Be Ready, Alexandria! H1N1 Influenza Update

The H1N1 influenza virus continues to spread across the United States. Currently, 48 states, including Virginia, have reported “widespread” influenza activity. The City of Alexandria is prepared. Since spring, the City and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD) have been monitoring the disease, and the City has implemented its Pandemic Flu Plan.

The City urges residents to be prepared, too:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze (alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective).
- Protect others by sneezing or coughing into your sleeve.
- When you feel sick, stay at home and stay away from others.
- If you do not feel well, call your doctor. In case you have the flu, this will help them take steps to prevent its spread to others.
- Protect yourself against seasonal flu by getting your regular flu vaccination.
- Get an H1N1 flu vaccination when it is available.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, production of H1N1 vaccine has been slower than expected and states are receiving limited shipments. Within the next several weeks, however, adequate supplies should be available for everyone who wants to receive the vaccine. Please follow health officials’ directives on when and how to get an H1N1 flu vaccination. To learn more about the H1N1 flu vaccine and vaccination clinics in Alexandria, call 703.838.4400, ext. 352.

The health of the City's schoolchildren is of particular concern. An important message for parents, as well as faculty and school staff, is to stay home if they have flu symptoms such as fever, cough, sore throat or fatigue. A person with such flu-like illness should stay home until they have been without a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine. Infected adults and children can still be contagious even after they begin to feel better. Have an emergency care plan in the event a child is sent home for illness while parents are at work or if a child needs to stay at home while ill.

For general H1N1 questions, call the Virginia Department of Health’s toll-free hotline number at 1.877.275.8343. Visit the City's H1N1 Information Web site, alexandriava.gov/Flu, or call the Office of Citizen Assistance at 703.746.4800 to receive Be Ready, Alexandria! For a Pandemic Flu Outbreak, a brochure with information on preparing yourself and your family. The City’s information page also includes information about vaccination clinics, the City’s Pandemic Flu Plan, news updates, and links to other important information.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius received a seasonal flu shot at T.C. Williams High School during a community flu vaccination clinic on September 11. Photo Courtesy of Pierre Paret.
Deputy Police Chief Earl Cook Named Police Chief

City Manager James K. Hartmann has named Acting Police Chief Earl Cook as Chief of the Alexandria Police Department. A native of Alexandria, Chief Cook is a 30-year veteran of the Alexandria Police Department and the first African-American in the City’s 260-year history to serve as the Chief of Police. He will be responsible for the administration of a 400-member police department. He replaces former Chief of Police David P. Baker, who resigned on July 28.

Chief Cook has spent his entire career as a member of the Alexandria Police Department. He began as a police academy recruit in January 1979. Upon graduation from the academy, he worked in patrol and criminal investigations until 1989. Over the next six years, he was promoted several times, advancing to sergeant, lieutenant, captain, and assistant chief. As assistant chief, he managed the criminal investigations bureau, and was named deputy chief in that role three years later. In 2006, he rose to the position of Deputy Executive Chief, serving as second in command; acting for the Police Chief in his absence; and providing significant direction on the police department’s policy and budget.

Chief Cook was born and raised in the City of Alexandria. He grew up on Princess Street and attended Lyles-Crouch Elementary School, Parker-Gray Middle School and George Washington High School through 10th grade. He transferred to T. C. Williams High School, after the school was integrated, and became a member of the historic Titans football team. After graduating from T. C. Williams in 1973, he attended Duke University, where he earned a bachelor’s degree in history and education. He resides in Alexandria and has three children and two grandchildren.

City Council Launches Strategic Planning Process

A major activity for City Council this year is the review and revision of the City’s Strategic Plan, Alexandria Vision 2015, which was developed in 2004 and revised in 2006. The new strategic planning process launched by City Council this year is an effort to update the Plan and to move the City forward in realizing the goals of the community. At the core of the Plan are seven goals that touch upon the City’s economy, environmental sustainability, transportation, education, youth, local government, public safety, human services, and historic and cultural diversity.

City Council will be holding public meetings on these goals and how to implement them. Your thoughts and input are important to this process and your contributions are important to the development of the City’s plan. Learn more at alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlanning, about the plan, and about how you can get involved in helping shape the City’s future.

Welcome to the New FYI Alexandria

Welcome to the leaner (and greener) FYI Alexandria! In an effort to improve efficiency, and bring you City news and information, we have produced this new version of the resident newsletter and will produce FYI Alexandria in both online and printed versions. You can access information about your City and neighborhood two ways:

- Visit the City’s Web site to get FYI Alexandria Online, (alexandriava.gov/FYI) an interactive digest with stories, feature articles, links to podcasts, video, expanded content and other dynamic features (including a downloadable, “printer friendly” version). To receive FYI Alexandria Online by e-mail, subscribe to the City’s eNews service (alexandriava.gov/eNews) and sign up for “FYI Alexandria” under “My Alerts.”
- Sign up to continue receiving printed copies of FYI Alexandria by sending an e-mail to fyi@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.3959.

Let us know what you think! For comments and feedback on FYI Alexandria, e-mail fyi@alexandriava.gov.

Access Alexandria: Follow the City on Twitter and Facebook!

The City of Alexandria is now on Twitter and Facebook! Connect and share with us to get all the latest information about City news, events, programs, initiatives, projects, emergency information, community issues, and more. Follow us at alexandriava.gov/Twitter or become a fan on Facebook at alexandriava.gov/Facebook.
Mayor’s Corner

As the economic downturn continues, the last few months haven’t been easy. And, when things are tough, we all have a tendency to get discouraged. This can create increased stress or depression, which may lead to overeating, decreased exercise, weight gain, and compromised health. It is important during times like these to maintain a personal commitment to be fit and healthy. By staying healthy, you maintain your own health, lower your health-related expenses, and most importantly, serve as a good example to your friends, family, neighbors and community.

Getting in shape—and staying there—is not easy, I can tell you that. It is tough. However, 60 pounds and 11 inches later, I feel and look better. I am healthier, and striving to lead by example—and so can you.

That is why I am asking you to join the “Get Healthy for Life, Alexandria,” initiative, a collaboration between the City, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, MECKids.com, and local health and fitness organizations. You can participate in so many ways—by eating better, becoming active, and adopting a healthy lifestyle. And there are tools to help. The City has joined forces with the nationwide 50 Million Pound Challenge (www.50millionpounds.com), a diet and exercise program developed by Dr. Ian Smith and sponsored by State Farm. The site contains free resources and tips for you to develop your own fitness program. Get started on becoming a better you today. Let’s all get healthy for life, Alexandria!

For more information, contact Carrie Fesperman at 703.838.4400, ext. 263 or e-mail carrie.fesperman@vdh.Virginia.gov.

New City Council Takes Office, Resumes Regular Meeting Schedule

On September 8, the City’s Town Crier, William North-Rudin, officially opened the City Council’s first legislative session after the summer recess. Following his proclamation, the new City Council—Mayor William D. Euille, Vice Mayor Kerry J. Donley, and Council members Frank H. Fannon IV, Alicia R. Hughes, Rob Krupicka, Redella S. “Del” Pepper, and Paul C. Smedberg—took their place on the dais.

In the coming year, the Council will be considering a full range of issues, including economic sustainability, public safety and strategic planning.

Legislative meetings of the City Council are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month (from September until June) at 7 p.m. in City Hall, 301 King Street.
Alexandria and the Recovery Act: An Update

Since this spring, the City has continued to apply for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grants. Recently, the City began to implement five grants that were awarded during the summer:

- To provide green jobs skills through the summer youth employment program and job training to adult and displaced workers who have been affected by the economic downturn: **$184,606** in Workforce Investment Act funds.

- To provide rental assistance, rapid re-housing and case management to those individuals and families who are homeless, or in danger of becoming homeless: **$512,214** in Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing grant funds.

- To make security improvements to the Court House; purchase equipment needed by the Police Department; improve programs the Court Service Unit oversees for the mentoring of young City residents; and to expand training programs for at-risk youth that are run by the Seaport Foundation, in conjunction with the Court Service Unit: **$323,939** in Justice Assistance Grant Funds.

- To increase dental services that are available to low-income Alexandrians; give job training to ex-offenders; and provide utility assistance, including utility management education, to low-income City residents: **$240,988** in Community Services Block Grant (stimulus) funds.

- To train staff who work with sexual assault/domestic violence victims who identify as members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender community: **$36,884** in stimulus funds from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Additionally, several of the City’s partners were awarded federal stimulus funds for various programs:

- To the Alexandria City Public Schools: **$4,106,822** for several purposes, such as professional development and capacity building activities, classroom instruction, supplemental student services, management information system upgrades, early childhood education services, and facilities renovations.

- To the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority (ARHA): **$2,056,530** in grant funding for capital investment in Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects through the Tax Credit Assistance Program. The grant will provide partial funding for the first phase of the James Bland redevelopment. ARHA also received **$1,800,000** to make improvements to various ARHA projects.

- To pay for less-polluting diesel buses for the City’s DASH bus system. Funding will pay the difference in cost between a traditional bus and one that emits less pollution. This grant, when combined with other state money, will provide sufficient funds for approximately seven new buses: **$810,000** (through the Mid-Atlantic Regional Air Management Association).

- To strengthen services at the three locations of the Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc.: **$300,000**, from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Funding will be used to create or save staff positions at a time when clinics have seen an increasing number of patients who lack health insurance during the economic downturn.
Alexandrians Explore the Future of the Waterfront

Alexandria continues its comprehensive planning process to enhance the character of the City’s Waterfront to make this hometown jewel a more attractive, accessible and enticing destination. As part of the extensive public participation process, the City hosted two public forums in April; since then, the City has sponsored a boat tour, a walking tour and a community charrette.

The May 30 boat tour, aboard the Potomac Riverboat Company’s Miss Mallory, traveled from Jones Point to Dangerfield Island. On the tour, more than 80 attendees had the unique opportunity to view the City’s waterfront from the water. During the tour, they learned about the history of the waterfront, including the more than 200-year-old debate on the ownership of fastland (land created by filling along the shoreline). They also learned about land title settlement agreements made between the U.S. government and landowners for many (but not all) parcels of waterfront land as a result of litigation initiated by the federal government in 1973.

On June 24, a walking tour led by the Alexandria Waterfront Committee, went from Windmill Hill Park (501 S. Union St.) to Founders Park (351 N. Union St.). On this tour, more than 20 participants learned about the history, challenges, opportunities for change and growth of the Waterfront area.

On June 27, nearly 100 City residents, business and property owners attended a daylong Waterfront Charrette. The morning began with presentations on the existing issues and opportunities along the Waterfront, and ended with participants indicating the areas along the waterfront they enjoyed, as well as those they wanted to see change, on a large floor map.

In the afternoon, participants formed small groups to develop their vision for the Waterfront. Armed with markers and a large map of the waterfront, each group was given time to create the Waterfront they desired to visit. At days end, each group presented their vision. In general, the groups wanted to see more connectivity along the waterfront, redevelopment at Robinson Terminal North, new opportunities at Robinson Terminal South and opportunities for more active uses at the Strand, such as outdoor dining, shopping, museums, boating, and improved views of the water. The City and its consultants are reviewing this information and will come back to the community in the fall with options based on the community’s input.

Links to the presentations, video clips, and upcoming meeting information are available at alexandriava.gov/Waterfront or contact Veronica Davis at 703.746.3855 or veronica.davis@alexandriava.gov for further information.

Alexandria: A Bike-Friendly City!

In May, the League of American Bicyclists designated the City of Alexandria as a Bronze-level 2009 Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC). The League recognized the City for its efforts in welcoming bicyclists and making bicycling safer and more enjoyable.

For more information, visit alexandriava.gov/LocalMotion.

Alexandria and the Recovery Act, Cont’d.

To provide a variety of energy efficiency renovations at the Lacey Court apartment complex, including new roofing and doors, energy star appliances, bike racks, and exterior lighting: $335,003 in Community Development Block Grant funds.

The City also took advantage of a federal stimulus program provision that allows the federal government to subsidize the interest localities must pay when they borrow money for capital improvements. In late June, Alexandria competitively sold $79.7 million in AAA/aaa general obligation bonds to fund improvements to the City’s public buildings, schools and parks. Recovery Act financing provides a 35 percent interest rate subsidy from the federal government, allowing the City to save $9.5 million in interest costs over the life of the bonds.

To hear a podcast about Alexandria’s stimulus funding activities, and for more information, visit alexandriava.gov/Recovery.

King Street Trolley

Alexandria’s King Street Trolley is a charming and fun way to get around town and the best part is this convenient travel service is completely free! The City of Alexandria’s free King Street Trolley transports residents, visitors, and those who work in Old Town between the King Street Metrorail Station and the Potomac River waterfront. As the holidays approach make sure to take advantage of the free trolley service, which operates along the one-and-a-half-mile route seven days a week from 11:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., providing access to accommodations, dining, entertainment, shopping and all the great amenities Alexandria has to offer. For more information visit alexandriava.gov/Trolley.
Be Ready, Alexandria! Are You Prepared?

Are you ready? The time to plan for a natural disaster, weather emergency, or national threat is now. By having the right supplies; knowing where to get information; and having a written plan for you, your loved ones and your pets, you can be prepared for whatever emergency arises.

Make a plan. Create a preparedness plan, which may include emergency telephone numbers and contact information, and share it with your loved ones. Be sure to consider all occupants of your home or office, and take into consideration those with special needs, small children and pets.

Be prepared. In the event of an emergency, tune in to your local TV or radio station for instructions from City Government on how to proceed. Depending on the situation and type of emergency, you may be instructed to “shelter in place,” that is, take immediate shelter where you are—or evacuate. (Note: You can also receive emergency alerts on your cell phone, pager, or PDA through the City’s eNews service. To subscribe, visit alexandr ava.gov/eNews.)

Shelter in place. During an emergency, unless you are in a burning building or otherwise unsafe location, chances are that you will be instructed to shelter in place—whether at home or at work—and await further instruction from the City. To prepare to shelter in place, you should plan on having the following supplies:

- A three-day supply of bottled water, one gallon per day per person
- A three-day supply of nonperishable food
- An extra supply of prescription medications
- A flashlight, battery-operated radio, and extra batteries
- A first aid kit
- A written preparedness plan

This is a basic checklist; there are many other supplies that can help you and your family become even better prepared. For an expanded checklist, visit www.makeaplan.org or www.readyvirginia.gov.

Evacuation. Should your local government instruct you to evacuate, remember to stay calm and follow your preparedness plan. Consider alternate ways to travel in case all or part of your route is blocked. Having an alternate evacuation route is essential when creating your preparedness plan.

For more emergency preparedness information, visit alexandr ava.gov/Emergency or www.readyvirginia.org. To sign up to receive emergency alerts on your cell phone, PDA, or pager through the Alexandria eNews service, visit alexandr ava.gov/eNews.
City Celebrates 70th Anniversary of Civil Rights Sit-In

Years before Mrs. Rosa Parks took her seat on the bus or the Greensboro Four sat at a “whites only” lunch counter, five brave young men went into an Alexandria public library and staged what may have been the nation’s first sit-in for civil rights. On August 21, 2009, the City of Alexandria celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Alexandria Library Civil Rights sit-in at the Barrett Library, which was the site of that historic event.

The program, sponsored by Alexandria Library, Alexandria City Public Schools, and the Office of Historic Alexandria, included a proclamation from Mayor William D. Euille; music; and a re-enactment of the sit-in featuring third grade students from Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School.

Keep Your Home From Being “Bumped”

Alexandria Police Officer Charlette Mitchell Young spends many of her days identifying environmental factors that attract crime. She analyzes homes and businesses in the city to determine factors that place them at risk for burglary. Residents and business owners sometimes call the police department to request Young’s services, and beat officers take her to patrol areas hit by crime waves. She tells residents and business owners that the two most practical steps they can take to minimize their burglary risk are to 1) trim their shrubs and 2) have “bump-proof” locks installed on their doors.

About 62 percent of burglars do not leave signs of forced entry, indicating they were able to enter the home with a key or through an unlocked door or window. Lock bumping is a technique in which burglars use a universal key to open a lock. “Bump-proof” locks use a complicated key design that makes it virtually impossible for burglars to use a universal key.

Bump-proof locks are one of the safest ways to protect the security of your home and family. To hear an interview with Officer Young about bump-proof locks and home security, visit alexandriava.gov/Podcasts.

PETs AROUND TOWN

Pet owners: Is your pet licensed? For the safety of our residents and our pets, all dogs and cats are required by City Code to be vaccinated against rabies and to be licensed in the City. Licenses are available at the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter, 4101 Eisenhower Ave. Visit www.alexandriaanimals.org for more information.

Got a picture of your pet you would like to share? Send your photo, along with your pet’s name and the name of your neighborhood to fyi@alexandriava.gov. And enjoy our photo gallery of fabulous furbabies and precious pets from past issues of FYI Alexandria at alexandriava.gov/PetGallery.

Autumn Leaf Collection

Each year, the City’s Department of Transportation and Environmental Services provides vacuum leaf collection service to single-family residential homeowners. From October through December, crews drive through City neighborhoods with specialized vacuum-equipped trucks to collect leaves that have been raked into the curb and gutter line or have been bagged in the free leaf collection bags. The City grinds the leaves into mulch, which is made available to City residents in the spring.

Leaf collection brochures have been mailed to residents. To view the 2009 leaf collection schedule online, visit alexandriava.gov/LeafCollection. For more information, call 703.519.3486.

Biodegradable leaf collection bags are also available free of charge from the City. The bags are collected one business day after your regular refuse collection day. Collection began October 27 and will end January 4, 2010.

Pick up your free biodegradable bags at the following locations:

- City Hall
  301 King St.
  Monday - Friday, 7 a.m – 8 p.m.

- Solid Waste Division
  2900 A Business Center Dr.
  Monday - Saturday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

- Charles Barrett Recreation Center
  1115 Martha Custis Dr.
  Monday - Friday, 2 p.m. – 9 p.m.
  Saturday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

- Chinquapin Park Recreation Center
  3210 King St.
  Monday - Thursday, 6 a.m. – 8 p.m.
  Friday, 6 a.m. – 6 p.m.
  Sunday, 8 a.m. – 6 p.m.

- William Ramsey Recreation Center
  5650 Sanger Ave.
  Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
  Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
  Sunday, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

- Mount Vernon Recreation Center
  2701 Commonwealth Ave.
  Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. – 9 p.m.
  Saturday, 9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
  Sunday, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Stay Informed with eNews!

The City of Alexandria’s eNews service lets you sign up to receive information on more than 100 topics, including vital emergency alerts. Messages ranging from news releases and department newsletters to public meeting dockets and payment deadline reminders can be sent directly to your e-mail account, PDA, pager, cell phone, or BlackBerry. Signing up for eNews is free, although your wireless provider may charge you to receive e-mail or text messages on your mobile device. If you already use e-mail or text messaging, eNews messages will work the same way. Contact your wireless provider if you have any questions about the fees they may charge.

Sign up for eNews today at alexandriava.gov/eNews!

Events & Activities

**Through January 9**
**SPIRITS IN A BOTTLE EXHIBITION**
Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Admission: (Suggested) $2
703.838.4356 or www.alexblackhistory.org

Saturday, November 21
**BEHIND THE COUNTER TOURS**
Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 South Fairfax St., 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Admission: $25 per person. Advance reservations are req’d. Tours limited to 12 people. Light breakfast included.
703.838.4242 or www.apothecarymuseum.org

Saturday, November 21
**LATE HARVEST BALL**
Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, 134 North Royal St.
8:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.
Admission: $45 in advance, $50 at the door (if tickets are available). Reservations are required. Period costume optional, “after-five” attire encouraged.
703.838.4242 or www.gadsbystavern.org

**Thursday, November 26**
**34TH ANNUAL ALEXANDRIA TURKEY TROT 5-MILER**
Cora Kelly Recreation Center, 25 W. Reed Ave., 10:00 a.m.
Admission: $10 for Ages 12 and under, $20 for ages 13 - 21, and $25 for 22 and over. Discounted prices for online registration. Visit visitdelray.com for details.
703.933.0520 ext. 203 or email paul@waterfordinc.com

Friday, November 27
**ANNUAL CITY TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY**
Market Square, 301 King St., 7:00 p.m.
703.838.4686 or alexandriawa.gov/Recreation

Saturday, December 5
**ORNAMENT DECORATING WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES**
Alexandria Archaeology Museum, 105 N. Union St., #327
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Admission: Free
703.838.4399 or www.alexandriama.com

Saturday, December 4 & Sunday, December 5
**39TH ANNUAL SCOTTISH CHRISTMAS WALK WEEKEND**
George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Dr.
Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 10:30 p.m. and Saturday, 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
703.549.0111, ext. 113 or www.campagnacenter.org

Saturday, December 12
**KWANZAA WORKSHOP**
Alexandria Black History Museum, 902 Wythe St.
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Admission: Free
703.838.4536 or www.alexblackhistory.org

Saturday, December 12
**CHRISTMAS IN CAMP OPEN HOUSE**
Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, 4301 W. Braddock Rd.
Noon to 4 p.m.
Admission: Suggested donation of $2 for adults, $1 for children.
703.838.4848 or www.fortward.org

Saturday, December 12
**CHEERLEADING EXHIBITION**
11:00 a.m.
T.C. Williams High School, 3330 King St.
703.838.4345 or visit www.alexandriawa.gov

Saturday, December 19
**BEHIND THE COUNTER TOURS**
Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum, 105-107 South Fairfax Street
9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Admission: $25 per person. Advance reservations are required and tours limited to 12 people.
Light breakfast included.
703.838.4242 or www.apothecarymuseum.org

Sunday, December 20
**HOLIDAY FAVORITES WITH THE COLONIAL HANDBELL RINGERS**
The Lyceum, 201 South Washington Street
2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.; 4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Admission: Free
703.838.4994 or www.alexandriahistory.org

**SAV E THE DATE!**
**FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA, DEC. 31**
www.firstnightalexandria.org

Visit alexandriawa.gov for information about holiday events in the City.