

# FYI ALEXANDRIA

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Alexandria's Official Resident Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2011



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## BE A MENTOR!



Consider becoming a mentor in 2011. By being a mentor, you can make a positive difference in the lives of Alexandria's youth and decrease the risk of crime, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, poor school performance and gang affiliation. Want to learn more? Call 703.746.4506 or visit [alexandriava.gov/Mentoring](http://alexandriava.gov/Mentoring).

## City's Financial Outlook Improves

Over the past several years, the City has made operational and budget changes that have helped Alexandria handle the extreme fiscal challenges that began at the start of Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 and continue today. Because of the hard budget decisions made in the last three fiscal years, the City began with a shortfall in FY 2010 – but ended with a surplus.

Several factors contributed to this FY 2010 surplus, and a positive outlook for FY 2011. The City was fortunate that Alexandria's real estate market has begun to grow again. However, the City also had to undertake significant budget reductions in programs and operations, and reductions in the

City's workforce (a total of 180 full and part-time staff positions in FY 2011 and FY 2010). These measures, coupled with continuing strong fiscal management, will help the City's financial sustainability during what appears now to be a gradually recovering economy.

The picture is slowly improving. The City is not anticipating a shortfall in FY 2012 or the need for cuts to current City services. City leaders will continue to make careful decisions that will maintain Alexandria's long-term financial integrity and sustainability.

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## Keeping the Dream Alive

Alexandria schoolchildren celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by taking part in a Citywide poster contest and exhibition sponsored by the Alexandria Black History Museum and the Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black Heritage. The work of the winners and finalists are on display in the Vola Lawson Lobby of City Hall through the end of February.



Trevon Robinson, 5th grade  
Patrick Henry Elementary School



Emily Sedwick, 4th grade  
James K. Polk Elementary School

## Multi-Agency Permit Center Offers New, Convenient Options

The City of Alexandria's Multi-Agency Permit Center is now offering more convenient options to streamline the permit process for customers. Staff at the Permit Center include representatives from the Departments of Code Administration, Planning and Zoning, Transportation & Environmental Services, and Finance, so that many building, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection system, business license, signage and outdoor dining permits can be processed, reviewed and issued more quickly--many in just one day. A Customer Service Manager oversees the processing

of permits to ensure they are issued efficiently and the public has a central point of contact for resolving issues.

The Multi-Agency Permit Center has integrated many new, online services into its operations:

- Customers can avoid long lines at the permit counter by checking the wait time in advance on the Code Administration website, [alexandriava.gov/Code](http://alexandriava.gov/Code).

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CITY OF ALEXANDRIA | CITY HALL, 301 KING ST. | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

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## “Style and Identity”

The Alexandria Black History Museum is currently exhibiting “Style and Identity: Portraits of Black Alexandria in the 1970s,” which features 32 paintings by Horace Day depicting Alexandria street scenes and portraits of African American Alexandrians and individuals from other Virginia communities. Painted during a time when media still promoted stereotypical, demeaning images of African Americans, Day’s portraits reflect the dignity and beauty he saw in his subjects. The exhibit runs through May 7. The museum is located at 902 Wythe St. For more information, call 703.746.4356.



“Quinter Allen”

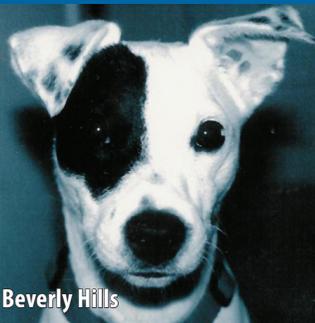


“Ricky McNeil”



“Alley Rear Alfred Street III”

## PETS IN THE CITY!



Pincho, Beverly Hills

Submit pictures of your fabulous furbabies and precious pets to [alexandriava.gov/PetPhotos](http://alexandriava.gov/PetPhotos), and perhaps your pet will be spotlighted for Pets in the City, a new video feature profiling the lives of pets in the City. Look for Pets in the City in upcoming issues of *FYI Alexandria!*

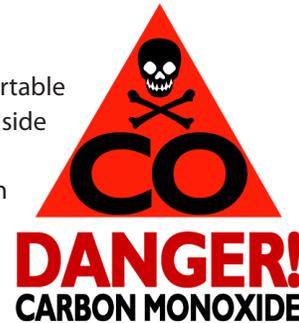
## Carbon Monoxide: The Silent Killer

Winter is here, and as the mercury dips, the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning increases. Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels such as gasoline, wood, coal, natural gas, propane, oil and methane burn incompletely. CO enters the body through breathing. CO poisoning can be confused with flu symptoms and other illnesses. Symptoms include shortness of breath, nausea, dizziness, light headedness or headaches. Everyone is at risk for CO poisoning, but infants, pregnant women and people with certain physical conditions (such as emphysema, asthma or heart disease) can be more severely affected by low concentrations of CO than healthy adults. High levels of CO can be fatal for anyone, causing death within minutes.

Take these steps to reduce the risk of CO poisoning:

- Install battery-operated CO alarms or CO alarms with battery backup in your home outside separate sleeping areas.
- Have home heating systems (including chimneys and vents) inspected and serviced annually by a trained service technician.

- Never use portable generators inside homes or garages, even if doors and windows are open. Use generators outside only, far away from the home.
- Never bring a charcoal grill into the house for heating or cooking, and do not barbeque in the garage.
- Never use a gas range or oven for heating.
- Open the fireplace damper before lighting a fire and keep it open until the ashes are cool.



**If you exhibit the signs of CO poisoning—headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, and confusion—get outside to fresh air immediately, and then call 911.**

Visit [alexandriava.gov/CarbonMonoxide](http://alexandriava.gov/CarbonMonoxide) for more information or contact the Alexandria Fire Department’s Community Services Office at 703.746.5260.

## Financial Outlook, Cont’d.

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As a road map for the upcoming budget, the FY 2012 City Council budget guidance, released in November 2010, includes the following key directions: that there be no increases in the City’s base real estate tax rates or other tax rates; that the City Manager submit a proposal for a transportation add-on tax; and that the City not increase its employment levels above the approved FY 2011 Operating Budget estimates.

City Manager James K. Hartmann will release his proposed General Fund Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2012 on Tuesday, February 8. In February, three budget worksessions are scheduled (February 9, 15, and 23), and a budget public hearing will be held on March 7 at 4 p.m. Additional worksessions will be held in the weeks leading up to City Council’s final adoption of the budget on May 2. For more information about the City’s FY 2012 budget process, visit [alexandriava.gov/Budget](http://alexandriava.gov/Budget).

## In Memoriam

On December 7, 2010, the City lost two prominent figures in its history. **Harold Winfield McConchie Jr.**, 77, served two terms on the Alexandria City Council, and also served on regional housing and transportation boards. **Elizabeth “Mary Beth” Anania Edwards**, 61, author and wife of presidential candidate John Edwards, resided in Alexandria during her senior year of high school and graduated from Francis C. Hammond High School in 1967.

## Save the Date: Speak Up, Take ACTION!

Want to improve the quality of life in Alexandria? Speak up! The Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria is collaborating with ACT for Alexandria and Virginia Tech to develop a better way to inform key decisions in Alexandria – through “quality of life indicators.” Quality of life indicators are the answers to the question, “What matters most to the people who live in Alexandria?” The indicators will serve as reminders and rallying points around which community minded individuals and groups can focus their efforts to make a measurable difference.

Come let us know what key quality of life issues are important to you!



By gathering information from Alexandrians about quality of life issues that matter most, we hope to begin conversations, forge partnerships, and strengthen collaborations to create a better Alexandria for everyone.

Join us at a Town Hall meeting or take five minutes to vote online with ACTION Alexandria at [www.actionalexandria.org](http://www.actionalexandria.org). Voting begins February 7th.

### Town Hall Meetings (SAVE THE DATE!):

- February 16: Charles Houston Recreation Center, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- March 2: William Ramsey Recreation Center, 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Visit [www.healthieralexandria.org](http://www.healthieralexandria.org) for more information.

## Get Involved: BRAC-133



In 2011, and over the next several years, major changes will be coming to the city's gateway on the West End. BRAC-133 will bring 6,400 new jobs to Alexandria when it is completed in September 2011, and the new buildings on the city's West End will be one of the City's most visible landmarks.

Growth of this magnitude brings complex transportation issues that will affect businesses, residents, and commuters. City leaders, staff, the BRAC-133 Advisory Group, and community stakeholders have been working closely with Alexandria's state and federal partners to find effective solutions for mitigating some of the significant transportation challenges that lie ahead. Residents are encouraged to learn more about the project and to get involved. For more information, visit [alexandriava.gov/BRAC](http://alexandriava.gov/BRAC).

## Permit Center, Cont'd.

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- Many permit applications can now be completed through the Code Administration website to facilitate faster processing.
- Lobby kiosks located at the Permit Center (Code Administration), Planning and Zoning, and Health Departments offer online access to permit information, forms, and applications while you wait.
- The Daily Inspection Viewer and Daily Update information Web page allows customers to stay informed about workload management, important building code and fire safety information, verification that

inspections are scheduled, and the results for inspections after they are completed.

- Customers can now obtain inspection results by phone, fax, or e-mail through the ACCESS automated phone inspection scheduling system at 703.838.4900.

The Permit Center plans even more opportunities for online accessibility within the next two years with the launch of an electronic plan submission and review system. For more information on all of the new resources offered at the Multi-Agency Permit Center, visit [alexandriava.gov/Code](http://alexandriava.gov/Code) or call the Permit Center Manager, James Hunt, at 703.746.4200.

## Eco-City Alexandria Green Building Workshops Begin

Attend the first Eco-City Alexandria Green Building Workshop on Saturday, February 5, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in City Hall (301 King St) in Sister Cities Room 1101. Learn do-it-yourself improvements to save energy and increase comfort in your home, apartment or small business. To make a reservation, e-mail Erica [Bannerman@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Bannerman@alexandriava.gov).

Upcoming workshops include Energy Audits for Home and Small Business (March 19) and The Green Landscape: For You and the Chesapeake Bay (May 7). For more information, call the Office of Environmental Quality at 703.746.4065 or visit [alexandriava.gov/Eco-City](http://alexandriava.gov/Eco-City).

Visit [alexandriava.gov/GreenBuilding](http://alexandriava.gov/GreenBuilding) to learn more about the City's green building efforts.

## Recycling Update

Last fall, the City launched an enhanced recycling program, completing delivery of 19,000 new, larger recycling containers. The new containers allow residents to recycle more materials with ease and convenience. Initial results are encouraging: during November 2010, residents recycled an additional 40 tons of materials, compared to the same period last year. In the Alexandria City Public Schools, where “greenovation” and environmental stewardship is now part of the educational culture in every school, recycling rates have doubled in the past year.

To learn about the City's other environmental achievements, visit [alexandriava.gov/Environment](http://alexandriava.gov/Environment).



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301 KING ST. | ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314**

## Snow Forecast?

Stay informed on the latest weather-related information, closings and cancellations, and more through these City resources:

- [www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov)
- City of Alexandria, Virginia on Facebook
- AlexandriaVAGOV on Twitter
- Comcast Cable Channel 70
- Emergency announcements via the Alexandria eNews service
- Snow Emergency Hotline: 703.746.4488
- Communications and Public Information (formerly Citizen Assistance): 703.746.4000

[WWW.ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV](http://WWW.ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV)

## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

### *Saturday, February 5*

#### **PLAY DATE WITH PRIDE**

*Alexandria Black History Museum  
902 Wythe Street*

*1 p.m.  
Culture Kingdom Kids, a mobile cultural arts program that produces children's events with a cultural twist, presents an interactive workshop for children ages 5 to 12. Enjoy hands-on creative arts such as storytelling, crafts, and music and dance activities. Parents must accompany children. Call 703.746.4356 for reservations.*

### *Sunday, February 13*

#### **"PAUL ROBESON"**

*Carlyle Club  
411 John Carlyle Street*

*5 p.m.  
Actor Hugh Staples portrays the life of singer, actor, and scholar Paul Robeson in an exclusive performance of the play, "Paul Robeson." The performance, a benefit for the Alexandria Black History Museum, includes dinner and discussion with Mr. Hayes. Advance tickets required; pricing options range from \$20-\$50. To make a reservation, call 703.746.4356.*

**For more information about the City's activities and events, visit [alexandriava.gov](http://alexandriava.gov).**

## Rec Center Naming Committee Seeks Nominations

The Ad Hoc Charles Houston Recreation Center Naming Committee, established to honor individuals who made outstanding contributions to Alexandria's African American community by dedicating recreation center rooms in their honor, seeks nominations of honorees for a second round of room dedications. Last year, the Committee facilitated the naming of the recreation center gymnasium and pool. The Committee will hold a community information meeting on Thursday, February 3, 7 p.m., at the recreation center, located at 901 Wythe St. The purpose of the meeting is to allow the public to receive information about the naming process, and to provide assistance to individuals wishing to submit a nomination. The nomination submission deadline is Tuesday, March 1, 2011. For additional information, visit [alexandriava.gov/Recreation](http://alexandriava.gov/Recreation).

## Alexandria Mayor and City Council

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Messages for City Council can be left at the Office of the City Clerk/City Council: 703.746.4550. Dockets, video, and podcasts of the City Council meetings are at [alexandriava.gov/Webcasts](http://alexandriava.gov/Webcasts).