ACPS fiscal forecast shows widening budget deficits.

 Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) forecasts a $18 million operating budget deficit for FY 2020, widening to as much as $95 million over five years.

“We like to start with the five-year forecast to set the framework” for upcoming budget cycles, said Dominic Turner, ACPS’s director of budget and financial systems, at a Sept. 6 meeting. The FY 2020 budget season will kick off publicly when ACPS Superintendent Gregory Hutchings proposes his 10-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) on Nov. 8.

“The bright side here is, we’re at a half-a-million dollar better position than we were as this time last year. But, as you can see, without systemic changes ... in the out-years, our deficit worsens,” said Turner. “If we continue to use the maximum allowable fund balance to balance our budget, we’re going to put ourselves in a not-so-good fiscal condition. We won’t be able to react to any unforeseen emergencies, because we won’t have a fund balance to use.”

ACPS staff based their forecast on various assumptions. Revenue assumptions include that local, state and federal sources will maintain FY 2019 per-pupil appropriations, even as enrollment continues to grow; and also the maximum use of fund balance allowable under ACPS School Board policy. Expenditure assumptions include annual enrollment-driven staffing increases of 2 percent; annual salary increases of 2.6 percent; annual health care rate increases of 13 percent; annual inflation of 2 percent; operating impacts of last year’s FY 2019 – FY 2028 CIP projects.

The forecast helpfully communicates that capacity expansion requires not only up-front capital costs, but also increased operating costs, said School Board Chair Ramee Gentry.

Starting in FY 2023, staff included a range of operating impacts for an as-of-yet undefined high school capacity expansion project. High and low estimates depend on whether ACPS decides to build an additional brick-and-mortar campus or to expand an existing one. Hutchings will unveil a more specific proposal on Nov. 8.

“This month, we will be engaging principals to see ‘Without Systemic Changes ...’ Page 4

Improved Grades Under new state rating system, more ACPS schools to receive accreditation this year.

 Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) reports that several of its schools will receive improved accreditation ratings from the state this year, thanks in part to revised, more nuanced accreditation standards.

Each year, the Virginia Department of Education (DOE) rates public schools, depending largely on how students perform on annual Standards of Learning (SOL) tests. SOLs “establish minimum expectations for what students should know” in English (including reading and writing), math, science and history/social science, according to the DOE.

The DOE is expected to publish full accreditation data for the 2018-19 academic year on Thursday, Sept. 27. This data will include schools’ SOL performance from the 2017-18 academic year, but adjusted from the raw pass/fail figures reported last month, according to federal rules.

Based on preliminary information, ACPS reports that 14 of 16 schools will receive full accreditation this year, up from 12 last year. Statuses will improve for William Ramsay Elementary School, Francis C. Hammond Middle School and Jefferson-Houston K-8 School. Jefferson-Houston and T.C. Williams High School will remain subject to DOE review. But, for the first time in several years, no ACPS campus will be denied accreditation outright.

The state’s revised rating system takes effect this year. Whereas the old system included a spectrum of partial or conditional ratings, the new system includes schools’ SOL performance on a pass/fail scale. 100% pass figures reported this year will be adjusted from the raw pass/fail figures reported last month, according to federal rules.

By Dan Brendel Gazette Packet

Pretty in Pink Events planned for Breast Cancer Awareness month.

Volana Lawson was a force to be reckoned with. A breast cancer survivor who had a double mastectomy, she founded the city’s Walk to Fight Breast Cancer in 1994 while she was still undergoing her own treatment and serving as city manager.

For nearly 20 years, the Walk raised funds to provide more than 100,000 free mammograms.

By Jeanne Theismann Gazette Packet

The American Cancer Society estimates that there are 2.5 million breast cancer survivors in America today, after facing the disease themselves or having lost a loved one to it.

See Breast Cancer, Page 16

See ‘Without Systemic Changes ...’ Page 4

See ‘Improved Grades’ Page 8

See ‘Pretty in Pink’ Page 16

See Grading, Page 8

See Fall Fun, Page 20

See Events planned for Breast Cancer Awareness month, Page 16

See Alexandria Gazette Packet

Creating Art Six-year-old Dakota Burmeister paints with artist Sidney Carter along King Street on Saturday, Sept. 22 during the 16th annual Alexandria King Street Art Festival. The event was supposed to be held the previous weekend and was postponed due to Hurricane Florence. More photos, page 14.
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Full ASTEAM Ahead

More than 400 youths and their families enjoyed creativity-boosting activities and food at a community event in Old Town on Saturday, Sept. 22.

The Fall Family Carnival, hosted by the Northern Virginia Urban League (NVUL), an Alexandria-based nonprofit, sought to expose minority, low-income and at-risk children and parents to the world of ASTEAM — aviation, science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. The event, held at the Charles Houston Rec Center, incorporated a variety of what NVUL calls “technology infused games and immersive hands-on experiences.” These included, for example, LEGOs, radio-controlled car racing, radio-controlled drone flying, rocketry, robotic demonstrations, virtual reality activities and chess.

For people to lift themselves out of poverty, they need an “income-oriented skill,” said Tracey Walker, chair of the NVUL’s board of directors. Walker, who works for an audit, tax and consulting firm, says she sees a difficulty getting minorities into the “pipeline” for such career fields such as accounting and cyber technology. While the carnival is college-oriented, it aims to reach youths earlier in the education-to-career pipeline, “getting [them] curious again about science” and orienting them toward ASTEAM related majors, she said.

The creative minds that solve STEM problems can also be cultivated through the arts, according to Nadine Draughn of Ramalingam Productions Performing Arts Studio, a company participating in the event. Additionally, the arts help children learn to “articulate themselves” and “get their points across,” she said.

Other organizations participating in the carnival include Artesian Enterprises; Athletes Innovate; Cyber Green Group; DEILAB; Destiny Aviation Services; Harris Engineering Group; Katrina Lynn Educational Services; Patriots Technology Training Center; Propel Productions; Race Tech; Smart Learning Solutions; Vertigo Entertainment; and Youth Technology Network.

For more information, visit www.nvul.org.

Supper Under The Stars

The Old Town Business and Professional Association and the King Street Gardens Park Foundation held the annual Supper Under the Stars event Sept. 21 at Waterfront Park. Beach music band Tommy and the Bahamas provided entertainment for the evening, which attracted more than 75 people to the waterfront for an evening of dining and dancing.

— JeAnne Theismann
Without increasing per-pupil expenditure or finding additional cuts and efficiencies, ACPS projects budget deficits widening to as much as $95 million over five years.

From Page 1

better understand each school’s individual needs,” said Turner. “These efforts are to help curb or eliminate our need to ask the city for more and more revenue each year.”

In particular, ACPS will consider “ways to contain our healthcare cost. This is a huge impact on our on budget.”

Hutchings also suggested exploring “innovative” incentives, rather than only boosting the budget, to attract and retain staff — for example, partnerships with developers to discount teacher rents, or vouchers for staff to use Metro or the city’s DASH bus system. The School Board expressed interest in pursuing such options, but not in lieu of a higher per-pupil funding allocation from the city.

Looking for alternatives might become a “stalling tactic,” said School Board Member Cindy Anderson. “We want an increase and we want to pursue these other things, as well. Always the ‘and’ [rather than ‘or’].”

School Board member Chris Lewis wants to discuss the subject with city council “sooner rather than later.”

Chertoff to Speak at Agudas Achim Lecture series honors Rabbi Jack Moline.

Meryl Chertoff, executive director of the Aspen Institute’s Society and Justice program, will be the featured speaker Oct. 14 at the 4th annual Rabbi Jack Moline Lecture at Agudas Achim Hebrew Congregation.

Chertoff’s presentation is titled “Pluribus or Unum: Allyship and Resilience Counter an American Crisis.” She will speak about how houses of worship and community-based groups can work together to create trust and partnerships that bridge division and build social capital needed in times of crisis.

Chertoff also directs the Inclusive America Project on religious pluralism in America. Additionally, she is an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown Law, where she teaches about state government.

The lecture series honors Rabbi Jack Moline’s three decades of service and leadership to Agudas Achim Congregation.

The lecture is free and open to the public and will begin at 4 p.m. RSVP by Oct. 11 to http://bit.ly/moline-lecture or 703-998-6460. Agudas Achim Congregation is located at 2908 Valley Drive.

— JEANNE THEISMANN

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com
Submit civic/community announcements at ConnectionNewspapers.com/Calendar. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

THROUGH DEC. 31
Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program. The City of Alexandria has reinstated its sewer Backflow Preventer (BFP) Assistance Program for homeowners in designated areas that historically experience basement back-ups or flooding. The City Manager approved the additional backflow preventer effort in the wake of torrential rainfall July 17-22. The program reimburses homeowners for up to 50 percent of the cost of installing a BFP device by a licensed plumbing contractor, up to a maximum of $2,000. The current program period is from July 1-Dec. 31. Alexandria homeowners should call the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services at 703-746-4014 or visit www.alexandriava.gov/tes.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 27
Community Health Meeting. 6:30-8:15 p.m. at the Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center, 1605 Cameron St. Residents are invited to make community health a priority by attending the second Community Health Meeting. The community health assessment process represents a grassroots effort to identify and address key health issues affecting Alexandrians. Light refreshments will be served, and live translators will be provided for Spanish, Arabic, and Amharic speakers. The meeting is free and open to the public; RSVP online. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Health.

Carlyle Design Review Board Meeting. 7 p.m. at City Hall, Chet and Sabra Avery Conference Room 2000, 301 King St. Contact Gary Wagner, gary.wagner@alexandriava.gov, 703-746-3818.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 29
Training Series for Condominium and Community Associations. 10 a.m. noon at Burke Library, 4701 Seminary Road. The City of Alexandria and Alexandria-based law firm Mercer Trigiani will sponsor a series of workshops related to condominium and community associations during FY2019. Topic for Sept. 29 is Community and Condominium Association Basics. For more information or to register, call the City’s Office of Housing at 703-746-4990 or email brandi.collins@alexandriava.gov.

Alexandria City School Board Candidate Debate. 1:4 p.m. at Ellen Coolidge Burke Library, 4701 Seminary Road. The Arlington League of Women Voters and the Alexandria Association of University Women are sponsoring a debate for Alexandria City School Board candidates. This is an opportunity to question candidates and learn their positions on important issues. District A Debate, 1-2 p.m.; District B Debate, 2-3 p.m.; and District C Debate, 3-4 p.m. Space is limited. Tickets free with online reservation at www.eventbrite.com/e/alexandria-city-school-board-candidate-debate-tickets-4834835714. Bring ticket to be admitted. Visit www.lwva-rva.org for more.

The 2018 Athenaeum Member Appreciation Party. 7-9 p.m. Enjoy a last sip of summer at the 2018 Athenaeum Member Appreciation Party. This year, the Athenaeum invites members and guests to join them in their final hours of fun and relaxation in an outdoor setting to celebrate the Athenaeum’s 20th anniversary and to enjoy the amenities it offers.

See Bulletin, Page 2G
Meet the ‘Heart of Alexandria’
Volunteer Alexandria hosts annual volunteer recognition event.

Alexandria’s Naomi Wadler will be awarded the Clara Mortenson Beyer Women and Children First Award for her advocacy in support of gun violence prevention.

Wadler, 11, organized youth protests at her school in the wake of the mass shooting in Parkland, Fla., earlier this year. She also addressed crowds at the March For Our Lives in Washington D.C., weeks after the Parkland shooting. That inspired her, said Fred Guttenberg, who lost his daughter at the Parkland shooting and then began speaking out about guns. I am very glad to bring more attention to the stories of African American girls who are shot every day without making the news,” Wadler said. “The last time I spoke at an event with Congressman Beyer, I was moved and inspired by Fred Guttenberg, who lost his daughter at the Parkland shooting and then began speaking out about guns. I am very glad to have this chance to talk about the need for action to make things better.”

Beyer created the Clara Mortenson Beyer Women and Children First Award while Ambassador to Switzerland in 2011. It is named after her grandmother, who is credited with convincing the Roosevelt Administration to appoint Frances Perkins, the first female Cabinet Secretary in the United States. Clara Beyer served as Secretary Perkins’ right hand, working on child labor issues. She was the first woman appointed as U.S. representative to the International Labor Organization in Geneva.

The award is given annually to an exceptional woman who made a difference on behalf of women’s empowerment. Sasha DiGiulian, the first American woman to free-climb the north face of the 13,462-foot Eiger, won the award in 2015. Other previous awardees include Ambassador to the United States U.N. Mission in Geneva and author Betty King, Ruth Gaby Vermot, the founder of “Peace Women,” Lisa Feldmann, editor of Annabelle Magazine in Switzerland, Arlington community activist Portia Clark, and immigration advocate Ofelia Calderon.

Pickleball Mixed Doubles At NVSO

BY SHIRLEY RUHE
GAZETTE PACKET

H eavy dark clouds and rain drops didn’t dampen the enthusiasm of the participants in the Northern Virginia Senior Olympics (NVSO) pickleball mixed doubles competition on Monday, Sept. 24.

Walkers circled the track surrounding the pickleball courts located in the middle at Thomas Jefferson Community Center where the competition was taking place. Four age brackets competed, ranging from five teams in the 60-64 year old class to three teams in the 80-89 year old class.

A table of volunteers, wearing black T-shirts emblazoned with a bright green NVSO logo, checked in the participants and point them to their courts. “Did you see that shot?” an enthusiastic supporter yelled encouragement from metal chairs on the sideline, cheering on relatives or waiting their turn to play.

“Did you forget to bring the bananas?”

“What time do you play?”

“I haven’t seen you since last year. How you been?”

Chuck Toftoy and Betty de la Cruz faced off against Horace Reyer and Elease Brooks, all from Arlington, in the second round of the 80-89-year-old category. On a nearby court Beth Baynes, Alexandria, and Tom Garcia, Arlington, played in the 9 a.m. slot.

The NVSO will continue until Sept. 26 with more pickleball, croquet, mini-golf, handball and bocce with rain date track events and tennis mixed in. This year’s competitive events are being held in 29 locations across Northern Virginia.

Landrum Recognized for AEDP Leadership

Stephanie Landrum, president and CEO of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, has been selected into the Washington Business Journal’s 2018 class of Women Who Mean Business honorees.

An Alexandria native, Landrum is the only woman to lead one of the region’s 10 largest economic development agencies. She is one of 25 women in the region to be selected for the recognition out of close to 400 nominations.

Honorees were selected based on criteria including commitment to community service, strong leadership skills and continuing success in their field.

Landrum, who holds a bachelor’s in urban planning and an MBA from the University of Virginia, will be honored at the Washington Business Journal’s annual Women Who Mean Business dinner on Oct. 11 at the Ritz Carlton in Washington, D.C.

— JEANNE THEISMANN
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**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS**

The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) will hold a series of public hearings to solicit comments on a proposed fare increase that will average approximately 3% over current fares. The VRE Operations Board will act on the FY2020 Budget, which includes the proposed fare increase, on December 21, 2018. If adopted, the fare increase would take effect the first week of July 2019.

See locations below to attend a public hearing near you.

**Date and Time**
- **Tuesday, October 30, 2018**
  - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.
  - **Thursday, November 1, 2018**
  - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
  - **Thursday, November 8, 2018**
  - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.
  - **Tuesday, November 13, 2018**
  - 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
  - **Thursday, November 15, 2018**
  - 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

**Location**
- Crystal City Marriott
  - Jefferson Room
  - 1600 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
  - Arlington, VA 22202
- Burke Centre Conservancy
  - The Commons CC
  - 5701 Roberts Parkway
  - Burke, VA 20151
- Holiday Inn Capitol
  - The House Room
  - 550 C Street SW
  - Washington, DC 20024
- Stafford County Government Center
  - Board Chambers
  - 1300 Courthouse Road
  - Stafford, VA 22554
- Germanna Community College
  - Fredericksburg Campus-Room 105A
  - 10000 Germanna Point Drive
  - Fredericksburg, VA 22408
- Union Station
  - Starlight Room – Near Gate D
  - 50 Massachusetts Ave NE
  - Washington, DC 20020
- Manassas City Hall City Council Chambers
  - 9027 Carter Street
  - Manassas, VA 20110
- VRE Headquarters
  - Suite 202
  - 1500 King Street
  - Alexandria, VA 22314
- PRTC
  - Second Floor Board Room
  - 14700 Potomac Mills Rd
  - Woodbridge, VA 22191
- Rappahannock Regional Library
  - Room 2
  - 1201 Caroline Street
  - Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Visit vre.org/publiccomment for more information. Written comments will be accepted through Friday, November 23, 2018. Written comments can be mailed to: Public Comment, 1500 King Street, Suite 202, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Comments may also be submitted via email to publiccomment@vre.org or via fax at (703) 684-1313. The public hearings are conducted in locations accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals with disabilities who require special assistance or need to request a sign language interpreter, please contact Lucy Gaddis by e-mail at lgaddis@vre.org or call at (703) 838-5433 or TTY (703) 684-6551 at least ten business days prior to the public hearing you’re planning to attend. For information about the VRE Operations Board visit vre.org/about/board.

**Grading the Graders**

**Adjusted Standards of Learning (SOL) testing results show improvements in student performance, even though English and math pass rates still fall short of state standards. Under the state’s new rating system, showing improvement counts toward accreditation. SOL figures are “adjusted” from raw pass rates reported last month. This is because, in determining accreditation, “allowances are made for certain transfer students, students who speak little or no English and students who pass retakes of tests after receiving remedial instruction,” according to the Virginia Department of Education.**

**From Page 1**

**State Accreditation Historical Results: Jefferson-Houston**

**New system has only three options: accredited, accredited-with-conditions and denied.**

**Schools can now receive accreditation not only if they’re “at or above standard,” but also if they’re “near standard or improving” at a “sufficient” pace, according to the DOE. This allows “a more balanced evaluation of schools serving at-risk students,” which previously “were subject to being perceived as ‘failing’ even if most students were making progress toward proficiency.”

**The old system considered only SOL pass rates and, for high schools, graduation rates. The new system takes into account a broader array of factors, including achievement gaps between demographic subgroups; absenteeism; and, for high schools, the dropout rate and a measure of college, career and civic readiness.**

**Last year, Ramsay and Hammond were “partially accredited: reconstituted.” That means they missed the state’s benchmarks for full accreditation four years in a row, and so had to enter into state-approved remediation plans. In the 2016-17 academic year, Ramsay missed the standardized testing pass rate for math by 23 percentage points; Hammond missed the benchmark for English by five points. But, based on subsequent testing results and under the revised system, both schools will achieve full accreditation this year.**

**Jefferson-Houston was previously denied accreditation, missing the state’s benchmark for English by nine points, for math by four points, and for science by three points. But this year it’ll bump up to an accredited-with-conditions rating, having met the standard for most indicators, except for certain demographic achievement gaps.**

**T.C. Williams High School was previously partially accredited, missing the state’s benchmark for math by eight points. It’s still falling short in math, as well as with regard to achievement gaps and graduation and dropout rates. It will receive an accredited-with-conditions rating.**

**Numerous factors contribute to school improvements, according to Pierreette Peters and Michael Routhouska, Hammond and Ramsay’s principals since 2015. In particular, they’ve endeavored to provide tailored rather than standardized support to students and families.**

**“We really formalized data-collection practices, and from that we make all our decisions,” said Routhouska. ACPS tracks students against both academic and behavior measures. Students experiencing the most difficulty receive increasingly more personalized “interventions” from school staff, according to ACPS’s Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS). Interventions might involve extra instruction in small groups or one-on-one, or time with a counselor. Educators regularly and collaboratively evaluate student data, working together to structure the best supports. Interventions also look to the home. Because of the schools’ diverse student bodies, “we have to reach out to families in different ways,” said Peters. For example, she employs Spanish- and Arabic-speaking parent liaisons, “who do a lot of groundwork with parents,” including touching base weekly. Another staffer aims to improve educational environments outside the classroom for students experiencing the most difficulty — for example, by sending “students home with books … so that the families can also help support reading instruction.” ACPS offers an eight-week program that “works with parents to teach them parenting skills.” Last year, Peters “met with all parents of students who had two or more Fs.” Ensuring student success also involves “teaching parents,” she said. Similarly, Routhouska says his school is starting this year to conduct “home visits.” He also works to decrease mid-year moves, which disrupt student learning. For instance, he’s personally called property managers to help negotiate rents to keep families in place.**

**Sumaira Hanifi, an eighth-grade student with her family from Afghanistan not long ago, expressed appreciation for ACPS’s approach. She says teachers have worked hard with her to improve her English skills, which may now surpass her native language skills. She says she’s now able to help her mother learn the language, as well.**

**Julia “J.J.” DeNunzio, a seventh grader, says she’s become more confident with math and more interested in books, and credits “good teachers” as key to student success.**

**Beginning Thursday, Sep. 27, find updated accreditation reports from the DOE at www.schoolquality.virginia.gov. For more information about the state’s revised rating system, visit www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/accreditation.**

**Julia “J.J.” DeNunzio, seventh-grade student at Francis C. Hammond Middle School.**

**Sumaira Hanifi, eighth-grade student at Francis C. Hammond Middle School.**
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BELLE HAVEN
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Seeing Diversity as a Gift

By Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

The mission of Alexandria City Public Schools is to ensure that Every Student Succeeds. But what does success look like?

In ACPS we have students from 118 different countries who speak 120 different languages. We have students who come to us without any prior formal education and students who enter kindergarten already able to write, read and solve math problems. Success looks different for each of our students. Every year, some of our students go on to study at Ivy League colleges such as Yale and Princeton. This year, one student whose family fled a civil war in Eritrea has won a full-ride scholarship to the Juilliard School, where she will study under some of the best musicians in the world.

One of the concepts that should not define student success, however, is poverty. We have this idea that is perpetuated through our own higher than usual Free and Reduced School Meal data that poverty is somehow an excuse for failing Standards of Learning tests or failing to graduate or reading two grade levels behind. It is not. It is not.

Meal data that poverty is somehow an excuse for failing Standards of Learning tests or failing to graduate or reading two grade levels behind. It is not. It is not.

ACPS has a student whose family fled a civil war in Eritrea, where she will study under some of the best musicians in the world.

One of the concepts that should not define student success, however, is poverty. We have this idea that is perpetuated through our own higher than usual Free and Reduced School Meal data that poverty is somehow an excuse for failing Standards of Learning tests or failing to graduate or reading two grade levels behind. It is not. It is not.

Some of our elementary schools with the highest Free and Reduced Price Meal percentages are accredited year after year with their students. Poverty should not be an excuse. It is something to counter and to work with, to be aware of, and to acknowledge just as we might acknowledge any other factor in a child’s life, but it should not be the primary defining factor of success.

Sometimes poverty means that a child has been uprooted from their country of origin because their parent worked for the U.S. military during the Iraq War and they were forced to flee to risk of their lives. Sometimes, they could not stay because their family was on the wrong side of politics in an African country at war. But what they bring to our country makes them richer as a nation.

Success for some of our students may not mean passing a fifth-grade SOL test for a student who has recently arrived in the country, but our children still see their own success and in many cases, these are even more powerful achievements.

This week, ACPS published Measuring What Matters as a way to share with our community the incredible talent our young people have that may manifest in many different ways. Standards of Learning (SOL) data is only one measure of a student’s academic success. Opportunities and successes outside of the classroom are just as important as the experience inside of the classroom. In ACPS, we pride ourselves on preparing our students for the world, whether it is college, a career, or joining the military. Every child deserves an opportunity to be supported and engaged in a high quality learning environment. And every child deserves to have their successes acknowledged. You can pick up a copy of Measuring What Matters in a library or at City Hall, or by going online to www.acps.k12.va.us.

There is no other school division where students can experience such a rich global environment as the one we offer at ACPS. Our students graduate being able to fully engage in our dynamic world. Time and time again, our students come back and tell us they were better prepared for the college experience or the world environment thanks to ACPS experiences we need to stop making poverty an excuse and set high expectations for all of our students regardless of their life situation. Most importantly, we must start celebrating our diversity in Alexandria City Public Schools as a gift that prepares our students to become global citizens who are culturally competent, caring, resilient and ready for the world!

Reconsider Football

To the Editor:

Last year I quit watching football. Cold-turkey! Players bashing their brains out for the temporary amusement of the spectators just seemed wrong.

Of course my personal decision does nothing to stem the carnage. The data show serious permanent brain injury in athletes at all levels, from the NFL down to high-school teams and even younger. I grew up a long time ago in an era that was generally much less safe for kids than it is today. There were no seat belts in cars, no helmets for bike riders, no playground equipment made of soft plastic with rounded edges. Somehow we survived, but, to this day, I’m glad I never played tackle football. It’s hard to reconcile society’s increasing fixation on child safety with its enthusiasm for a sport that does so much lasting damage to the players’ brains.

Which brings me to the local brouhaha over lights at Parker–Gray Stadium. There are many important issues: Will the lights violate a promise made to the neighborhood residents? Would the funds be better spent on improving academias, especially since test scores in Alexandria continue to lag nearby jurisdictions?

But to me the overriding concern is the brain damage inflicted on the athletes. There are no technological fixes. The violence of the game itself is inseparable from what makes it exciting to play and to watch.

In pursuit of student safety, ACPS should seriously consider the extreme, but justified, step of phasing out the football program at T.C. Williams. Let’s remember the Titans the way we remember our combat veterans. Honor their achievements, but, go forward, do everything we can to keep our successors out of harm’s way.

Alan Chodos
Alexandria

Get Out and Vote

To the Editor:

As a nearly 25-year resident of Alexandria and a long-time member of the Alexandria Democratic Committee, I pay close attention to political future of the Port City. I have heard that some voters don’t always go to the polls for local and state elections because they believe that Alexandria is so strongly Democratic that they don’t need to vote. In 2018, the cost of being wrong about that is too high to take the risk. The decisions City Council makes aren’t partisan. Sewers and potholes aren’t Democratic or Republican issues. But Democratic elected officials make decisions based on our shared values, and that impacts our daily lives.

Even though our elected officials are Democrats, we still have to vote to protect basics like Civil Rights, environmental sustainability, and education. Since we all agree on our foundational principles, we can spend our time pushing forward, working to expand Civil Rights, write better environmental policy, and fully fund ACPS.

We must also reaffirm Alexandria’s commitment to selected homes in the City of Alexandria. 

By Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

Seeing Diversity as a Gift

By Dr. Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

The mission of Alexandria City Public Schools is to ensure that Every Student Succeeds. But what does success look like?

In ACPS we have students from 118 different countries who speak 120 different languages. We have students who come to us without any prior formal education and students who enter kindergarten already able to write, read and solve math problems. Success looks different for each of our students. Every year, some of our students go on to study at Ivy League colleges such as Yale and Princeton. This year, one student whose family fled a civil war in Eritrea has won a full-ride scholarship to the Juilliard School, where she will study under some of the best musicians in the world.

One of the concepts that should not define student success, however, is poverty. We have this idea that is perpetuated through our own higher than usual Free and Reduced School Meal data that poverty is somehow an excuse for failing Standards of Learning tests or failing to graduate or reading two grade levels behind. It is not. It is not.

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Some of our elementary schools with the highest Free and Reduced Price Meal percentages are accredited year after year with their students. Poverty should not be an excuse. It is something to counter and to work with, to be aware of, and to acknowledge just as we might acknowledge any other factor in a child’s life, but it should not be the primary defining factor of success.

Sometimes poverty means that a child has been uprooted from their country of origin because their parent worked for the U.S. military during the Iraq War and they were forced to flee to risk of their lives. Sometimes, they could not stay because their family was on the wrong side of politics in an African country at war. But what they bring to our country makes them richer as a nation.

Success for some of our students may not mean passing a fifth-grade SOL test for a student who has recently arrived in the country, but our children still see their own success and in many cases, these are even more powerful achievements.

This week, ACPS published Measuring What Matters as a way to share with our community the incredible talent our young people have that may manifest in many different ways. Standards of Learning (SOL) data is only one measure of a student’s academic success. Opportunities and successes outside of the classroom are just as important as the experience inside of the classroom. In ACPS, we pride ourselves on preparing our students for the world, whether it is college, a career, or joining the military. Every child deserves an opportunity to be supported and engaged in a high quality learning environment. And every child deserves to have their successes acknowledged. You can pick up a copy of Measuring What Matters in a library or at City Hall, or by going online to www.acps.k12.va.us.

There is no other school division where students can experience such a rich global environment as the one we offer at ACPS. Our students graduate being able to fully engage in our dynamic world. Time and time again, our students come back and tell us they were better prepared for the college experience or the world environment thanks to ACPS experiences.

We need to stop making poverty an excuse and set high expectations for all of our students regardless of their life situation. Most importantly, we must start celebrating our diversity in Alexandria City Public Schools as a gift that prepares our students to become global citizens who are culturally competent, caring, resilient and ready for the world!
Letters

From Page 10

Voting Suggestions
To the Editor:
On Sept. 22, in-person absentee voting began. Here are six reasons to vote a complete, straight Democratic ticket:
❖ Alexandrians can vote for nine Democratic nominees, and each is individually worthy of your support – Kaine for Senate, Beyer for House, Wilson for Mayor, and six vetted candidates for City Council: Aguirre, Bennett-Parker, Chapman, Jackson, Pepper and Seifeldein.
❖ Collectively, the Democratic slate for council brings valuable diversity in every respect: 50 percent women, two seasoned hands and four newcomers, and a racial and ethnic mix that includes blacks, whites, Latinos, and a refugee from Sudan.
❖ Democratic Council nominees were vetted by the voters in a competitive primary. Other council candidates are self-appointed or were picked in backroom deals with no voter input.
❖ Six members will be elected to council, even if you don’t vote for six. Failing to fully use your vote risks letting a non-Democrat win a seat.
❖ At the Congressional level, we can’t afford to be complacent. Both Kaine and Beyer are “looking good” for re-election, based on polls. But two years ago, so was Hillary.
❖ At all levels, this election is seen as a referendum on the Trump Administration. Low turnout, narrow Democratic victories, or (God forbid!) victories for some Republicans in this Democratic bastion would send the opposite message.
I urge Democrats and fair-minded independents to vote, and make all of their votes count, for the good of the city and the nation.

Tom Osborne
Alexandria

Local Issue
For Ratepayers
To the Editor:
Until recently I was like many Northern Virginians who are unaware of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and its detrimental effects on our state. This 600-mile pipeline will carry “fracked gas” from West Virginia.

Gail Gordon Donegan
Alexandria

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JUST OPENED. 50% SOLD.
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145 Riverhaven Drive, National Harbor, MD 20745
By Alan Stillman

Odds are you know someone who has had a stroke or is a caregiver to a stroke patient. In fact, stroke affects 80 percent of all families and is a leading cause of death and disability. The lifetime risk of stroke is 1 in 5 for women, 1 in 6 for men. Those odds increase even more for those with certain risk factors like smoking and high blood pressure.

Stroke affects a heavy toll on individuals and families. In October 2017, Mayor Allison Silberberg proclaimed a city-wide health campaign to protect our community from the devastation caused by stroke. The goal of Stroke Smart Alexandria (SSA) is to educate every person who lives, works and regularly spends time in Alexandria on how to spot a stroke and how critical it is to stroke survival to call 911 immediately.

Life-saving treatments are available to stroke victims but they are all time-sensitive. A clot-buster called t-PA, for example, can be given to restore blood flow to the brain. However, it must be administered within 3-4 hours of onset of stroke symptoms. Unfortunately, less than 10 percent of people who are eligible for t-PA get to a hospital within the time window. Even more advanced treatments are available these days, but because the vast majority of people do not know how to spot a stroke and the importance of calling 911 as soon as the symptoms are recognized, many stroke victims tragically missed the chance for recovery, even survival.

Alexandria is fortunate to have one of the best primary stroke centers in the country. INOVA Alexandria Hospital has been awarded the Joint Commission’s Gold Seal of Approval for stroke care, and recognized for its outstanding specialized stroke treatment by the American Stroke Association (ASA). While our local hospitals have made impressive improvements in reducing the door-to-needle time, it is now up to us, Alexandrians, to lower the onset-to-911 time to help those struck down get the best chance of survival and recovery.

To educate Alexandrians to recognize the signs of a stroke, Stroke Smart Alexandria is making available free educational materials around our city. Pictured at right is a specially designed visual tool to help everyone learn and remember the signs of a stroke. The tool is available in the forms of tear-and-waterproof wallet cards, stickers, refrigerator magnets, and posters, available for free at the following locations: City Hall; INOVA Alexandria; Giant Pharmacies and Neighborhood Pharmacy; Libraries; Recreation Centers; Starbucks with bulletin boards; Senior Services of Alexandria, and City Clinics; Christ Church Alexandria; Goodwin House; Immanuel on the Hill; and Watergate at Landmark.

Because most people who are suffering a stroke have difficulty calling 911 themselves, it is important to educate the people around you on how to spot a stroke. Every Alexandrian is encouraged to learn and remember the signs of stroke, and to distribute the stroke visual tool to friends and family. By spreading the word, you may just save your own life or someone else’s.

In his TED Talk, Alan Stillman, a 30-year resident of Alexandria, shares his personal story of watching helplessly his grandmother Rose suffer a stroke, and being left alone in the world at a young age without a family after eventually losing Rose. Knowing the personal cost of the disease, he started the Spot-a-Stroke, Save-a-Life campaign to raise stroke awareness among the public. His TED Talk can be viewed at tinyurl.com/SpotStroke.

Beginning with Stroke Smart Alexandria in his hometown, Stillman hopes to eventually get the ear of Gov. Ralph Northam and take the campaign to the state level. If you have ideas on how to spread the word or want to help, contact Stillman at Alan@kwwppoint.com

Opinion

Saving Lives by Becoming a Stroke Smart City

By Char McCargo Bah

The Seaton family was one of Alexandria’s 19th century success stories. They were free people of color by early 1800. Lucinda Seaton, mother of John Andrew Seaton, obtained her freedom from President George Washington.

John and his brothers, George, Jr. and Adolphus, were high achievers during a time when many African Americans were slaves. John was a giant of a man who made giant achievements. During the Civil War, he enlisted in the Quartermaster’s Department in Alexandria, and then he enlisted in the colored Union troops. After the war, John was appointed by Sen. John F. Lewis to a position at the U.S. Department of Treasury and then another position for the U.S. Capitol police.

In 1871, John was appointed Alderman for the fourth ward in Alexandria City Council, was the first colored man in the State to be honored. John accompanied the body of U.S. Rep. Charles Sumner in 1874 from Washington, D.C. to Boston. He also accepted a position in 1875 as a police guard in New York for the Equitable Life Assurance Company at their new building in Manhattan. New someone who had a good career; this salary was unheard of for a colored man in his era.

John and his siblings had amassed a number of properties throughout Alexandria and Fauquier, the District of Columbia and Manhattan, N.Y. It was noted in The New York World newspaper on June 20, 1887, that John A. Seaton, an employee at the Equitable Building was a builder that had built a nice cottage in Fauquier, Va.

John was born around 1837 in Alexandria — at that time Alexandria was part of the District of Columbia — to Lucinda Seaton. He had several siblings: George, Lucinda, Laura, Martha, Mary Ann and Adolphus. He grew up in the neighborhood of Washington and Franklin streets. Due to the success of John and his siblings, their neighborhood was known as “Seatonville.”

He was a giant of a man, 6 feet 6 inches tall and he weighed 275 pounds. On Feb. 23, 1860, John married his first wife, Virginia Whiting. After the death of Virginia, on March 18, 1877, he married his second wife, Alice McGuire. John and Alice Seaton divorced in January of 1890. On April 4, 1890, John married his third wife, Elizabeth Grant. John had two sons that survived him, one from his first marriage, John A. Seaton, Jr., and a son from his second marriage, Adolphus Seaton.

John was respected by all the people who knew him. He was involved in the education of former slaves during the early period of the Reconstruction era. He was also a member of the Universal Lodge, No. 1. A.E. and A.M., of Alexandria, Va., Lieutenant Commander of Fletcher Consistory, Scottish Rite Masonry, 32-degree Mason and a Noble of Magnus Temple of the Mystic Shrine of Mount Olivet Baptist Church in New York City.

In April 1898, Hon. John L. Seaton died at his summer residence in Fauquier County, Va. A midnight service was held over his body by the Scottish Rite Masonry. He was buried on his farm in Bealeton, Fauquier, Va.

John Seaton has a descendant by his second wife, Alice McGuire Seaton. Alice’s great-grandnephew, James Henson, Sr., lives in Alexandria on the site of the old Seaton School for Boys (renamed to Snowden School). John’s brother, George C. Seaton built the Seaton Boys School after 1865. The school served Colored boys from 1870 through 1919. Indeed, John’s physical appearance and his devotion to helping his community earned him the title, “A Giant of a Man.”

Char McCargo Bah is a freelance writer, independent historian, genealogist and a Living Legend of Alexandria. Visit her blog at http://www.theotheralexandria.com for more about “The Other Alexandria.”
We’re proud to call Compass our newest home.

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T
wo hundred artists from around the nation showed off their cre-
ations at the 16th annual King Street Art Festival, held on Fri-
day and Saturday, Sept. 22-23.
The event, hosted by Howard Alan Events, featured a variety of art types, in-
cluding painting, sculpture, metalwork, woodwork, glasswork, clothing, jewelry —
and sometimes hybrids thereof. All told, the art on display was valued at over $15 mil-
lion, according to Visit Alexandria.
Total effect on revenues is unknown. The city government doesn’t estimate attendance or economic impact, according to Andrea Blackford, a city spokesperson. But neither does it subsidize the event. Rather, the spon-
sor must pay permitting fees and reimburse the city for personnel and other costs, such as for the police officers who cordoned off King Street. In past years, the latter reimburse-
ment has amounted to over $30,000.

Artists from across country participate in art festival.

By Dan Brendel
Gazette Packet

Art
Galore

Paintings by North Carolina’s Richard Wilson

Copper water sculptures by Maryland’s Yos Belchatovski

Steel sculptures by Tennessee’s Rommel and Courtney Ricaurte

Clay sculptures by Maryland’s Tanya Tyree

Fine art photography by Washington state’s Lijah Hanley

Wood turnings by Georgia’s Matthew Hatala

Artist Janine Monroe of Atlanta, Ga.

Artist Cat Clausen shows off one of her Abraham Lincoln paint-
ings, of which she has painted over 200 since 2005.

The 16th annual Alexandria King Street Art Festival offered booths stretching six blocks from the intersection of Washington and King streets to King and Union streets.
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Our new Alexandria community is Brandywine Living’s 29th luxury, active aging community with licensed Assisted Living and Memory-Care, visit us at www.BrandyCare.com
Vola Lawson, shown with members of the Alexandria Rotary Club at the 2013 Walk to Fight Breast Cancer, was a breast cancer survivor and founder of the walk that raised funds to provide mammograms to low income city residents. Lawson died in 2013 and a memorial fund in her name will raise funds through several events scheduled throughout the month of October.

“We have a lot of exciting events planned to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer care,” said Pat Miller, an organizer of the events. “Due to budget cuts the annual city walk was permanently canceled in 2014 but the community has come together to honor Vola and support the fund, which continues to provide cancer prevention education and free mammograms for low income women.”

According to the Center for Disease Control, breast cancer is the most common cancer in women, for all races and ethnicities. It is the second most common cause of death from cancer among Hispanic women and the second most common cause of death from cancer among Asian/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native women.

CDC statistics show that about 237,000 cases of breast cancer are diagnosed in women and about 2,100 in men each year in the U.S. About 41,000 women and 450 men in the U.S. die each year from breast cancer.

“Early detection is key to treating breast cancer,” Miller said. “A mammogram can help do this but unfortunately many low income women cannot afford one. That’s why the Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Memorial Fund was created — to cover the costs of mammograms and other screenings so that all women can receive early care when needed.”

Events scheduled to raise money for the Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Memorial Fund include:

❖ Couture for a Cure – Oct. 4, 7-9 p.m., Springfield Town Center at Springfield Mall. Breast cancer survivors, community members, physicians and advocates will take to the runway in a fashion show event. Sponsored by the Association of Alexandria Radiologists, admission is free.

❖ Breast Cancer Awareness Walk – Oct. 13, 8-11 a.m., Oakland Baptist Church, 3408 King St. Fellowship and light refreshments at 8 a.m., walk starts at 9 a.m. $10 donation. Sponsored by the historic Oak-land Baptist Church, contact Nechelle Terrell 571-426-0569.

❖ Los Tios Restaurant Night – Oct. 16, 2615 Mount Vernon Ave. Dine at Los Tios and a percentage of the evening’s profits will benefit the Vola Lawson Fund. Contact Anuja Miner anujam43@gmail.com.

❖ Del Ray Farmers’ Market – Oct. 13 and Oct. 20, Breast Cancer Awareness T-shirts, 2311 Mount Vernon Ave. Awareness T-shirts will be on sale. Sponsored by the Alexandria Friends of the Commission for Women, contact Jacinta Greene greenejacinta@gmail.com.

❖ Yates Automotive Give Your 2 Cents Program – throughout the month of October. Yates Automotive 317 E. Braddock Road. Yates will donate two cents of every gallon of gas purchased to the Vola Lawson Fund.

❖ Mammogram Screening – throughout the month of October and ongoing, free screenings provided with a referral from Neighborhood Health, 2 East Glebe Road. Call 703-535-5568 to schedule an appointment for a referral.

To donate to the Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Memorial Fund, visit https://www.razoo.com/story/Volalawson or send a check payable to the Vola Lawson Breast Cancer Fund to: ACT for Alexandria, 201 King Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, VA, 22314. All donations are tax-deductible.
Show Me the Money

Visitor spending hits record high of $826 million.

By Jeanne Theismann
Gazette Packet

Alexandria, named the number one Best Value U.S. Travel Destination in 2018 by Money magazine and one of the South’s Prettiest Cities 2018 by Southern Living, is reaping the rewards in tourism dollars. According to new data from the Virginia Tourism Corporation, visitor spending in Alexandria grew to a record $826 million last year, a $36 million increase from the previous year as announced by Visit Alexandria at its annual meeting Sept. 24.

“This is a pivotal year for Alexandria as we face unprecedented competition,” Visit Alexandria President and CEO Patricia Washington said in a statement. “This challenge unites us and energizes us to work smarter, relying on big data to drive our marketing decisions and to continue to improve the quality of experiences and programs our city has to offer.”

Tax receipts from visitors, defined as people who travel from 50 or more miles to Alexandria, also rose from $26.6 million in 2016 to $27.4 million in 2017. This year, the city became the first jurisdiction in Virginia to charge a tax on Airbnb rentals, creating another source of visitor revenue for the city.

As visitor spending grew, the average hotel occupancy rate fell in fiscal year 2018 to 72.5 percent compared to 73 percent in 2017. Revenue per available room dropped to $111 from $113 the previous year. The hotel occupancy rate remains higher than the DC regional average of 71.3 percent.

Tourism initiatives still to come this year include the opening of the King Street waterfront park in October.

The Portside in Old Town Festival will kick off the opening Oct. 12-14 with activities to include free tours of the tall ship Godspeed, a waterfront beer garden from Port City Brewing Company and a pop-up Pizzeria Paradiso.

THE CONTINUING SERIES is part of the King Street Corridor Initiative, a programming, beautification and marketing campaign funded by the city and private partners. Additional programming at the new waterfront park will lead up to the summer 2019 arrival of Tall Ship Providence, a permanent attraction for the city.

Washington also emphasized the city as a destination for meetings, touting Alexandria’s proximity to the nation’s capital. She noted that the group will continue to look to regional visitors, who account for 43 percent of consumption taxes, as sources of visitor spending.

When combined, regional and destination visitors pay 71 percent of consumption taxes in the city, which is based on 2016 Visa credit card data.


At the Alzheimer’s Association Walk to End Alzheimer’s®, people carry flowers representing their connection to Alzheimer’s—a disease that currently has no cure. But what if one day there was a flower for Alzheimer’s first survivor? What if there were millions of them? Help make that beautiful day happen by joining us for the world’s largest fundraiser to fight the disease.

Register today at alz.org/walk.

Walk to End Alzheimer’s – DC
The National Mall
October 13 | 9:00 am

Additional Walks available.
Find one near you at alz.org/walk or call 703.359.4440.

JOIN THE FIGHT FOR ALZHEIMER’S FIRST SURVIVOR.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 22
♦ The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a felonious assault at King and 28th streets. An adult victim was transported to the hospital with non-life-threatening injury. The Fairfax County Police Department helicopter assisted.
♦ The Alexandria Police Department is conducting a death investigation in the 2300 block of Mill Road, the Hoffman Town Center parking garage.

Crime Report
The following incidents were reported by the Alexandria Police Department.

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SPORTS

TC Defense Forces Six Turnovers in Loss to Patriot

Titans hoping to solidify quarterback position heading into bye.

By Jon Roetman
Gazette Packet

TC. Williams defensive back Ricardo Ross intercepted a pass on the fourth play from scrimmage during Saturday’s home game against Patriot but fumbled the ball back to the Pioneers during the return.

Later in the first quarter, Ross snagged another interception, but this one was wiped out by a penalty.

On the very next play, Ross intercepted Patriot quarterback Chris Sonnenberg for a third time and returned the ball to the Pioneers 9-yard line.

“I had to tell my team I owe them one,” Ross said. “I went out there the next play and got it.”

Ross, a junior safety, was part of a defensive unit that forced six turnovers, including five in the first half, and kept the TC. Williams football team in the game. However, a struggling offense in search of consistency from the quarterback position and multiple special teams miscues played a major role in the Titans’ 24-7 loss to Patriot on Sept. 22 at Parker-Gray Stadium.

TC has lost three straight games after starting 2-0, but the defense’s performance on Saturday gave the Titans something to build on for the future.

“I thought the defense played, really, really well,” TC head coach Jimmy Longerbeam said. “We had our backs up against the wall some and they did a great job taking the ball away.”

The TC defense piled up takeaways, but the Titans were unable to capitalize.

Ross intercepted a pass on the game’s fourth play but lost a fumble during the return. On the very next play, Patriot fumbled the ball and TC recovered in Pioneers territory.

TC drove down to the 20-yard line but ended up missing a 37-yard field goal attempt.

TC forced another turnover on Patriot’s net possession — Ross’ second interception — and took over at the Pioneers 9-yard line. But after three plays totaled a loss of one yard, a different Titan kicker came on the field and missed a 27-yard field goal attempt.

Patriot took a 7-0 lead on its next possession and led for the remainder of the contest.

Ross credited TC coaches and film study for helping him to be in the right place to intercept a pair of passes.

“Ricardo’s kind of turned a corner,” Longerbeam said. “What you saw today is what we thought he was. … As a ninth grader, he intercepted three balls in a game. He’s got a great knack for the ball and he’s got really, really good football instincts.”

Mohamed Aly also intercepted a pass for the TC defense. The Titans recovered three Patriot fumbles, as well.

Offensively, TC continued its quarterback-by-committee approach while searching for a replacement for former starter Diondre Charlton.

Robert Longerbeam, a junior, started at quarterback against Patriot on Saturday, Sept. 22.
Sports

TC Defense

quarterback against Patriot and completed 5 of 11 passes for 37 yards, and threw an interception on fourth and goal from the 7-yard line during TC’s first possession of the second half. He carried the ball 16 times for 51 yards and scored TC’s only touchdown on a 5-yard run on fourth down with 42 seconds remaining in the final quarter. Longerbeam has experience at the position but hasn’t played much in recent seasons due to injury.

He looked like “[a] kid who hadn’t been quarterback for two years,” Jimmy Longerbeam, Robert’s father, said. “He made some good runs, didn’t pitch it sometimes when he should have. Threw some balls into the ground. He was a quarterback as a ninth grader and broke his wrist. Last year, he broke his (right, throwing) wrist and had a plate put in, so he didn’t play at all after the first game.

“... He just looked like a kid who hadn’t played.”

Jack Rossi, a senior who started the previous week against Robinson, also played against Patriot. He completed 8 of 16 passes for 58 yards and carried four times for 13 yards. Rossi was the varsity backup quarterback last season.

TC has a bye this week, giving Titans coaches two weeks to select a starting quarterback for their next game against West Potomac on Oct. 5 and, hopefully, for the remainder of the season: by Jeff McQuilkin

“Right now, it’s been quarterback by committee,” Jimmy Longerbeam said. “The good thing about it is we’ve got basically two weeks to get that spot solidified. ... We’re hoping somebody will distance himself in the next two weeks. That’s the goal.”

TC running back Anthony Eaton carried eight times for 33 yards and caught one pass for nine yards on Saturday.

The Titans will play their next three games on the road, starting with their Gunston District opener at West Potomac at 7 p.m. on Oct. 5. After games at Hayfield (Oct. 12) and Edison (Oct. 19), TC will return home for its final two games of the regular season against Mount Vernon (Oct. 27) and Annandale (Nov. 3).

Prue Named TC Basketball Coach

G eorgetown University and Morgan State assistant coach Darryl Prue has been named as the new head coach for the T.C. Williams High School Boys Basketball Team.

Prue, himself a star on the D.C. metro basketball circuit in the 1980s, currently coaches for Team Takeover, an Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) program in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. He was introduced on Monday, Sept. 24 by Georgetown University coach John Thompson III.

Prue’s appointment is the latest in a series of hires this school year for T.C. Williams, whose athletic program is under the directorship of James L. Parker. The new director of Athletics and Student Activities is recruiting staff to boost the school division’s reputation as a training ground for top-tier athletes. TC aims to expand the number and types of programs and opportunities offered at the high school level and increase funding through public-private partnerships.

A two-time First-Team All-Met forward at Paul Laurence Dunbar High School, Prue guided Dunbar to a No. 1 national ranking by USA Today in his junior season. He was named a Third-Team All-American by Street and Smith, and as a senior averaged 23 points per game coupled with an incredible 17 rebounds per contest.

Prue was recruited by Thompson at Georgetown University, but opted to attend West Virginia he was honored as the Co-Rookie of the Year in the Atlantic 10 as a freshman and earned Second-Team All-League honors his sophomore year and First-Team recognition his final two years. Prue was named an Honorable Mention All-American his junior year. He went on to play for 11 years on the international basketball circuit, winning three league championships.

Since his playing days ended, he has worked on the staffs at Georgetown University and Morgan State University. He now coaches for Team Takeover. He has also been a personal trainer for several NBA players, including Roy Hibbert of the Indiana Pacers and Greg Monroe of the Detroit Pistons. Prue starts in the role this week.
The Painted Rocks at Revolver Creek members suggested ‘The Count of Monte Cristo’ classic stories at ACCT. “One of our concepts was that the audience prevails.” She added: “This is a story of death and rebirth, repentance, renewal and transcendence. We would love to have the audience decide for themselves if Dantès killed himself, ‘begun his life anew,’ or has been ‘renewed in spirit.’ This is up to each theater-goer to decide for himself. The essential arc of Edmond Dantès’ life goes from revenge to obsession to forgiveness to transcendence which is to be clear and compelling. This version should be where theater patrons can talk about the ending as they exit the theater. Cal Whitehurst is playing the role of Gerard de Villefort, a prosecuting attorney for the French Royal Government and one of the conspirators who send Edmond Dantès to prison on a false charge of treachery in 1815. He gets himself a man who has spent his career serving justice; but he carries within him not only the secret of his unjust imprisonment of Dantès, but an even deeper and darker one as well,” he said.

He added: “One challenge to performing in this production of ‘The Count of Monte Cristo’ is acquitting myself gracefully in the dance segments, which serve both to set the play in 19th century France and to illustrate the various characters and their relationships to each other. In addition, the play is an adaptation of a highly melodramatic novel; and de Villefort has some very strong actions and intense emotions, which require me to strike a balance between believability and a dramatic style that is true to the Dumas work.”

Jim Pearson is playing the role of Eugène Danglars, who he calls a ‘nasty piece of work.’ “By turns charming and abusive, he is a bully to those below him and a sycophant to those above,” he said.

He said the challenge was “Finding the arc of the character from small-time impersonator to grand living and plotting has been an emotional journey. Danglers’ relationship with his wife is truly complex as well.”

Tim Caron is playing the role of Edmond Dantès, an honest, hard-working and somewhat naïve man pushed into a horrible situation. “Years later, when he escapes this personal hell, having learned that it all unfolded because of the greed of some selfish acquaintances, he’s (understandably) driven to punish them. Under the guise of ‘The Count of Monte Cristo,’ a now wealthy and well-educated Edmond is able to execute grand designs against each of them — but with little restraint on the extremity of his actions,” he said.

Nic Barta is playing the role of Benedetto, a man who has had to survive on his own whole life. “He never knew his real family and went through life never truly trusting people. When he meets the Count, he’s taken aback by how different he is. When he’s employed by the Count he’s given a direction no matter how small it may be. He gets taste of what higher class life could be and begins to like it. Benedetto is a man lost in the harshness of the world. He’s a very tragic character,” he said.

He said the dance choreography was tricky to get the hang of. “I don’t consider myself a good dancer, so learning the Waltz from square one was quite the challenge. I had to learn to relax and be persistent in learning the steps,” he said.

Tameka Taylor plays the role of Hermione Danglers, who is very socially and class conscious. “She’s feisty and has had many love affairs. Hermione’s marriage to her husband Eugene Danglers is not one of love and respect but one of convenience. She adores her daughter Eugenie and enjoys being the Belle of the ball and the talk of the town, however this ‘talk’ is not always in her favor,” she said.

She added: “Revenge and justice are two very separate things. Revenge is one-sided, motivated anger, self-interest, jealousy ... etc. It also can bring about more revenge. It never results in peace, but only conflict of mind, body and soul with all involved.”

Aldersgate Church Community Theater is presenting “The Count of Monte Cristo” from Sept. 28 to Oct. 14. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are $12-$15. The venue is located at Aldersgate Church, 1301 Collingwood Road, Alexandria. Visit www.acctonline.org.
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Meet Chef Steve Rosenthal 

... at Tequila and Taco.

By Shirley R lune

IN THE KITCHEN

S teve Rosenthal measures out garlic and onion powder, oregano, mustard seed, and other herbs and spices into 8 small purple cups. “I weigh everything,” he says. Rosenthal is making the rub for the pork belly tacos at Tequila and Taco on John Carlyle where he has been the executive chef since it opened in May 2019. He says this is his favorite dish and the customer favorite as well.

Rosenthal empties each small dish into a large aluminum bowl and mixes it in brown sugar and kosher salt, tossing it around and mashing the sugar with his hands. “I make sure I get all of the little clumps of sugar out.” This will make enough for about two quarts of the rub he spreads on the pork belly before baking it for six hours at 225 degrees. The rub mixture will last about a week. He turns to the sauce that will be sprinkled on the top of the finished taco. “It consists of three ingredients: wine vinegar, dark brown sugar and gochujang (brown rice red pepper paste).” He says he uses about equal portions of each ingredient.” Rosenthal says he makes all of his sauces using his own reci pes. “I try to make everything homemade that I can and out of fresh ingredients.” Each table in the restaurant has a plastic bottle of his Serrano, Fresno and Habanero sauces. Habanero is the favorite. “It is made by soaking orange habaneros in white vinegar for two weeks and then simmering it with roughly chopped carrots and Sp anish onions and freshly squeezed oranges.” He won’t reveal any more. It’s “my secret recipe.”

Rosenthal piles 10-pound pork belly off of the cold storage and pulls off the plastic wrap. He places it on a large cookie sheet with the meat side up. “I pull off the loose fat and sprinkle an 8-ounce cup of rub mixture over the meat. I rub it in there real nice so that the flavors goin’ inside.”

He flips the pork belly over and sprinkles an addit i onal 8-ounces of rub on the other side. “I make sure I get the whole thing covered, all the little areas.” Rosenthal has slivered seven cloves of garlic, “I always slice the butts off first.” He bruises several sprigs of thyme with the back of his knife and then peels slices of lemon peel and chops finely to make zest.

Rosenthal sprinkles half of the garlic, thyme and lemon zest in the bottom of a large pan, then places the pork belly on the top and adds the other half. “Now I’ll wrap the whole pan in plastic and let it sit overnight to marry the flavors.” I use one of these pork butts every day .

Now let’s go make ourselves some tacos. Rosenthal flips three white corn tortillas on the grill that has been wiped with canola oil. “I only use canola oil. There are too many allergens out there now.” He has sliced rectangles of pork belly which he sinks in a 7-gallon vat of oil to get them GBD (Golden Brown Fluffy and Delicious.)

Rosenthal has flipped over the tortillas and removes them from the grill onto a cloth towel and presses down to remove any extra oil. He places tacos in a three-tiered metal holder and adds two crunchy pork belly slices to each. “Now a little bit of shredded radish and a healthy squirt of gochujang sauce. Now a nice little slice of avocado and a little bit of scallions.” He slips the tacos onto a rectangular blue plate with just enough room for two lime wedges.

Rosenthal says cooking is fun and relaxing. “There is something comforting about cooking food. I like to watch people take a bite of something I made and they don’t say anything but I get that little head nod.” His says his whole family cooked but he learned to cook from his mom. His favorite? “Oh wow, one of my favorites was her zucchini bread. She made it all summer. It brings me back to my childhood.”

kmaier@alexlibraryva.org.

SEPT. 27-APRIL 2

Still Life Alive. 9-5 p.m. at River Farm, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria. Parr Art Shellbolo One Woman Art Show, featuring 100 original oil paintings of flowers, fruit, landscapes and seascapes. Uchello’s work has been collected by IBM, the International Monetary Fund and more. Email pmuchello@aol.com or visit www.patriceuchello.com.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 28

Garden Talk: Planting Trees & Shrubs. 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. (16-Adult) Learn how to select trees and shrubs that thrive in Northern Virginia. Understand how to handle bare-root, balled, wrapped and container plants from different sources and find inspiration in colorful, creative world of tree and shrub planting. Free and find inspiration for local planting. Free. Visit www.green springgardens.org or call 703-410-9263.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 29

5K Fundraiser. 7:30 a.m. at Fort Hunt Park by the Arts on the Horizon, a non-profit theatre for children ages 0-6. Families are invited to run or walk to support Arts on the Horizon’s arts education programs and community events. 4192 Union Church Road. Each participant will be individually blessed by Pastor Grace Van and will receive a Certificate of Blessing with the pet’s name calligraphied by the artist. Blessing happens in the courtyard under the oaks on Cameron Mills Road. Call or text 703-408-4008.

Plants & Design: Shade Garden Intensive, 9 a.m.-noon. (Adults) We love the relief shade offers from the hot sun, but lament how challenging it is to have a shade garden. What can a gardener do with shade? Topics: Made in the Dry Shade and Great Plant Combinations for Shade Gardens. $39/person. Register online at www.arts onthehorizon.org or call 703-408-4008.

Fall Festival. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at Beatty Central Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Odd Fellows’ Fall Festival will be established to showcase the literary talents of Alexandria’s teens. Launching on Sept. 29, submission deadline for creative writing is Oct. 31. Selected writers from the Teen Poetry Circle will be informed in November. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Arts, search Teen Poetry Program.

A Mansion House Whiskey Tasting. 6-9 p.m. at Carlyle House Hotel, 121 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria. A new Alexandria Teen Poetry Circle will be established to showcase the literary talents of Alexandria’s teens. Launching on Sept. 29, submission deadline for creative writing is Oct. 31. Selected writers from the Teen Poetry Circle will be informed in November. Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Arts, search Teen Poetry Program.

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Fall Fun & Entertainment

4 Dates to Circle in October

By Hope Nelson

Multicultural potlucks, a pizza and beer pairing, a waterfront festival and Hallowe'en fun — October does indeed have it all. Here are some of the month’s best picks.

Pass the Plate Potluck at Woodlawn’s Pope-Leighey House, Oct. 4
Delve deeply into a “cross-cultural, heritage-inspired” dinner featuring foodways historian and cookbook author Michael Twitty. Guests are asked to bring a dish that spotlights their own history and culture, with the idea that by the time dinner is served, a diverse, multicultural tableau will have formed. The main course will be a recipe from Twitty’s cookbook, “The Cooking Gene.” Once you’re done with dinner, visit Woodlawn’s current exhibit, “Makers in the Mansion.” 9000 Richmond Highway. 6-9 p.m. $40.

APPETITE

Pizza and Beer Guided Pairing at Port City Brewing, Oct. 10
Among its other accolades, October is National Pizza Month, and Port City intends to celebrate this time with fanfare. Join the brewery and one of its visiting food trucks, Killer Tomato Pizza, for a five-course pairing featuring Killer Tomato’s pies and Port City’s ales. Who knows? You just might find a new favorite to feature at your next football (or Halloween) party. 3950 Wheeler Ave. 7-9 p.m. $30.

Portside in Old Town at King Street Waterfront, Oct. 12-14
The festivities of the weekend don’t center on eating, but don’t fret; food and drink are still on the menu during Alexandria’s autumnal celebration. While taking in the tallship Godspeed and enjoying some of the cultural and historical exhibits on offer, be sure to stop for a break and a bite to eat. Pizzeria Paradiso will bring an outdoor pizza oven along and will remain at the ready to quell any hunger pangs the festival might have caused. (Children can learn to make their own pizza on Sunday, Oct. 14, from noon to 1 p.m. at a special demo.) When you’ve had your fill of pizza, venture next door to Port City’s beer garden to wash it all down. King Street Waterfront. Activities daily Oct. 12-14. Free; vendors may charge.

Hole in the Wall Halloween at Captain Gregory’s, Oct. 31
Join the other guests at Captain Gregory’s for a spooky evening filled with themed cocktails and festive eats. The intimate speakeasy will be transformed into Halloween Headquarters, so don’t forget to wear your best costume in order to raise your chances of winning a prize. Your ticket entitles you to three cocktails — plus food and festivity, of course. 804 N. Henry St. 7-10 p.m. $75.

Hope Nelson owns and operates the Kitchen Recessionista blog, located at www.kitchenrecessionista.com. Email her any time at hope@kitchenrecessionista.com.
Friday, October 19, 2018

7:00 - 10:00 P.M.

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TUESDAY/ OCT. 2

“Hats Off to Autumn.” Show runs Oct. 2-Nov. 4, 2018, at Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery, Torpedo Factory Art Center, Studio 29, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Potomac Fiber Arts Gallery announces the opening of its juried show, “Hats Off to Autumn.” This juried show will be eligible for recognition by the jurors. Non-themed work may also be exhibited. 10:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. weekdays, and 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. Call 703-548-0935 or visit www.potomacfartergallery.com

WEDNESDAY/ OCT. 3

2018 Oktoberfest. 6-9 p.m. at Port City Brewing Company, 3950 Wheeler Ave., Alexandria. Sponsored by AniMeals on Wheels, and educational programming. See seniorservicealex.com/2018-Oktoberfest.

THURSDAY/ OCT. 4

Yacht Haven Garden Club Meeting. 10 a.m.-noon at Mount Vernon Yacht Club, 4817 Tarpon Lane, Alexandria. The Yacht Haven Garden Club meeting will be Plants and Tricks for the Garden. Speaker will be Dan Scott from American Horticulture Society. New members welcomed. Email: Preacherlo@comcast.net or call 703-304-6136.

BHNV Fundraising Gala. 6-9 p.m. at Crown Point Old Town Alexandria, 991 North Fairfax St., Alexandria. Bethany House of Northern Virginia is hosting its 7th Annual Garden of Light Gala. $100 per person or $900 for a table of 10. Email ojohnson@bhnv.org or call 703-658-9500. Visit www.bhnv.org/garden-of-light.

Pass the Plate Potluck. 6-9 p.m. at Woodlawn & Frank Lloyd Wright’s Pope-Leighey House, 9001 Richmond Highway, Alexandria. Featuring culinary foodways expert and cookbook author, Michael Twitty, as well as the artisans of the current art exhibit, Makers In The Mansion. Each group of guests, as part of their participation will be asked to bring a dish which highlights their own family story. Email woodlawnevents@savingplaces.org. Visit eventbrite.com, search “Pass the Plate Potluck.”

Fashion Show. 7-9 p.m. at Springfield Town Center, 6505 Springfield Mall, Springfield. Join the Association of Alexandria Radiologists for the Fourth Annual Couture for a Cure Breast Cancer Awareness Fashion Show, dedicated to the battle against breast cancer. To donate, visit alexandriaraediology.com.

FRIDAY/ OCT. 5

Cocktails by Candlelight. 6-9 p.m. at George Mason’s Gunston Hall, 10709 Gunston Road, Mason Neck. Kick-off the weekend at Cocktails by Candlelight event an after-hours event where visitors to make and sip on period cocktails in Gunston Hall’s hearth kitchen. Converse and be merry around the fire with friends and loved ones, and enjoy a candlelit tour. Tickets are sold online (bit.ly/2MKZDK4) or at the door for $35, $25 for Friends of Gunston Hall. All attendees must be 21 or older.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/ OCT. 5-7

Mount Vernon’s Fall Wine Festival & Sunset Tour. 6-9 p.m. at Mount Vernon Estate. Celebrate the history of wine in Virginia with exclusive evening tours of the Mansion and cellar, appearances by “George and Martha Washington,” and live blues on the east lawn overlooking the scenic Potomac River. Visitors can bring a blanket and relax on the lawn as they sample wines from 20 Virginia wineries. Tickets are Friday, Oct. 6: $42, Saturday, Oct. 7: $48, Sunday, Oct. 8: $38. Private reserved tables, which can seat up to 12 guests and include a fruit and cheese platter, three bottles of house wine and VIP table service are available starting at $1,100. Tickets and tables are available at MountVernon.org.

SATURDAY/ OCT. 6

Family Dog Day. At Shuter’s Hill, grounds of George Washington Masonic National Memorial. Reservations are $10 per person. If a session is filled, contact the museum at 703-746-3999 or archaeology@alexandriava.gov to be placed on any waitlist. Additional reservation is required for all programs; space is limited. The programs are family friendly, but children under 16 must be accompanied by a participating adult. Visit www.alexandriaarchaeology.org,

Gratitude Walk Live. 8:30-10:30 a.m. at West Potomac High School Track, 6500 Quander Road, Alexandria. Mission is to challenge individuals to walk a mile or a lap in honor of someone they are grateful for or in memory of (parents, etc.). No cost and they will give 30 free tickets to individuals for lunch at the local buffet at 11 a.m.

Sneak Peek: “Sailing on a String.” 10 and 11:30 a.m. at the Lab at Coincidence, 10582 Quaker Lake, Alexandria. Sneak peek showcases a work-in-progress and allow families to contribute to the creative process. Audiences are invited to join in after each performance to provide feedback about their experience. Tickets $4. Purchase tickets at www.actiontheater.org/sailing-on-string.html.

Civil War Artillery Day. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Fort Ward Museum, 4301 W. Braddock Road, Alexandria. The program features reenactors from the 1st Connecticut Heavy Artillery, a Union regiment that was stationed at Fort Ward during the Civil War. Call 703-462-0950.

Story Time for Little Historians. 11 a.m. at the Alexandria Black History Museum, 962 Wythe St. “Why the Sun & Moon Live in the Sky,” retold and illustrated by Niky Daly. Enjoy cultural stories and creative crafts activities that introduce world history and folklife. Afterwards, explore the museum exhibits to learn about local Black history. All ages welcome, but most suitable for children 4 and older. Admission is $2 per person. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 703-746-4356.

Slave Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony. 11 a.m. at George Washington Masonic National Memorial, 2200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria. The Black Women United for Action (BWUFA) and the Mount Vernon Ladies’ Association invite visitors to the 28th Annual Slave Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony. The ceremony is open to the public without cost, rain or shine. Donations, checks, payable to: Black Women United for Action, 6551 Loudale Court, Suite 400, Springfield, VA 22150. Visit blackwomenunitedforaction.org and use PayPal button.

Victorian Pharmacy Workshop. 1-3 p.m. at Lloyd House, 220 N. Washington St., Alexandria. Learn about Victorian apothecaries and make herbal remedy with The School Family Apothecary historic interpreters Kent and Melissa Schud. Includes a ticket to visit the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum at a later date. Recommended for ages 12 and older. $15 per person; required purchase of tickets is at the door for $35, $25 for Friends of Mount Vernon. Visit www.torpedofactory.org/partners/other-partners.

At Belle Haven Country Club, 13000 Braddock Road, Alexandria. Sneak peeks showcase a work-in-progress and allow families to contribute to the creative process. Audiences are invited to join in after each performance to provide feedback about their experience. Tickets $4. Purchase tickets at www.actiontheater.org/sailing-on-string.html.

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The city is planning for an area that is home to many African-American descendants of freed slaves and native peoples as well as Yogaville, a lovely and pristine place of healing and education. The health and their very lives are endangered.

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See LETTERS, PAGE 26
By KENNETH R. LOURIE

Not on hold with the Oncology department today. Not overlooking Twinkle or Biscuit off my writing tablet as I sit and write this weeks column. And not going hungry from the previous Friday’s infusion a week plus has passed so the worst side effect of the treatment has passed.

In general, aside from waiting for my upcoming CT scan on Sept. 26, I am glad that soon I can get on with my life. You note I didn’t say fate. That word has too negative a connotation. And my nature, as you regular readers know, is as a positive/glass half full kind of person. So, as I approach this next milestone, I view it not negatively (as I am sure others would have).

You might wonder how I have come to this realization. I have always been an optimist and a believer in the power of positive thinking. In my life, I have faced many challenges and obstacles, and I have always tried to see the silver lining in every situation.

I believe that the key to a happy and healthy life is to focus on the positive. When something negative happens, I try to focus on what I can learn from it and how I can use it to grow and improve myself.

I also try to surround myself with positive people and to surround myself with positive energy. I believe that the people you are around can have a big impact on your outlook on life.

I have always been a believer in the power of positive thinking and I have always tried to live my life in a positive way. I believe that by doing this, I have been able to get through some of the most difficult times in my life.

I also believe that it is important to give back to the community. I have always been involved in many different charitable organizations and I have always tried to help those in need.

I believe that by giving back, I am able to help others and to make the world a better place. I believe that by doing this, I am able to feel good about myself and to feel like I am making a positive difference in the world.

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