



'CONTRABANDS' IN ALEXANDRIA



PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN

"The Path of Thorns and Roses" by sculptor Mario Chiodo at the Contrabands and Freedmen Memorial Cemetery.

Black History Museum director details forgotten history in presentation

BY CODY MELLO-KLEIN

Walking past the Mobil gas station on South Washington Street in the 1990s, it would have been difficult to imagine the history that sat just beneath the surface of the concrete. But fast forward to 2014 when the Contrabands and Freedmen Memorial Cemetery officially opened, and a significant chapter in Alexandria's Civil War history, while literally still underneath the surface, had been unearthed.

Audrey Davis, director of the Alexandria Black History Museum, talked about the importance of contrabands and the cemetery



PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN

AUDREY DAVIS

during a special event at the Athenaeum on Feb. 21.

During the Civil War, as Union forces marched south, slaves started fleeing to Union-controlled strongholds in hopes of finding asylum and, eventually, freedom.

"It's a universal truth that everyone wants a better life for

SEE **CONTRABANDS**

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PHOTO/CODY MELLO-KLEIN

The city's pay-by-phone parking pilot program covers 13 blocks in Old Town.

Action deferred on parking pilot

Staff snafu prompts delay, almost two dozen residents weigh in

BY CODY MELLO-KLEIN

The city's controversial pay-by-phone parking pilot was docketed for possible permanent passage at Saturday's city council public hearing, but due to an administrative error had to be deferred, to the March 16 public hearing.

The pilot, which covers 13 blocks in Old Town, has caused tension between Old Town neighbors, Alexandri-

ans and institutions since it was launched in 2016. While final action on the program was deferred, public comment was not, and more than 20 speakers turned up to share their views.

Old Town residents testified that they have been able to find parking near their homes much easier since the parking pilot was implemented. Several detailed the positive effects the program has had on their lives.

"I can think of nothing else the city has done to

SEE **PARKING**

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INSIDE

Public Hearing

Council approves zoning changes and development projects.

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Real Talk

Local realtor explains what defines a bedroom in Alexandria.

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Christine Roland Garner

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WEEKLY BRIEFING

Apartment fire displaces two residents

An apartment fire on the 6100 block of Edsall Road that took place Monday resulted in no injuries, but displaced two residents, according to a tweet from the Alexandria Fire Department.

The AFD responded to the fire around 4 p.m. and found fire visible from a unit on the 15th floor of the residential high-rise, according to the

tweet. Shortly after 5 p.m., AFD reported that the fire was under control, but units were remaining on the scene to remove smoke.

IAFF Local 2141, the labor group representing firefighters in Alexandria, tweeted that the AFD units that responded to the scene, Engine 208 and Truck 208, are understaffed, despite consistently being the

busiest units in the city.

The organization sent out a tweet asking citizens to attend City Manager Mark Jinks' budget proposal presentation on Feb. 28 at Charles Houston Recreation Center to advocate for higher compensation for firefighters, as well as for four firefighters on all engines in the city.

-mschrott@alextimes.com

Virginia General Assembly approves funding for combined sewer outfall remediation

The General Assembly adopted a state budget that includes \$25 million for Alexandria's combined sewer outfall remediation project, the City of Alexandria and AlexRenew announced Wednesday.

The funding will be confirmed when Governor Ralph Northam signs off on the

Fiscal Year 2020 state budget next month.

The CSO remediation project is projected to cost between \$370 million and \$555 million and will be primarily funded through increased sewer fees paid by Alexandria residents and businesses, according to a news release. State law requires the project

to be complete by July 1, 2025.

"We are grateful to all our state leaders for supporting Alexandria's aggressive efforts to improve the quality of local waterways," Mayor Justin Wilson said in a statement. "We thank Gov. Northam for including this key funding in his budget proposal."

-mschrott@alextimes.com

CRIME

Alexandria pastor sentenced for investment fraud

An Alexandria pastor was sentenced to eight years in prison on Wednesday for a \$2 million fraud scheme that victimized members of his congregation, clergymen and other investors, according to a Department of Justice news release.

Terry Wayne Millender, 54, former senior pastor of Victorious Life Church, was arrested in 2016. He had founded an organization called Micro-Enterprise Management Group that he said helped poor people in developing countries by providing small loans to businesses by working with a network of established micro-finance institutions, according to court documents

and trial testimony.

Millender emphasized MEMG's Christian mission and use of funds to lure investors, many of whom invested their retirement funds in a shell company called Equity Trust that they were falsely led to believe was a third-party entity. Millender used their money to conduct risky trading on the foreign exchange currency market and options trading. He then used the profits on personal expenses including payments on a \$1.75 million residence and lavish furniture for the house.

After MEMG failed, Millender created another entity called Kingdom Commodities Unlimited, which he said specialized in the brokering

of Nigerian oil deals. The victims in that scheme gave more than \$450,000 to KCU, which Millender used to pay for rent, golf trips, a birthday party and other personal expenses.

"Millender preyed upon the religious beliefs and charitable desires of more than two dozen victims and has demonstrated little to no remorse for his actions," G. Zachary Terwilliger, U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, said in a statement. "His rampant fraud scheme has exacted a heavy emotional, spiritual and financial toll on his victims, and today's sentence reflects the seriousness of his crime."

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Social justice advocate Fay Slotnick dies at 71

BY HANNAH HIMES

Longtime Alexandria resident and civil liberties advocate Fay Slotnick died Feb. 20 from liver cancer. She was 71.

Slotnick served in many roles, including as an attorney, legislative aide to former Alexandria City Council Member Joyce Woodson, both executive director and board chair of the Parent Leadership Training Institute of Alexandria, member and executive committee member of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, board member of American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia and board member for Friends of the Torpedo Factory.

She was also mother to three children who all have careers that involve helping other people which, her daughter Jennifer Slotnick said, was a trait passed on by their mother who “want-

ed to change the world.”

“She’s just a good person,” Jennifer Slotnick said. “She wanted to find ways to do things better. She was tough. She had high standards for herself and everyone around her, but I think that things she had a hand in were better because of it.”

Former Alexandria Mayor Allison Silberberg said Slotnick had a big heart, and was committed to social justice and making things happen for the sake of others.

“Fay was generous with a can-do spirit and made a significant difference, giving people the tools to change their lives and the lives of their children, thereby having a positive effect on our community as a whole. She will be sorely missed,” Silberberg said in a statement.

Slotnick was from Philadelphia and went to Temple University. She later attended Rutgers Law School. After



COURTESY PHOTO

Fay Slotnick leaves a legacy of commitment to the Alexandria community.

living and raising children in New Jersey, Slotnick and her family moved to Alexan-

dria in 1996.

Volunteering her time and finding “like-minded people and causes” was how Slotnick found her way in Alexandria, Jennifer Slotnick said.

Former Alexandria City Council Member Joyce Woodson worked with Slotnick in the early 2000s when Slotnick was serving as her legislative aide. Woodson remembered Slotnick as generous and brilliant.

“She was a person who knew how to get things done,” Woodson said.

The two worked together on projects like the Alexandria Housing Development Corporation, a non-profit created to address the need for affordable housing, and the Parent Leadership Training Institute of Alexandria, which aims to help parents become better advocates for their children.

“Fay was very instrumental in, you know, pushing

that to success,” Woodson said of PLTI. “She was just really very generous and supported the organization with time and talent, and financially.”

Eliza Engle is the current chair of PLTI’s Board of Directors. She was in “Class 7” of the 11 that have gone through the program, which is currently on hiatus.

“She’s an amazing woman. A compassionate woman. Always willing to help people,” Engle said. “Fay always had a smile on her face and was very concerned about everyone. She wanted to help everyone succeed in life and I feel that is why she worked so hard on PLTI because she could see the result it had in people’s lives.”

Engle said if she can do a small percentage for her community of what Slotnick did for Alexandria, she would feel that she accomplished something.

where Slotnick served in many roles including Development Committee Chair.

“She was a committed social justice warrior with a heart of gold,” Claire Guthrie Gastañaga, executive director of the ACLUVA, said. “Her role on the [ACLUVA] board was one in which she was someone who led by example and who coached us all to be fiercer.”

Slotnick is survived by her husband Jack Slotnick; daughters Phyllis and Jennifer Slotnick; son Steven Lynn (Rebecca); and grandchildren Aaron, Sean and Sydney Lynn and Jacob Slotnick.

Memorial services are being planned for both Alexandria and New Jersey. In lieu of flowers, her family asked that donations be made to ACLUVA or Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically.

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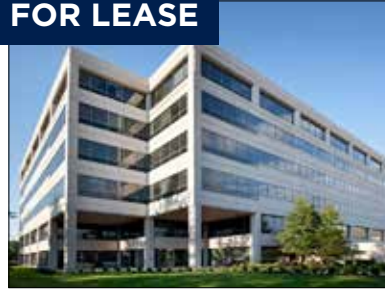
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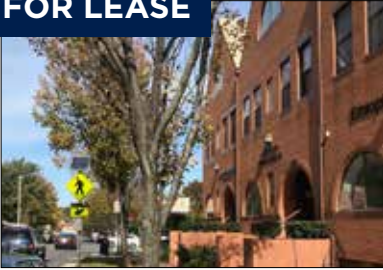
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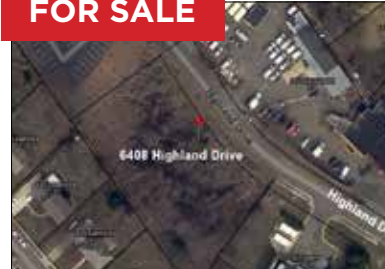
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Patrons' Show scales back to meet building code

Event to take place on Cherry Blossom river-boat in 2020

BY MISSY SCHROTT

After celebrating its landmark 50th anniversary last year with its most successful show yet, the Art League's Patrons' Show returned on Feb. 17 this year with slightly less zest.

The Patrons' Show is the Art League's biggest fundraiser. Each year, it features more than 600 works of original art donated by Art League artists, Art League faculty and Torpedo Factory artists. The night of the show, ticketholders are randomly called to select a work of art to take home.

This year, the Art League scaled back the seating and ticket sales for the event due to occupancy code at the Torpedo Factory. After selling 673 tickets last year, it capped tickets this year at 606.

The Art League also adjusted seating to comply with the occupancy code. In past years, patrons have primarily been seated throughout the first floor, in studios and at upper-floor railings that overlook the first floor. This year, the railing seating was removed, and about 250 attendees were seated



COURTESY PHOTO

Of the roughly 750 people who attended the Art League's 2019 Patrons' Show, about 500 were seated inside the art center, while the other 250 participated from outdoor tents.

in outdoor tents. In addition, the Art League limited the number of couples tickets – two seats and one work of art – in order to cut back on the number of seats required.

“We had some changes since the city's taken over permanent management of the building,” Suzanne Bethel, executive director of the Art League, said. “They had some changes that they wanted to make in terms of

how we occupy the building during the Patrons' Show. Most of it was just about traffic flow.”

While the Torpedo Factory's building code has not changed in the past year, the existing code wasn't being enforced, according to Brett Johnson, director of the Torpedo Factory.

“From our standpoint, the event is run by the Art League,” Johnson said. “We've only asked that they

follow protocol which has been in place for a number of years, but it hasn't really been enforced as much in the past.”

Johnson said the city has been reviewing emergency protocol and building safety since it temporarily took over operations of the art

center two years ago. That temporary management became permanent in November.

“We updated our policy for all emergency protocol about a year ago,” Johnson said. “We worked with the fire department, with the police department, Office of Emergency Management, to update all that and make sure everybody understood what it was, what the protocols were. It's just basic safety. We wanted to make sure that we're safe.”

Bethel said she learned that the format of the 2019 Patrons' Show would need to change shortly after the 2018 event.

“For the most part, what we found is we kind of had to ask ourselves a few questions – did we want to significantly reduce the number of people that could attend the event, [or] did we want to change up the seating?” she said. “Ultimately, we decided we're going to try to keep the spirit of the event as much as we can, because part of what makes it exciting is the energy and

SEE PATRONS

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PATRONS FROM | 7

the number of artworks and the number of people.”

Bethel said some patrons were wary of the seating changes.

“I think that for some people who have come year after year, that they wish that we had done it in the way that we’ve done it in the past,” she said.

Connie Benson, a resident who has attended the show sporadically since the 1970s, said she heard negative feedback from the patrons who sat outside.

“The people that I talked with ... many of them had been inside before and so going outside was definitely a change,” Benson said. “It was cold, and then of course the weather wasn’t good, so it was wet. There was water coming down through the inside [of the tent.]”

Steve Roberson, a patron

“Part of the fun of the event is the crowd and people reacting, ... so dispersing people has the potential to detract from it. It didn’t seem to that much this year, at least from my experience, but it might have for others.”

– Steve Roberson, Patrons’ Show attendee

who has attended the show for the past seven years and sat inside this year, said the event lived up to his expectations.

“It obviously wasn’t as packed, but I think the crowd was still boisterous and fun,” Roberson said. “It didn’t feel like it was all that different.”

However, he acknowledged that he may have felt differently had he purchased one of the outdoor

tent tickets.

“There is something to be said for being with the big group of folks,” he said. “I would’ve had a little apprehension if we could only get tickets in the tent, only because part of the fun of the event is the crowd and people reacting ... so dispersing people has the potential to detract from it. It didn’t seem to that much this year, at least from my experience, but it might have for others.”

Despite the complaints from some of the patrons seated in the tents, Bethel said this year’s show had been a learning experience that would inform how it’s structured in the future.

Next year’s event is already slated for a major venue change: Bethel announced on Tuesday that next year’s show would take place on the Cherry Blossom, the Potomac Riverboat Company’s white and yellow sternwheeler that is regularly docked on the waterfront.

“We think it might be a good solution for our current seating challenge and a fun way to incorporate a local business,” Bethel said in an email. “I think our ticketholders will like it and find a riverboat setting kind of appropriate for the gambling spirit of Patrons’ Show.”

Bethel added that if the

show ever took place in the Torpedo Factory again, it would not use outdoor space.

Despite the challenges event organizers faced this year, Bethel said she was happy with the outcome of the show. The Art League is still calculating total funds raised, but Bethel said the final yield is likely within \$10,000 of last year’s \$174,000.

“For the most part ... Office of the Arts, the staff of the Torpedo Factory and the Art league are working together to make sure that we maintain some of the activities that we have in the building that people really enjoy,” Bethel said. “I will say that it was a great event for us, we have wonderful patrons that come year after year and they all-in-all pretty much embraced the changes with some alacrity.”

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PARKING

FROM | 1

more directly and positively affect my own personal quality of life," Shelly Whitmire, an Old Town resident for 21 years, said. "I feel safer, I am able to load and unload my vehicle without double parking and I can usually expect whenever I leave town, or simply go somewhere else in the city, to park on my block near my home."

Other residents, including 30-year Old Town resident Karen Tietjen, were quick to defend the program not as a cure-all but as a way to relieve the pressure on residents.

"The parking program has eased the situation somewhat, but it does not guarantee residents a parking space," Tietjen said. "Rather, it creates a level playing field by promoting greater turnover of the cars."

Non-residents, however, contended the program makes Old Town less welcoming and, especially for senior citizens who may not have cell phones – let alone smart phones – less accessible. Access and information were primary concerns for many non-residents.

"To me this is a program that says, 'Katy Cannady, keep out,'" Rosemont resident Katy Cannady said. "I only have a landline phone and when I pay I use some quarters or my credit card, and this sounds like it's going to be more difficult. It's not been thoroughly explained. I don't understand how I'm going to make it work for me."

Others expressed concern about the program's potential effect on local business, though no business owners offered testimony.

Department of Transportation and Environmental Services staff proposed three alternative payment methods: a city voucher system, senior parking permits and a

ParkMobile voucher system that businesses could use to absorb parking costs for their customers. Councilors Mo Seifeldin and Del Pepper urged T&ES staff to flesh out the proposals before their next presentation to council.

Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker spoke about the overwhelmingly positive feedback she had received from Old Town residents during extensive canvassing of the 13 blocks in the program.

"We need better ways of encouraging people into garages," Bennett-Parker said. "Enforcement came up a lot. Continuing to work to make guest permits easier to access. I know that's something staff is working on."

Mayor Justin Wilson expressed surprise that, despite staff report's findings that the program has had a modest impact statistically, residents anecdotally described an incredible impact on their own lives.

"What we've heard from a great number of residents on these blocks is how significant an improvement of quality of life they've seen," Wilson said. "... That should speak to the benefits of this program."

According to City Attorney Joanna Anderson, the administrative snafu that led to the pilot's deferral was because the proposed ordinance was not published within five days of its first introduction. This failure meant council could not vote on final passage of the parking program at Saturday's meeting.

Because the pilot was scheduled to expire on March 1, council voted 6-1 to approve an emergency ordinance to extend the pilot until March 23, which means the program won't lapse if council approves it at the March 16 public hearing.

Councilor Amy Jackson cast the lone dissenting vote

after expressing concern that the parking program did not constitute an emergency.

"Right now the issue is it does not feel like an inclusive Alexandria," Jackson said.

Jackson wasn't the only council member upset about the emergency action. Councilor John Chapman at first said he did not believe the situation called for an emergency ordinance, however discussion of the effects of a possible program lapse convinced him otherwise.

According to Yon Lambert, director of T&ES, if the pilot program lapsed, either the pay-by-phone signs would have to be covered up and there would be no parking regulations on those blocks at all between March 1 and the March public hearing, or the signs would be covered and replaced by the old two-hour signs. However, there would be a transition period from one regulatory framework to another resulting in a confusing mish-mash of signage.

"We agreed with the city attorney in that there is a communications issue and the issue of parking use on those blocks which is potentially confusing to those that wish to park on those blocks," Lambert said.

Wilson said a lapse in parking regulation was unacceptable.

"We have a multi-decade regulatory framework on these streets that would abruptly stop on March 1 with no enforcement and I don't think that's an appropriate transition," Wilson said.

Wilson and several other council members were quick to point out that this vote, predicated on an administrative error, shouldn't have been necessary.

"I will say generally that this should not happen," Wilson said. "This is on us and we failed."

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PAINTING THE TOWN GREEN

The 38th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade returns to Old Town

BY MISSY SCHROTT

Get your green glitter and shamrock sequins ready – Alexandria's 38th Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade is returning to King Street this Saturday.

The Ballyshanners, a non-profit organization that promotes Irish heritage in Alexandria, organizes and hosts the event each year. Regularly held on the first Saturday in March, the parade through Old Town has become a beloved Alexandria tradition.

Each year, the parade features more than 100 parade units of Irish pipe bands, Irish step dancers, girl scout troops and military groups. This year's parade will feature eight different marching bands – more than it's ever had, according to Ballyshanners Chair Kim Moore.

"It's always been a terrific blend of fun for pretty much everybody," Moore said. "It's a great family day, and that's one of the things that we have always appreciated about hosting the event."

The day kicks off in Market Square with the annual Fun Dog Show, which the

Ballyshanners organize in partnership with the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. Starting at 11 a.m., more than 30 festive canines will compete for titles including "Most Creative Costume," "Best Human/Canine Look-Alike," "Most Talented" and "Most St. Paddy's Spirit."

"If there's not a dog involved somewhere, then it's just not Old Town," Moore said.

At 12:30 p.m., the parade will begin its descent down King Street. While Alexandria is home to several successful parades each year, the St. Patrick's Day celebration is the only one to travel down King Street.

Leading the parade this year will be grand marshal Shawn McLaughlin, president and chief operating officer of McLaughlin Ryder Investments, Inc., and long-time Alexandria resident.

McLaughlin had been recommended for the grand

marshal position by Bernadette Troy, widow of Pat Troy, the founder of the parade. Pat Troy died last year at age 76 just days after serving as grand marshal of the 2018 parade with Bernadette.

Moore said the Ballyshanners chose McLaughlin because of his commitment to the community. McLaughlin will be installed as grand marshal at a dinner on Friday night.

"It's a great honor," McLaughlin said. "I'm looking forward to great weather and a lot of friends along the parade route and hopefully dressing like an authentic Irishman and doing a lot of smiling. It'll be a wonderful day, and it's just the people that are there that make the day special."

"I'm sure I'm going to indulge in too much shepherd's pie that day," he added, "and maybe a little bit of Guinness to wash it down."

While the parade may be one of Alexandria's biggest

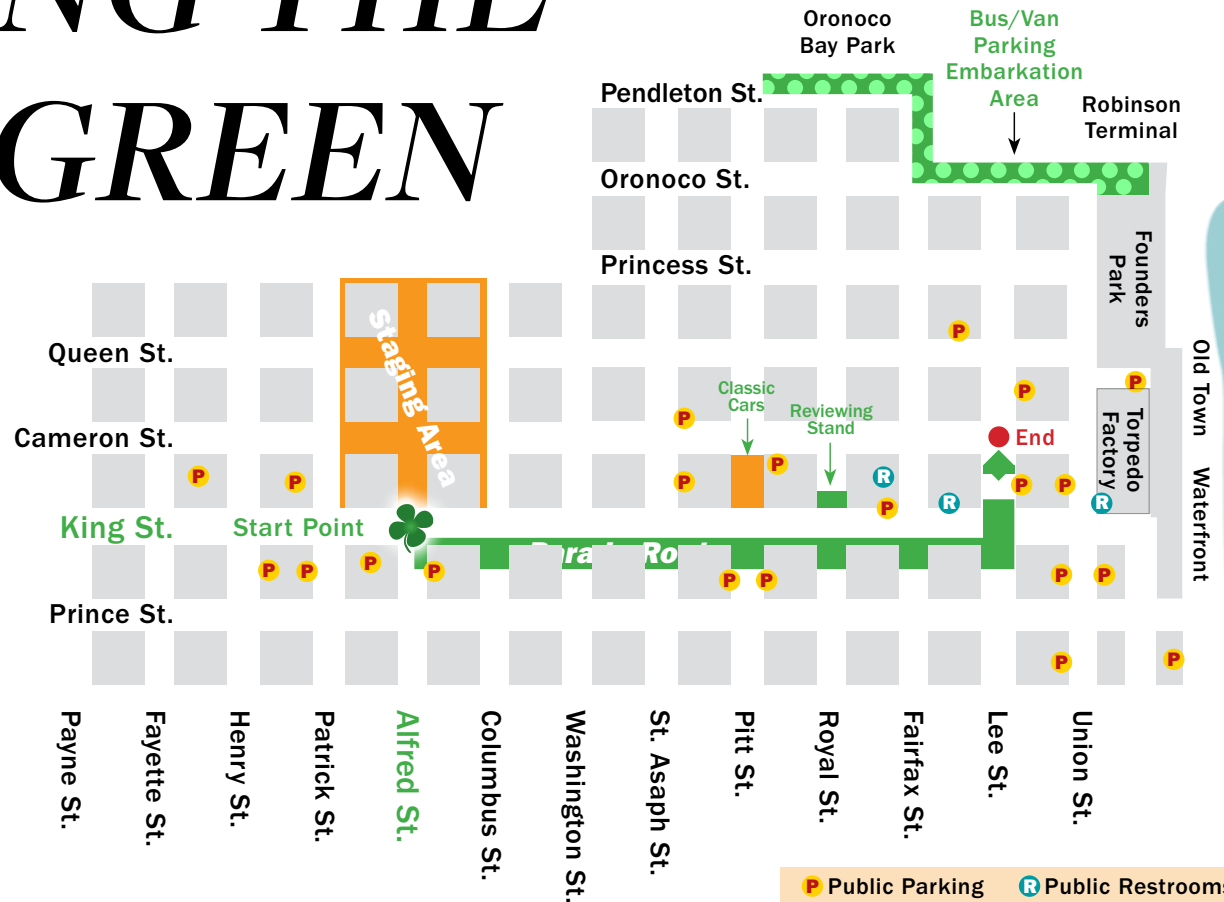
parties, it is also one of its most expensive. Each year, the St. Patrick's Day Parade costs about \$50,000, according to the Ballyshanners' website. The Ballyshanners work to fundraise year-round with various events, including the annual Alexandria Irish Festival in the summer. This year is also the first year they've launched a Go Fund Me page: www.gofundme.com/ballyshanners2019

"We just are immensely grateful to the donors who gave to the Go Fund Me and to the attendees at all of our fundraisers because that also shows the community interest in our event," Moore said.

The fun is just days away, so be sure to follow the sound of bagpipes to Old Town on Saturday and celebrate Alexandria's Irish side.

In the words of McLaughlin, "Who doesn't want to be Irish for at least one day of the year?"

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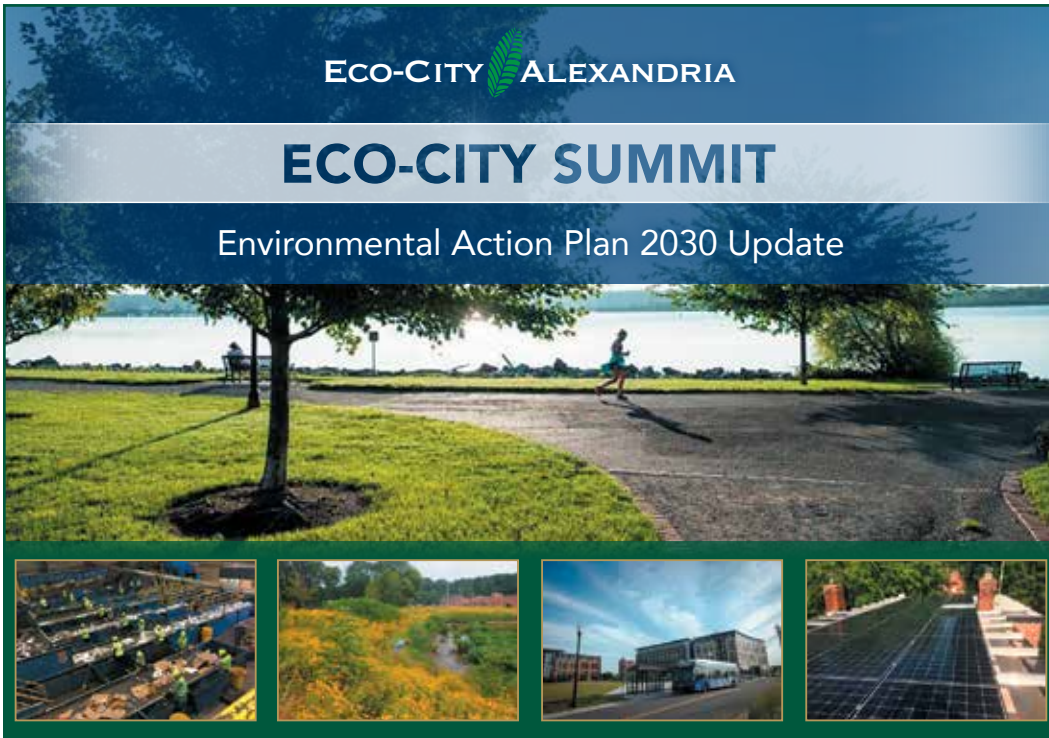
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ECO-CITY ALEXANDRIA

ECO-CITY SUMMIT

Environmental Action Plan 2030 Update

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2019

9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Francis C. Hammond Middle School Cafeteria, 4646 Seminary Road

OPEN HOUSE

9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

KEYNOTE

10:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

"7 Secrets to Living Your Most Sustainable Life"

Diane MacEachern, founder and CEO of Big Green Purse

For information on watching the keynote online, please visit alexandriava.gov/Eco-City

Alexandria is seeking feedback on draft recommendations for an update of the Environmental Action Plan, the City's roadmap for creating a thriving, sustainable community. Join us for an open house overview of the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) update. Community members will be able to give feedback on the recommendations for all 10 topics of the EAP. Don't miss this opportunity to help update the City's sustainability goals and actions.

There will be an optional tour of Hammond's composting facility after the event.

For additional information, please visit alexandriava.gov/Eco-City or call 703.746.4065.

To request reasonable disability accommodation, contact geraldyn.taylor@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.5418, Virginia Relay 711.



Council approves zoning and development changes

BY CODY MELLO-KLEIN

Conversations around parking dominated the public hearing on Saturday, but city council also approved several zoning changes along with a number of development projects.

Proposed changes to the height and front setback regulations on houses resulted in passionate testimonies from community members and extensive conversations among council members.

Under current regulations, a house cannot exceed 25 feet in height unless the homeowner goes through a special exception process. The proposed changes would allow homeowners to go up to a 30-foot maximum and increase to 35 feet through the special exception process.

Several residents and representatives from the North Ridge Citizens' Association expressed concerns about the new height regulations.

"Our community is all residential and we have had a lot of contentiousness in past times between neighbors about higher, larger residences," Jeanne Snapp, former president of the NRCA, said.

John Fehrenbach, a res-

ident of North Ridge for 30 years and member of the NRCA, said he was worried that the new height changes could impact the character of the neighborhood.

"It's stable; it's beautiful; it's visually appealing," Fehrenbach said. "I fear the proposed relaxation [of regulations] would change the neighborhood for the worse."

Council members echoed Fehrenbach's concerns.


"It's just not a matter of visual disparity," Councilor Mo Seifeldein said. "It could block someone's view or sunlight and things like that."

Both community members and members of the council asked staff to provide more data on height increase requests moving forward.

According to Karl Moritz, director of the Department of Planning and Zoning, the increase of five feet is enough to allow homeowners to add a small attic or roof peak, not add a third story to their homes. There are still regulations in place that take into account the average height of houses on a given block and other factors when determining whether homeowners can increase the height of their houses.

"Along with our changes in how height is calculated as well as existing height-to-setback ratio requirements we felt there are still plenty of protections to make sure there's not a new home that sort of looms over its neighbors," Moritz said.

SEE ZONING



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SPORTS

ALEXANDRIA SPORTS ROUNDUP

The Alexandria Times sports roundup includes records and game results for the prior week in two sports per season for Alexandria's four local high schools: Bishop Ireton, Episcopal, St. Stephen's and St. Agnes and T.C. Williams.

This winter, the sports are boys' and girls' basketball. We will also be running photos from games and encourage readers to send timely photos for submission to newstips@alextimes.com.

GIRLS' BASKETBALL

School	Record
Bishop Ireton	20-11
Episcopal	16-12
SSSAS	8-14
T.C. Williams	18-5

Scores the past week:

Feb. 20 SSSAS W 50-44 @ Holton-Arms	T.C. Williams W 58-33 vs. Woodson
Feb. 22 Episcopal W 52-50 @ Bullis SSSAS L 54-52 vs. Madeira	B.I. L 53-38 vs. St. John's Episcopal W 66-59 vs. Sidwell Friends
Feb. 23 T.C. Williams W 61-34 vs. Hayfield	Feb. 25 Episcopal L 56-32 @ Georgetown Visitation
Feb. 26 B.I. W 72-40 vs. Bishop O'Connell	Feb. 26 T.C. Williams L 65-61 vs. Woodbridge

BOYS' BASKETBALL

School	Record
Bishop Ireton	15-18
Episcopal	17-9
SSSAS	24-3
T.C. Williams	13-12

Scores the past week:

Feb. 21 B.I. W 60-47 vs. St. Mary's Ryken SSSAS W 80-56 vs. Goretti	Feb. 23 B.I. L 66-54 vs. Paul VI T.C. Williams L 88-80 vs. Lake Braddock
Feb. 22 T.C. Williams W 66-60 vs. Gar-Field	Feb. 26 Episcopal W 70-38 vs. Norfolk Academy

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ZONING FROM | 14

Council members approved the proposed changes unanimously.

Two new development projects were also approved: an outdoor food and crafts market on the waterfront by the Torpedo Factory and a multifamily residential building on the site of the former Royal Street Bus Garage, or "bus barn."

The new multifamily residential building will house 287 units, with 12 units dedicated to affordable housing, and will feature publicly accessible and private open spaces and a two-story underground parking garage.

"It's obviously long-awaited and I think there are some folks that would have taken anything here, but the fact is we're getting a really, really good

project on this site," Mayor Justin Wilson said.

The new development wasn't the only time affordable housing came up at the public hearing on Saturday.

Council unanimously approved a zoning text amendment that would create a new Residential Multifamily Zone and incentivize developers to include affordable housing units as part of their plans in exchange for an increased floor-to-area ratio. The new residential multifamily building's 12 units of affordable housing are proof of that strategy in action.

"It's a whole new world and we're trying to adjust to it the best we can, and this is one of those steps forward," Councilor Del Pepper said.

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"It's a universal truth that everyone wants a better life for themselves, for their family. The right to live free, the right to die free. And this is what you're seeing in the contrabands and this is truly an American story."

-Audrey Davis, director of the Alexandria Black History Museum

CONTRABANDS FROM | 1

themselves, for their family," Davis said. "The right to live free, the right to die free. And this is what you're seeing in the contrabands and this is truly an American story."

These slaves were classified as "contraband of war," property that had been taken by the Union for the war effort. According to Davis, the history of contrabands started not too far from Alexandria.

In May 1861, three slaves, fearing they would be shipped to the Carolinas, fled to the nearby Union-controlled Fort Monroe in Hampton, Virginia.

"The three men took a risk," Davis said. "They got in a rowboat and they rowed over to Fort Monroe hoping to find asylum there. They had no idea what would happen to them."

The slaves' masters sent agents to Fort Monroe to retrieve the three escaped slaves, but General Benjamin Franklin Butler refused them, despite the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which stated any escaped slave must be returned to the given master upon capture.

"He said, 'No, you are saying you're not a part of this country anymore. And if you are not part of this country, I am going to keep your prop-

erty, and as a commander in war I have a right to do that and to take that property away from you if it's going to be used against me, so I'm going to make them contraband of war,'" Davis said.

By the Sunday after Butler's decision, eight more escaped slaves had turned up at Fort Monroe. By Monday, another 20 had travelled to Monroe. By the end of May, nearly 500 contrabands were at Fort Monroe, earning it the moniker "Freedom's Fortress."

Contrabands started to flood Union-controlled cities and territories, including Alexandria. According to Davis, an estimated 18,000 to 20,000 contrabands came through Alexandria, but the real number is likely much higher.

For contrabands, the situation represented hope for the future, something not many slaves thought they would have.

"If you could get to a Union stronghold, you had a chance to live on your own, to work for a wage and if the Union won the war, you could be free," Davis said.

Many contrabands in Alexandria did earn a wage and lived out from under the thumb of their masters, but life was still tenuous. The Union army was unprepared to take care of a massive num-



PHOTO/ OFFICE OF HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA

Contrabands working on the U.S. Military Railroad Station in Alexandria during the Civil War.

ber of refugees. As a result, there was inadequate food and housing, Davis said.

"People were dying in the streets," Davis said. "They literally didn't have blankets to cover them or clothes to cover them. ... They were also dealing with doctors that had brilliant ideas like, 'Let's take all the contraband orphan children and have them working at the small pox hospital because nothing really matters if something happens to them.'"

In 1864, the Union army built a barracks and the L'Ouverture Hospital. Harriet Jacobs and Julia Wilbur, pivotal figures in African American history, were also working in Alexandria as aid workers,

fighting to improve the conditions of contrabands.

"They had to fight stuff like that all the time: sexism, misogyny, ill treatment of the contraband, especially from the people who were supposed to be taking care of them," Davis said.

The Union also hired Reverend Albert Gladwin to create an organized ledger of contrabands' births, marriages and, primarily, deaths. The register is now kept at the Library of Virginia and has been an invaluable tool for historians.

The Contrabands and Freedmen Memorial Cemetery stands as a testament to those lives, but, according to Davis, the process of getting

that history recognized was a challenge.

"It took many years and two really wonderful women here in Alexandria – Lillie Finklea and Louise Massoud – to sort of reawaken interest in the contraband cemetery," Davis said.

After the war, the family to whom the cemetery land originally belonged returned to Alexandria. The family allowed people to go into the cemetery and take out clay to make bricks. Soon skeletons were exposed, while coffins stuck out of graves like cannons.

In 1917, the then owners, the Catholic archdiocese of Richmond, sold the land with two provisions: the land would never be used to serve alcohol and there would never be a gas station on the site. According to Davis, the first building to go up was a gas station. The site still appeared on city maps as a black cemetery until 1948.

Beginning in the late 2000s and over the course of 10 years, Finklea and Massoud fought to get the cemetery memorialized in history.

"It was sad though because they would put up a sign or have flowers or wreaths that were almost always vandalized, ripped up or thrown

SEE **CONTRABANDS** | 20

HEALTH

Over the counter medication

Sometimes the most accessible treatment for an illness can be harmful | Page 20

REALTALK

What's a bedroom?

Local realtor defines the classification of a bedroom in Alexandria | Page 22

CALENDAR

February and March events

Learn copperplate calligraphy, have a face-time with history and more | Page 24

LIFE WELL LIVED

Be careful with over the counter medications

BY DR. VIVEK SINHA

You have a cold. Or maybe your spouse has one, or perhaps a family member or neighbor. You have to go to the local pharmacy to get some cold medicine. Seems simple enough, until you get to the cough and cold aisle and face what seems like a countless array of medications.

Some medications promise to help with your congestion while others promise to help you sleep. Some promise to stop your cough, while others promise to make your coughs more productive. There are literally hundreds of over the counter medications for the common cold or virus. How do you know which one is right for you?

Like most things in health care, if you are not sure, you should always consult an expert. Since your physician is familiar with your medical history and current medications, he or she is an obvious first choice. Your pharmacist is also an excellent source of real-time information. They can help guide you in making the right choice for your symptoms.

The purpose of this article is not to replace information from a trusted advisor. It is meant as an introduction into the various types of OTC medications available.

OTC cough and cold medications help make the symptoms more bearable while the

body fights the infection either on its own or with the aid of antibiotics if it's a bacterial infection.

While there are many different types of medications, cough and cold medications can be divided into five broad categories: antihistamines, decongestants, pain/fever reducers, cough suppressants and cough expectorants. It is important to remember that combination medications have more than one ingredient and if two or more types of medications are taken, it is very easy to accidentally double the recommended dosages.

Antihistamines

Most people are familiar with common antihistamines such as Zyrtec, Allegra and Claritin. Antihistamines found in cough and cold medications are usually different types. Chlorpheniramine, brompheniramine, diphenhydramine and doxylamine are four common antihistamines found in these medications.

These medications help dry up nasal secretions and reduce post-nasal drip. One side effect of these antihistamines is that they cause drowsiness, which is why these components are often found in "nighttime" medications. It is important to note that if you take a combination medication that has this ingredient in it and the take an additional antihistamine like

Zyrtec, or Allegra, then you have doubled the dose of your antihistamine.

Decongestants

Examples of these types of medications are phenylephrine and pseudoephedrine. Sudafed is a common name brand that contains this medication. It can also be found in combination medications like Nyquil. These medications help with nasal and sinus congestion. They help reduce the vascular congestion in the nasal passages and can allow one to breathe easier.

One side effect is that they can raise your heart rate and cause palpitations. People with high blood pressure should avoid these medications because it can potentially raise their blood pressure to dangerous levels. If anyone feels jittery or has a rapid heartbeat after taking this medication, they should not continue taking it.

Pain/fever reducers

These are extremely common medications called acetaminophen, i.e. Tylenol, and ibuprofen i.e. Motrin or Advil. They are found in many combination medications and can help with body aches and high temperatures. People with kidney or liver problems

or high blood pressure should always consult their physician before taking medications that contain these components.

Cough suppressants

The medication typically used is dextromethorphan. This ingredient helps suppress the cough reflex. It is commonly used when someone is coughing so much that it is either causing them to stay awake at night or if they cough so much they gag afterwards. It is a fairly well-tolerated medication. However, certain antidepressants can interact with this ingredient. If you are on daily medications, always ask your doctor if they may interact with OTC medications.

Cough expectorants

The most common one is guaifenesin, which can be bought separately, i.e. Mucinex, or used as a combination medication. It is often paired together with a cough suppressant such as in Mucinex DM. By combining it with the cough suppressant, it helps a patient cough less but when they do cough, the coughs are more productive.

As important as knowing which medications to take, is knowing how much of the medicine to take. Unless direct-

ed differently by your doctor, follow the instructions on the label. The pharmacist is also a valuable source of information when it comes to dosing.

When buying medications for children, a different set of issues must be considered. The child's age and weight are critical factors in determining if OTC cough and cold medications are safe to use in this age range. Except for medications like Tylenol and Motrin, over the counter cough and cold medications generally should be avoided in children under six, unless directed by a doctor. The efficacy of these medications in young children is minimal and the risk of accidental overdose is high.

Having an infection is hard. Oftentimes though, if used properly, OTC medications can help make the symptoms feel slightly more bearable. But always be careful with any medication. I often tell my patients that over the counter medications may be as dangerous, if not more, than prescription medications. Know your medical history, know which medications you are on and know what medications you should avoid. If in doubt, ask your doctor. Here's to a short cough and cold season.

The writer is the chief medical officer of Belleview Medical Partners, an office and house call practice based in Old Town.

CONTRABANDS FROM | 19 away," Davis said. "But they continued persevering every single year."

In 2007, the city, now behind Finklea and Massoud, purchased the gas station and office building that sat on the site and demolished them.

There was a short memori-

al ceremony on May 12, 2007, prior to more extended archaeological digs. More than 1,800 burials were discovered at the site, more than half of which were children under the age of 16. By 2014, more than 600 grave shafts had been discovered.

The Contrabands and Freedmen's Memorial Ceme-

tery officially opened on Sept. 6, 2014. Finklea and Massoud were the first to enter the cemetery. Council members, Alexandrians and descendants of contrabands also attended the opening.

"We wanted to honor those people who risked everything for freedom but did not live long in it," Davis said.

"The Path of Thorns and Roses," the sculpture by Mario Chiodo that stands in the cemetery, represents the significance of the site itself, Davis said.

"It's about the burden and the power of grief, but the ability to heal and find hope eventually," Davis said.

In closing her talk, Davis

merged the personal, political and professional, quoting her great, great grandfather who was one of the original contrabands who lived and worked at Fort Monroe: "We want to get wisdom. That is all we need. Let us get that and we are made for time and eternity."

-cmelloklein@alextimes.com

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REAL TALK

What's a Bedroom?

Kevin Ratcliff

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BY MICHELLE ZELSMAN

Living in Alexandria where so many of the homes were built in the late 1800s and early- to mid-1900s, we get creative when it comes to space. I've seen walk-in closets turned into impressive nurseries and I've seen nurseries turned into walk-in closets that would make Carry Bradshaw's Manolo Blahniks scream in delight, "Oh honey! We are home!"

When owners decide it is time to sell, having an extra bedroom can translate into more money at the settlement table. But not everyone agrees on the characteristics of a bedroom and there's a lot of debate among sellers, buyers, realtors and appraisers.

I recently met an appraiser at a home and we had a debate about a lower level room I classified as a bedroom that had no closet, a sliding glass door that opened to the backyard and measured roughly 12 by 14 feet. Our discussion went something like this:

Me: "Yes, it's a bedroom."

Appraiser: "No, it's not."

Me: "Yes, it is."

Appraiser: "No, it's not."

Turns out I was right – technically.

But rather than having another debate where I behave like a child who wants her way, I decided to go to a higher authority and get an actual legal definition of a bedroom.

In the simplest of terms, according to Gregg Fields, director of the Department of Code Administration for the



Name: Michelle Zelsman

Company: Coldwell Banker

Title: Realtor

Bio: The writer is the principle member of the Zelsman Powers Group at Coldwell Banker along with her counterpart, Jimmie Powers. Zelsman specializes in Alexandria, where she has resided for more than three decades. She is licensed in both Virginia and D.C.

City of Alexandria, to be a bedroom, a room must have:

- A minimum of 70 square feet for one occupant and an additional 50 square feet for each additional occupant. So two occupants require a minimum of 120 square feet.

- A minimum ceiling height of seven feet.

- A light and a means of ventilation.

- A means of egress directly to the outside from the sleeping room. This can be a door directly to the outside or an operable emergency escape rescue opening – window – meeting the minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet with a minimum width of 20 inches and minimum height of 24 inches. A sill height of not more than 44 inches in height from floor to opening is required. No

bars, covers or screens. The exception to this is if a full fire sprinkler system is installed in the building.

- A smoke detector. This is required in all bedrooms and now radon detectors are required for bedrooms located in basements.

Fairfax County's Nicholas Polera, an engineering technician, and Arlington County's Allison Cook both concurred with Fields that these requirements, which are mandated by the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, are followed by their jurisdictions, and should be in all Virginia municipalities.

So, what about the closet? Shouldn't a bedroom be required to have a closet?

According to Polera, "We hear this a lot, but a bedroom does not need a closet."

In fact, a legal bedroom doesn't even need a closing door. But as Fields pointed out, though there is no closing door requirement, "it does have to offer privacy." So a room measuring 70 square feet, a proper egress and an opening is, in fact, a bedroom in the Commonwealth.

Here's a building code requirement for a bedroom that was unexpected and one I'd never heard before.

"A bedroom needs to have arc fault protection," Polera said.

He explained that this relatively new requirement for the arc fault circuit interrupters electrical outlet is similar

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REAL TALK

BEDROOM FROM | 22

to the ground fault circuit interruptor required where an electrical outlet is close to a water source. They are often found in kitchens, bathrooms and laundry areas.

Cook cautioned that the AFCI is in accordance with today's building code requirement.

"In a 1950 build, that code was not in place at the time it was built," Cook said.

She said that a bedroom in a house built in 1950 won't meet today's code for the new AFCI requirement.

"Chapter 1 of the building

code talks about existing conditions. We can't retroactively make all [homes] fit into today's codes," Cook said.

In other words, bedrooms in older homes get a pass on the AFCI requirement which went into effect in the 2012 Virginia Construction Code. And that code exception isn't limited to older homes that don't have AFCI in the bedrooms, according to Amanda Love, public relations director for the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development in Richmond.

"A bedroom in a house that was built in 1920 might look very different from a

bedroom in a house that was built in 2018, but both are bedrooms for the purposes of the state building codes," Love said.

If you've bought or considered buying a home in Alexandria, you know there is no truer statement than Love's.

"The code that is applicable to an existing building is the code that was in effect at the time it was constructed A room is a bedroom if it existed as a bedroom prior to the first edition of the USBC or was constructed and approved as a bedroom under any edition of the USBC," Love said.

So let's say you have an unfinished basement and you want to turn it into a bedroom. Let's say that basement has one of those small windows close up to the ceiling.

"If someone wanted to turn it into a bedroom, [they can but] they need a building permit," Cook said. "The window well, if recessed into the ground, must be three feet by three feet and must include a ladder" for emergency escape and rescue.

The basement bedroom must meet the other requirements to include the window sill no more than 44 inches from the floor.

Cook shared that in Virginia, building codes are regularly updated on a three-year cycle. The 2018 Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code was drafted in 2015, reviewed by a panel of experts and included members of the public. A new update cycle is beginning and the next set of building codes for the Commonwealth will be published in 2021. The first VUSBC was published in 1974.

So yes, that fancy walk-in closet that was once a nursery could be counted as a bedroom – of course, subject to the discretion of the appraiser.

HOME OF THE WEEK

Sophisticated townhome within walking distance of King Street Metro

Stepping into this sophisticated, urban residence, house hunters will encounter high ceilings, wood flooring and natural light from the southern exposure at the rear of the home.

This smartly designed three-level townhouse offers a two-car garage, as well as additional amenities to make city living easy. Find a private brick patio and a living room fireplace with gas logs. The house also has gas cooking and dual-zoned gas heating. Handsome moldings throughout the interior add a level of elegance.

Upstairs, find three bedrooms, each with its own private bath. The owner's



Left: Stately with charm, the facade of 1314 Duke St.



Right: The open kitchen, ideal for entertaining.

PHOTOS/JESS OVERCASH

suite boasts a private balcony overlooking the community courtyard.

Beautifully maintained and in close-to-new condition, this fine residence is ready to go.

The home is an easy walk to the King Street Metro station, as well as shopping and restaurants. The convenient location will delight those commuters in search of more free time and less driving.

AT A GLANCE

- List Price:** \$829,000
- Interior Square Footage:** 1,936
- Exterior:** All brick
- Parking:** 2 garage spaces
- Fireplace:** Gas logs

- Monthly Fee:** \$556
- Patio:** Brick, private
- Listing Agent:** Diann Carlson, Weichert Old Town
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CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 28

2019 NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY FILM

Attend a film screening of "Thicker Than Blood" in recognition of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. The event will highlight the stigma and challenges of living with HIV today, while increasing awareness about the barriers faced by HIV positive and LGBTQ community members. Facilitators will lead discussion immediately following the movie. Light refreshments will be served prior to the movie, and free HIV testing will be available.

Time: 6 to 10 p.m.

Location: The Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St.

Information: www.alexandriava.gov

TOM TEASLEY AND CHAO TIAN MUSICAL PERFORMANCE

Two local music icons, world percussionist Tom Teasley and Chinese dulcimer specialist Chao Tian, join forces to showcase tunes from their recent collaboration, "Dong Xi." Teasley continuously looks for innovative ways to create cross-cultural dialogue.

He blends centuries-old percussion traditions with digital technology to create ancient and futuristic virtual ensembles. A leading performer on the Chinese dulcimer, Chao Tian received her master's degree in musical performance in 2010. Since then, she has toured throughout the world as leader of the Always Folk Ensemble, bringing her virtuosic talent on the dulcimer to people in more than 30 different countries.

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.

Location: The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St.

Information: www.nvfaa.org/events

PUBLIC TOWN HALL ON 28TH AMENDMENT

Join Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist Hedrick Smith and President of the American Promise and former Assistant Attorney General of Massachusetts Jeff Clements for a public town hall discussion about a proposed 28th amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would enable limits on election contributions and spending.

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: T.C. Williams High School Minnie Howard Campus, 3801 W. Braddock Road

Information: www.americanpromise.net

MARCH 1

FOR THE ARTIST ART EXHIBIT OPENING RECEPTION

The "For The Artist" exhibit, which lasts from March 1 to 31, will feature artwork that Del Ray Artisans members have always dreamed of creating. The diversity of expression and creativity in this exhibit will be inspiring to artists and art appreciators alike. Two and three-dimensional works, paintings, mixed media and photography will be on exhibit.

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: Colasanto Center, 2704

Mount Vernon Ave.

Information: delrayartisans.org/exhibits

MESSIAH CONCERT Blessed Sacrament Festival Choir and Orchestra will give a complete performance of "Messiah," a sacred oratorio by George Frideric Handel, at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church. Soloists are members of the Washington National Opera and San Francisco Opera. All concerts are free. A free-will offering is taken up at the door.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Location: Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, 1427 W. Braddock Road

Information: Contact John McCrary, 703-998-6100 ext. 103

THE FEMININE SIDE OF THE TAVERN

Discover the many roles women played in tavern life. This tour challenges assumptions about a woman's role in the 18th century and how women interacted with the tavern, a place commonly assumed to be just for men. Advance purchase of tickets recommended. Limited space available.

Time: 10 to 11 a.m.

Location: Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St.

Information: www.alexandriava.gov

MARCH 2

HOME WITH THE HERBERTS

John Carlyle's son-in-law, William Herbert, immigrated to America from Ireland and married Sarah Carlyle. He became an influential merchant, banker and politician in Alexandria, resigning as mayor on the eve of the War of 1812. Step back in time to see what life was like in the 19th century in Alexandria and to learn more about this part of Carlyle's family life. Admission is free, but donations are welcome.

Time: Noon to 4 p.m.

Location: The Carlyle House Historic Park, 121 N. Fairfax St.

Information: www.novaparks.com/parks/carlyle-house-historic-park

LETTERA AMOROSA: 17TH-CENTURY ITALIAN ARIAS

Rising French star mezzo-soprano Anna Reinhold, twice-Grammy-nominated harpsichordist Jory Vinikour and theorbo player Deborah Fox perform a beautiful program of 17th-century Italian songs and keyboard solos, including works by Monteverdi, Cavalli, Frescobaldi, Strozzi and others.

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Location: The Athenaeum, 201 Prince St.

Information: www.nvfaa.org/events

ALEXANDRIA ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE

Visitors and residents are invited to don their green and line King Street in Old Town to kick off the region's St. Patrick's Day celebrations at the 38th Annual Alexandria St. Patrick's Day Parade, presented by the Ballyshaners, a nonprofit organization that aims to promote and preserve Irish heritage. More than 2,000 participants will march in the parade, including dog rescue groups, pipe and

drum bands, the Notre Dame Alumni Band, historical re-enactors, Shriners and Kena cars and Irish dancers. Parade-goers can come early for the Fun Dog Show on Market Square, which benefits the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria. More than 30 costumed dogs will compete in a range of categories, including "Best Human/Canine Look-Alike," "Most Talented" and "Most St. Paddy's Spirit."

Time: Parade runs from 12:30 to 2 p.m.; dog show runs from 11 a.m. to noon

Location: Old Town

Information: www.ballyshaners.org

LOCAL HISTORY AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS TOUR

Come in and see the variety of materials held by the Local History and Special Collections Branch. Interested in the history of a house? Come see the Sanborn Maps and look through the photo indexes. Interested in family genealogy? Come learn about the county resources, databases and census material available to help. Like looking at old photos? There are daguerreotypes, glass plate negatives and silver gelatin prints.

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: Kate Waller Barrett Branch, 717 Queen St.

Information: alexlibraryva.org

MARCH 4

CALLIGRAPHY: LEARN COPPERPLATE

Come learn copperplate calligraphy from Katherine Torres of Queen Street Calligraphy. At the end, students will have an appreciation of this beautiful handwriting style and have some exposure to how people throughout history drafted business and personal correspondence. At the end of the program, students will have the opportunity to see how inks made from historic recipes compare with their modern equivalents. Due to the nature of historic inks, only ages 16 and over will be permitted.

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.

Location: 717 Queen St.

Information: alexlibraryva.org

MARCH 6

GREENSTREET GARDENS ANNUAL PHILADELPHIA FLOWER SHOW BUS TRIP

Take a day trip from Alexandria to the Philadelphia Flower Show. Tickets are \$80 (\$70 if you purchase four or more) and include bus transportation to and from Philadelphia, an entry ticket to the Philadelphia Flower Show and light refreshments at check and on the return trip. The show is from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The bus from Alexandria departs Greenstreet Gardens at 1721 W. Braddock Road at 7:30 a.m. and is scheduled to return by 8:30 p.m. Tickets can be purchased in-store at Greenstreet Gardens or online.

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Location: Greenstreet Gardens, 1721 W. Braddock Road

Information: www.greenstreet-gardens.com

MARCH 9

RIVER CLEAN UP

Karena Thek and John Herbert started a river clean-up on Jan. 1 with the aim of getting the waterfront cleaned up before everything turns green. They are asking for volunteers to focus on big picture items – bottles and large items that have washed up – as well as the small bits – broken up pieces of Styrofoam and plastic, straws and bottle caps. Park at the north end of Belle Haven Park (furthest from the entrance) and walk north towards Old Town.

Time: 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

Location: Mt. Vernon Trail, halfway between Belle Haven Park and Old Town

Information: karena23@icloud.com

MARCH 10

FACETIME WITH HISTORY

On the second Sunday of every month, guests will be greeted by a person from the past while journeying through the Gadsby's Tavern Museum. In March, history fans can hear locals Hannah Fairfax Washington and her sister-in-law Jane Fairfax reminisce about early Alexandria. While the character varies, through conversation and stories, guests will deepen their understanding of the past and how it connects to today.

Time: 1 to 4 p.m.

Location: Gadsby's Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St.

Information: www.alexandriava.gov

MARCH 11

AUTHOR TALK: PATRICIA MILLER 'BRINGING DOWN THE COLONEL'

Join Author Patricia Miller as she discusses her book "Bringing Down the Colonel: A Sex Scandal of the Gilded Age and the 'Powerless' Woman Who Took On Washington."

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: 5005 Duke St.

Information: alexlibraryva.org

MARCH 12

TRIBUTE TO WOMEN IN THE CIVIL WAR

An interpretive program presented on the contributions of women who actively participated in the Civil War as physicians, nurses, spies and even undercover as a soldier. The event is presented by a National Park Service Ranger from the Civil War Defenses of Washington office.

Time: 2 p.m.

Location: Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road

Information: alexlibraryva.org

MARCH 13

MY JOURNEY WITH FABRIC: STITCHING STORIES THROUGH QUILTS

Come see and learn about extraordinary quilts by Sandy Barrett

Hassan. What began for this native Washingtonian as gift-making for friends in the 1970s, has now blossomed into a serious art form.

Her quilts are exhibited in museums, featured in books and are currently for sale in the gift shop of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture. The event is free but RSVP is required.

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.

Location: Woodlawn & Pope-Leighey House, 9000 Richmond Highway

Information: woodlawnevents@savingplaces.org

A CHAT WITH DOROTHY PARKER

Performer Elaine Flynn performs as the incomparable Dorothy Parker who was a celebrated wit, a writer and a social satirist during the roaring 1920s. Learn about Parker's escapades in New York, Hollywood and Europe. Listen to excerpts of Parker's stories, magazine articles from Vanity Fair and The New Yorker and her poems including those from her best seller, "Enough Rope." Get to know (or renew your acquaintance of) Dorothy Parker and see why she was considered a legend in her own time.

Time: 3:30 p.m.

Location: Ellen Coolidge Burke Branch Library, 4701 Seminary Road

Information: alexlibraryva.org

MARCH 16

LUCK O' THE IRISH ST. PADDY'S CELEBRATION

Wear green to Cedar Knoll; it's time to party with the Old Town Boutique District and the Scout Guide Alexandria. Set to a backdrop of entertaining tunes from Justin Trawick and the Common Good, the Guinness and Irish Whiskey will flow and the Irish-inspired food will delight. Admission includes heavy hors d'oeuvres served throughout the night and two drink tickets worth a cocktail or wine apiece. Spoiler Alert: Gift cards from your favorite Old Town Boutiques will also be raffled off. Tickets are \$44 each.

Time: 7 to 11 p.m.

Location: 9030 Lucia Lane

Information: reservations@cedarknollva.com

MARCH 19

ASO SPRING RECITAL

Join three ASO musicians for an evening of music and conversation. Enjoy a variety of solos from the classical tradition by Claudia Chudacoff on violin, Matt Harding on trumpet and Dean Woods on bassoon with accompanist Elizabeth Brown. Harding and Woods are sponsored through the Adopt a Chair program. Stay after to mingle with the musicians for a wine and dessert reception to be held in the lobby following the concert. Limited seating is available. Tickets are \$35 for adults and \$5 for youth.

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Location: Metro Stage, 1201 N. Royal St.

Information: www.alexsym.org

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Our View

Pay attention to proposed zoning changes

City staff have reviewed many of Alexandria's zoning ordinances, and changes to those ordinances have started making their way onto dockets for city council's consideration.

At Saturday's public hearing, council passed several zoning modifications, including changes to landscaping requirements and increased height allowances for houses. The changes also allow for greater density in housing developments in exchange for dedicated affordable housing units.

Generally, we think periodic reviews of Alexandria's various ordinances are a good idea, since times change, the city changes and our zoning and other local laws should be as relevant as possible. But we also think zoning changes should be made carefully and cautiously – and with as much transparency as possible.

When city leaders take a holistic look at an aspect of life in Alexandria, such as zoning requirements, those leaders need to articulate their overarching vision for the changes, if there is one. Then residents need the opportunity to weigh in on that larger vision as well as the particulars of each recommendation.

Holistically speaking, we are supportive of changes that aid individual homeowners, or owners of existing businesses and buildings, so long as those changes don't harm Alexandria's historic fabric or the livability of their neighbors. For instance, allowing residents to more easily modify their homes, or businesses to use signage that better engages customers, are good changes that affirm private property rights.

We're less supportive, however, of changes that aid developers and, in doing so, infringe on the livability of existing residents.

Raising the height limit so a homeowner can build onto their existing home is one thing. Making it easier for builders to put large, inappropriate spec houses on small lots that dwarf existing homes is quite another.

Much more troubling would be a revision to the city's noise ordinance that allows for higher noise levels. While this was not proposed at Saturday's public hearing, it's purportedly in the pipeline.

Several new restaurants were recently granted permission for outdoor seating and music that, from the start, seemed likely to violate Alexandria's noise ordinance. City staff and city councilors told concerned residents not to worry, that the restaurants would have to comply with Alexandria's noise ordinance.

Likewise, neighbors of T.C. Williams high school who opposed lighting the football field that's adjacent to their homes objected to lights, and a modified stadium sound system, partially on the grounds that noise at their property lines would exceed allowable limits.

It would be exceedingly cynical of our city leaders to have assured neighbors of both T.C. Williams and these new restaurants that the noise ordinance protects them from excessive noise – and then turn around and raise the maximum noise limit.

When talk turns to topics like zoning, the eyes of many people start to glaze over. After all, what could possibly be more boring than wading into the weeds of technical land-use issues?

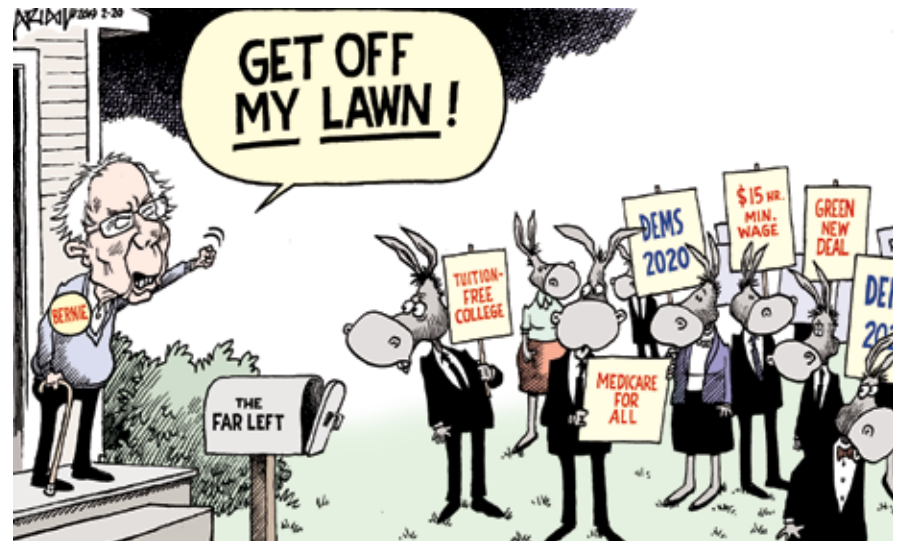
Residents who are concerned about Alexandria's livability, particularly in Del Ray and Old Town, should pay attention as zoning changes are proposed.

Many zoning changes are innocuous, and some will even be helpful. But others, particularly those adopted at the expense of Alexandria's neighborhoods, should be vigorously opposed. Raising the allowable noise level would fall in that category. It would not only be wrong – we need less noise in our lives, not more – but, worse, a breach of trust.

Opinion

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

- Thomas Jefferson



Your Views

I support Vision Zero

To the editor:

I've read with interest the arguments made for and against Alexandria's Vision Zero policy. I would like to offer my own thoughts on the matter from the perspective of a pedestrian and bicycle rider.

Living near the Masonic Memorial, I usually walk or ride my bike to get to the waterfront, King Street Metro and North Old Town. When there's gridlock in Old Town I've found a bicycle is the quickest way to get around. But our streets are not safe enough. We still have people being seriously injured or killed on our city streets each year. Even if you never walk or ride a bike yourself, every neighbor who does is one less person contributing to the worsening gridlock.

Like myself, many of our millennial residents eschew cars and would rather choose mass transit, bicycles, walking or scooters to get around our city. This is good news, because if we want less gridlock – which is what several of those against the Vision Zero stated is a problem – we need

more residents to be like the millennials.

But we need streets to be safer throughout the entire city, from the West End to Old Town, and from Arlington's borders to Hunting Creek. Should we deny citizens and millennials the safest possible streets? Discourage their quest to reduce congestion, noise and pollution? Keep streets dangerous to discourage them from having a healthy lifestyle?

The thoughtfully re-designed King Street reflects a holistic approach to accommodate all modes of transportation safely while moving traffic at a reasonable pace – precisely what Vision Zero espouses. I thank the city for implementing it.

I believe that Vision Zero increases the livability and safety for citizens and visitors. This is why I am an advocate for Vision Zero. It's the right policy to make our streets safer because everyone benefits from safer streets, regardless of their age and travel choice.

-Rudolf M. Rojas,
Alexandria

My View | Anne Fritter Thurston

I remember 'integration day' in 1959

I have waited 20 years for your editorial of Jan. 31, "Remembering nine brave children." I was a sophomore at Francis Hammond High School in February 1959 when the school was integrated, but I moved away at the end of the school year and did not move back until 1999. The memory of that day in 1959 has stayed with me and influenced much of who I later became.

As "integration day" approached, there was much discussion among Hammond High School students but not much information. Popular opinion among the students was divided, and there were conversations about the effect of integration on the football team and the prom.

At some point, we knew that two students, a brother and sister, would be coming to integrate the school. It is from your editorial that I remember their long-forgotten names: James and Patsy Ragland.

The police were a strong presence when the day arrived, checking the trunks of cars coming into the parking lot, inspecting the book bags of students as they entered their classrooms, patrolling the corridors.

My first encounter with the reality of integration was at lunchtime. The cafeteria had three long rows of very long tables where the students ate their lunch, and most students sat with their friends at the same table every day. We had high school sororities then, and I ate with members of my sorority, at a table in the middle row.

When 13-year old James Rag-

land came into the cafeteria, he chose a side table next to double glass doors that led outdoors and where the gap between his table and the one behind him was much wider. He carried his lunch from home and thus did not go through the cafeteria line.

There must have been a few students sitting at the table when he sat down, but they quickly got up and left. Then students from the surrounding tables began to move away. With every eye in the cafeteria on him, James Ragland sat there and ate his lunch with more dignity and composure than anyone I have seen before or since.

I, too, sat and watched, transfixed, my hand over my mouth, my eyes brimming with tears. I didn't know what to do. But other students did. When the pain of watching that brave young teenager became unbearable, a number of students stood up and went to join him at the table, offering to share a cookie or an apple. I have remembered this story and told it all my life, but I also fear that my memory exaggerates the well of good will that sprang up as we watched James Ragland eat.

In college I began tutoring black students in Roxbury and helped in the beginning stages of what became the first successful rent strike there. Later I helped organize an effort to register people in the black ghetto of Oakland to vote for Bobby Kennedy in the primary of 1968. I was there, in the ghetto,



ANNE THURSTON

SEE **THURSTON**

| 31

My View | Jack Lichtenstein, Col., U.S. Army (Ret.)

Morris L. Murray's contribution to civil rights

Your tributes to Samuel W. Tucker in your editorial "Remembering Samuel Tucker, a great Alexandrian" and Out of the Attic, "Samuel Tucker's 1939 sit-in" were striking in their demonstration of human achievement in the face of deep-set and determined racial discrimination. Throughout his life, Tucker seemed to grasp that the best and most effective answer to discrimination was the will to succeed. He refused to be denied.

What many of your readers may not know is the identity of the young man who is front and center in the photograph of the demonstrators leaving the Kate Waller Barrett Branch of the Alexandria Public Library on Aug. 21, 1939, after their peaceful sit-in planned by Tucker to test existing law and demonstrate its shamefulness.

The young man with his shirt collar over his suit jacket collar appears to be in the process of lighting a cigarette and looks directly at the camera, firmness rather than doubt or fear on his face. His name was Morris LeRob Murray.

Morris L. Murray was born in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 24, 1917, according to public records. That would put him at 22 years of age at the time of the library sit-in. According to his draft registration card, filled out in 1940, he resided with his grandparents at 813 Princess St. in Alexandria.

His grandmother was Deliah Murray. His grandfather, Freeman M. Murray, also was his employer. Freeman Murray was a printer in D.C. and appears to have employed young Morris as a linotype operator. All this is confirmed by the 1940 U.S. Census. Soon after the census was taken, Morris, like Samuel Tucker, left Alexandria to join the U.S. Army and serve in World War II.

There is a reason for my interest in this man.

In 1965, I was a young lieutenant studying at the Army Intelligence School at Fort Holabird, Mary-

land. Lt. Col. Morris L. Murray, U.S. Army, was one of my instructors. I did not come from Virginia and would not live here until many years later, and I had no notion of the man's background prior to his service. Nor could he tell us much about his service because, as I discovered later, he spent his career in dangerous assignments demanding that he assume another identity.

He was small and wiry in physical stature but filled with energy. Many other instructors droned on and on when they taught. He crackled. We students often called him "bantamweight," a reference to his size but also a tribute to his toughness and spirit. We called him that among ourselves; to his face, we called him "sir."

Morris L. Murray was awarded the Legion of Merit, one of the military's highest awards, for his years of Army Service which spanned several major wars. He died in 1979. For anyone who cares to honor this son of Alexandria, he is buried in Arlington National Cemetery, Section 60, Grave 1342.

It is fitting that your paper also cited Arlington National Cemetery as the place where Samuel W. Tucker is at rest (Section 25, Grave 1971). Both of them were soldiers for our country but also for civil rights.

A third, though a Washingtonian and not an Alexandrian, was my former boss, Edward W. Brooke. Ed Brooke served with Samuel Tucker in the 366th Infantry in Italy during WWII, became an attorney and later, from 1966 to 1978, represented Massachusetts as the first black U.S. Senator since Reconstruction. He is buried in Section 8, Grave 5190-5-RH.

These men were giants who overcame obstacles in peace and war. Their objective was to live America's promise. I doubt they thought enough of themselves to believe they were showing future generations the way. But they surely did and should be remembered and honored.



JACK LICHTENSTEIN

Your Views

Sen. Kaine, let David Schenker go

To the editor:

The food fights between the executive and legislative branches over presidential nominations are not new to Washington. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's ongoing spat with Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ) of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee over who's to blame for stalled ambassador nominations is only the latest in the long back-and-forth between Congress and the administration of President Donald Trump over personnel.

But our own Sen. Tim Kaine has pushed senatorial advice and consent beyond wisdom.

David Schenker, a former Bush administration official now serving at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, is the casualty of Kaine's roadblock. Kaine has held up Schenker's nomination as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern affairs since he was nominated in April, and renominated last month. Schenker is eminently

qualified for the position, and there exists no opposition to the candidacy itself. But Kaine is using his hold on Schenker's nomination to needle the Trump Administration on its justification for the use of force in Syria this April.

Kaine's block on Schenker does him – and our policy – more harm than good. With the murder of a journalist causing an ongoing international crisis in Turkey and Saudi Arabia, Iran flexing its muscles in the Levant, the Syrian conflict reaching a critical stage and many ambassador posts still unfilled, we need the State Department fully staffed with competent experts to handle these challenges. This political maneuvering is unwise and harmful to American interests.

Stop with the food fight Sen. Kaine. It's time to let David Schenker go.

*-Jameson Cunningham,
Americans for a Free Syria,
Alexandria*

Potholes need immediate attention

To the editor:

As I drive around Old Town, I continually come upon numerous pot holes that have obviously developed over the winter. Luckily, to date, I have not been the victim of a blown tire or worse. I fully realize that the city does have a pot hole repair number and that they are generally attentive in responding to the citizens' cries for help.

The city's normal repaving plan for its 550 miles of roads is to pave 50 miles each

year. This is probably insufficient for this year's crop of potholes. Hopefully the roads closest to your home are not scheduled for year 11.

It is evident that the city is totally overburdened this year, therefore city leaders need to step up their game and dedicate more resources to the problem. This is indeed a safety issue that needs the city's immediate attention.

*-Townsend A. "Van"
Van Fleet,
Alexandria*

Fact-based decision making

To the editor:

I am responding to the letter, "Vision Zero is a detrimental fad" in the Feb. 7 Alexandria Times. The author cites a letter to the editor in the Wall Street Journal with one person's opinion about an .8 mile section of roadway in Los Angeles to make a case that "Vision Zero is detrimental."

You can read a fact-based rebuttal to that here: <http://bit.ly/LTERebuttal>.

The Federal Highway Administration provides more useful references for how streets should be updated for both safety and mobility. The inference that our mobility is at risk from street changes that prioritize safety is false and is an approach that uses fear, not unlike approaches used by some politicians.

FHWA guidelines are based on results of numerous roadway changes, not just a single case study; they provide transportation of-

officials with parameters for when the number of lanes might be reduced to improve safety without undue impact on mobility. Locally, reconfiguration of King Street between Janneys Lane and Radford Street is an example of implementing safety changes without measurable traffic diversion or undue additional delays.

Very few traffic crashes have occurred since implementation in 2016, compared to an annual average of seven crashes during the 10 years prior to this project. Addressing both safety and mobility is a question of balance, and fact-based analysis.

Traffic fatalities exceed the number of deaths from gun violence in Alexandria, and traffic violence is getting worse. There were five traffic fatalities in Alexandria in 2018, nearly double the average annual number (2.6) from 2010 to 2015. With a jump to four fatalities an-

nually in 2016 and 2017, and now five in 2018, (and one so far in 2019), most people will agree that we have a growing traffic safety problem.

In addition to the tragedy of each traffic fatality, there are many additional tragic but untold stories of the lasting damage inflicted upon crash survivors and their families. Alexandria's Vision Zero Plan prescribes a set of low-cost initiatives to address our growing traffic safety problem.

The plan was specifically developed for Alexandria by a city interdepartmental working group, which included Alexandria police and fire departments. While I too have concerns about growing congestion, FHWA guidelines and fact-based decision-making suggest that safety on our streets can be dramatically improved without undue impact on our mobility.

*-Jim Durham,
Alexandria*

Build a bridge to Van Dorn station

To the editor:

Alexandria should prioritize building a bridge across Backlick Run and Norfolk Southern to Van Dorn Station, expanding the amount of housing on the West End within walking distance to the Metro and mitigating displacement from Amazon in Crystal City.

Amazon's new headquarters in Crystal City will invariably lead to some displacement, pushing both current and future residents further down the Blue and Yellow lines, and possibly outside the city. Although most of Alexandria's focus has been on development and impact at Potomac Yard, the

West End will also be affected by the inevitable cascade of residents, and should be part of the solution.

Currently residents on the West End must detour onto busy Van Dorn Street to reach Van Dorn Station, tripling the walk distance and time, encouraging the use of cars and increasing traffic on Duke Street, Route 1 and I-395. Amazon's new headquarters has been critical to securing infrastructure projects that otherwise would not have been funded without guaranteed demand, including a bridge from Crystal City to National Airport, reducing travel time from 20 to five minutes.

According to WMATA, ridership was 3,321 at Van Dorn in 2015, with only 343 residences falling within a half-mile walking distance, compared to 4,739 at similarly residential but better connected Braddock Road. The established community of 3,600 at Cameron Station alone, with a feeder bus route to the Pentagon, would support an increase in ridership before any additional development.

Enabling further growth by improving this interconnection would help the city retain current and future residents that cannot be

OUT OF THE ATTIC

Remembering Eudora Lyles

As Black History Month comes to an end, and Women's History Month begins, we'd like to take a moment to remember Eudora Lyles, who played a big role in Alexandria's 20th-century history.

Born in Alexandria in 1918, Lyles was one of the first graduates of Parker-Gray High School. She championed Alexandria's minority residents through her activism and political involvement. She also founded the Inner City Civic Association, which was a reaction to the 1972 zoning proposals that threatened to wipe out the inner-city neighborhood which included her residence on North Fayette Street.

In a 1999 oral history interview, Lyles noted that one of her first experiences with housing issues was during urban renewal, which she dated as far back as the 1930s. She



PHOTO/ALEXANDRIA AFRICAN AMERICAN HALL OF FAME
Eudora Lyles.

remembered how her mother and sister were forced to sell their houses for less than market value; finding new houses for the reduced amount that the city had given them had proved an impossible quest.

Lyles responded to the proposal to build the eight-

lane highway through northern Alexandria not only by founding the Inner City Civic Association, but also by involving herself in other civic associations to stop the plan, which disproportionately affected Alexandria's African American residents. Lyles wrote letters, made phone calls, attended city council and zoning meetings and led a seven-year fight which resulted in a victory for herself and her neighbors.

After the victory over the highway, Lyles continued to advocate for Alexandria's residents, especially on housing issues. She served as co-chair of the Economic Opportunity Commission, and was a board member of Micah Housing, Inc., the Community Block Grant Community, the Martin Luther King Program Committee, the Black Caucus and the National Association for

the Advancement of Colored Peoples. Lyles also worked on the United Way study on housing issues and belonged to the Tenants Organizing Project. In 1985, the Alexandria Commission for Women recognized her work as an advocate on housing issues by presenting her an award.

Lyles was also a gifted musician who taught herself to play the piano and ukulele. She often performed for military members at the local USO, and once performed in front of Robert Kennedy at the Jockey Club in Fredericksburg.

Lyles was married to Perry Hamilton Lyles Jr. They had four children: Perry, Jonathan, Eudora and Paula. Lyles died on July 6, 2000.

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

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absorbed by Potomac Yard or Old Town. Moreover, improving access would balance the loss of affordable housing relocated from more metro accessible locations to the West

End. Combined, this would help stabilize the population base to support local small businesses and bolster the future viability of redevelopment at Landmark Mall and West Eisenhower.

This one missing link is

as much about infrastructure and transportation as housing, including affordable housing, and the future of the West End. A bridge would in effect increase the effective housing and transportation supply, allowing Alexandria to better

mitigate displacement from both Amazon and decadal regional growth, achieve its affordable housing goals, relieve traffic and potentially transform the West End.

*-Matt Quan,
Alexandria*

Weekly Poll

Last Week

Do you think the city's pilot parking program, which enables residents in Old Town to request pay-by-phone parking on their blocks, should be extended?

68% - No, it's bad for Old Town businesses if there's no free street parking nearby. Shoppers go elsewhere if they have to pay.

23% - Yes, there's not enough parking on blocks close to King Street. Residents have a difficult time parking near their houses and this is helping.

9% - I'm not sure.

This Week

[Take the poll at alextimes.com](http://alextimes.com)

What do you think about zoning changes in Alexandria?

A) I like the adjustments to landscaping requirements, height and density that were approved at Saturday's public hearing.

B) I don't like the adjustments to landscaping requirements, height and density that were approved at Saturday's public hearing.

C) I think the city should continue to make more zoning changes in the future.

D) I'm worried that small zoning adjustments could add up to major changes.

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THURSTON FROM | 27

registering people, when Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated.

On election day, the turnout in the precincts where I had worked was high, and all of them went 96, 97, 98 percent for Kennedy. And then he, too, was killed as we were celebrating his victory.

Moving back to Alexandria in 1999, I made an

attempt to find the brother and sister who had integrated Hammond High. I did not remember their names, and they seemed not to be in the yearbook. I went to Hammond to inquire of the staff, but they knew nothing about them either.

Once I ran into former Mayor Bill Euille at the Alexandria Black History Museum and we talked about the two students. He remem-

bered them and thought they might even still be around, but nothing happened. I would still love to meet them and hear their stories.

I hope they know that their bravery, courage and composure surely must have influenced many others who were students at Hammond High School that year. And surely they must know the quote from Robert Kennedy, that "Each time a man stands

up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance."

I did not know until reading a letter to the editor in another issue of the Alex-

andria Times that Thomas Chambliss Williams, for whom T.C. Williams High School was named, had opposed integration. Surely Alexandria's high school deserves a more worthy name. I would suggest that consideration be given to renaming it after the two brave teenagers who became the first African American students at Hammond High School in 1959.

Classifieds

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