

BAR#2023-00428 OHAD
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 724-734 N Saint Asaph Street
Applicant: ARP Royal OPCO, LLC

BAR#2023-00436 OHAD
Request for alterations at 225 N Fairfax Street
Applicant: Alturas 225 NF, LLC

BAR#2023-00437 OHAD
Request for alterations at 724-734 N Saint Asaph Street
Applicant: ARP Royal OPCO, LLC

BAR#2023-00427 OHAD
Request for alterations at 1315 Duke Street
Applicant: Gretchen Bulova, Director Office of Historic Alexandria for the City of Alexandria

BAR#2023-00282 OHAD
Request for partial demolition/encapsulation at 1315 Duke Street
Applicant: Gretchen Bulova, Director Office of Historic Alexandria for the City of Alexandria

BAR#2023-00401 OHAD
Request for alterations at 225 N Fairfax Street
Applicant: Gretchen Bulova, Director Office of Historic Alexandria for the City of Alexandria
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Classifieds
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