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National Night Out 2014



On Tuesday, August 5, from 5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M., City officials will partner with Alexandria Police to celebrate the 31st Annual National Night Out.

For more information about this event, visit www.nationalnightout.org.

Amazing "Gracie"

K-9 "Gracie" has spent the past five years protecting the City of Alexandria and its residents as the Alexandria Police Department's first female canine. You wouldn't know it, but "Gracie" is in a real fight for her life. In November 2013, K-9 Officer Escobar noticed some blood in her urine. "Gracie" underwent a number of tests before getting a diagnosis of kidney cancer. She was given two to three months to live.



"Gracie" and her handler, K-9 Officer Steve Escobar, have worked and trained together since and Officer Escobar was transferred to the K-9 Unit in 2009. The pair graduated from Basic K-9 School in January 2010. "Gracie" and Officer Escobar worked the midnight shift for three years before being moved to the day shift. When not at work, "Gracie" and Officer Escobar continued to train. "Gracie" became certified as a bomb dog. She and Officer Escobar competed, along with other members of the K-9 Unit, in the United States Police Canine Association's Region 3 Dog Trials. In 2012, "Gracie" was the top novice dog in apprehension and obedience.

"Gracie" has defied all odds. Five months after her diagnosis, her energy is up and she is still able to work. Though she continues to do well, the Police Department and Officer Escobar are aware that it is all really a matter of time and they are preparing for what happens next. Officer Escobar is training a new canine to take over when "Gracie" can no longer work. Until that time, "Gracie" appears to be enjoying every minute of her day job.

In February, NBC4 covered "Gracie's" story on the air and posted an article online. Local artist, Jason Swain, saw the coverage and offered his services to create a painting featuring Gracie. On May 15, the portrait was presented to Officer Escobar and "Gracie". They were surprised and touch by the donation, and Gracie did not bark at her painted image, so that must be a good sign.

Hume Springs Park Clean-Up

On June 1, at 6 a.m., COPS unit members Sergeant Nick Ruggiero and Officer Matt Kramarik were up bright and early to assist Hume Springs residents with a neighborhood clean up. The effort cleaned streets, alley ways, sidewalks, and the Four Mile Wet Lands. By mid-morning over 13 bags of trash had been collected.





Promotions

Recently Police Chief Earl L. Cook announced the promotion of several Police Department employees. "These promotions acknowledge the dedication and hard work these individuals have given to the Alexandria community," said Police Chief Earl L. Cook. "On behalf of the men and women of the Police Department, I wish to congratulate these officers and wish them luck in their new assignment."

Those promoted include:

- Jerry Newcomb promoted to Lieutenant.
- Matthew Weinert promoted to Lieutenant.
- Thomas Ground promoted to Sergeant.
- Nicholas Lion promoted to Sergeant.
- Brandon Jackson promoted to Sergeant.
- Jason North promoted to Sergeant.
- John East promoted to Sergeant.
- Patrick Coke promoted to Records Supervisor.

Retirements in Review

The Police Department has experienced the retirement of many influential members already in 2014. We thank them for their many years of dedicated service.

Charles Bailey

Mark Bergin

Richard Estes

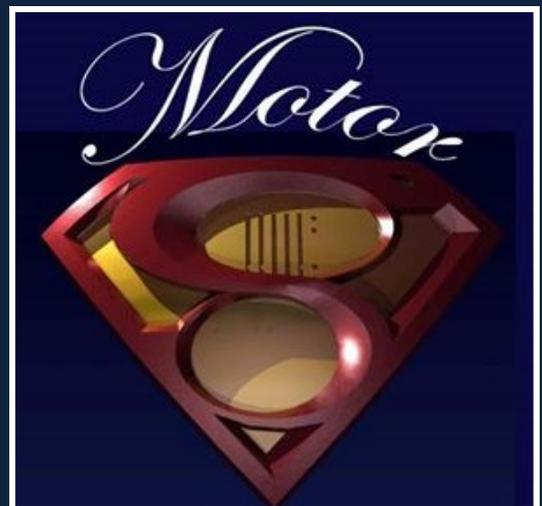
Derek Gaunt

Robyn Nichols

Cleveland Spruill

Laboy Shooting: A Year Later

February 27 marked the one year anniversary of the shooting of Officer Peter Laboy. While February 27, 2013, was a difficult day for APD, we remain forever thankful for Officer Laboy's miraculous recovery and in constant awe of his progress. You inspire us everyday, Officer Laboy!



Homicide on Ridge Road Drive

On February 6, at 11:35 a.m., officers responded to the 2400 block of Ridge Road Drive for a report of a shooting. As they arrived at the scene, officers located two adult female victims inside a home. The victims were transported to local hospitals. One victim suffered non-life-threatening injuries. The other victim, Ruthanne Lodato, 59, Alexandria resident, succumbed to her injuries at the hospital.

Initial investigation indicates the suspect knocked on the door of the residence and shot the two victims when they answered the door. The suspect then fled. Police conducted an extensive search of the area for the suspect. A Fairfax County Police Department helicopter was used to aid in the search. This search caused the lockdown of several Alexandria City Public schools.

Alexandria Police later released a composite sketch of the suspect and asked for the public's help in identifying him. The suspect is described as an older white male, balding with gray hair, and a full beard. He was last seen wearing tan outerwear, possibly a jacket or work coat. The release of the suspect composite on Friday generated an enormous number of tips; as a result the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is assisting the department with agents and analysts to help vet each and every tip. Since the February 6 homicide, Alexandria Police have worked around the clock gathering information.

On March 6, the Police Department received forensic reports from the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Forensic Science regarding the recent homicide of Ruthanne Lodato in comparison to evidence collected in previous homicides.

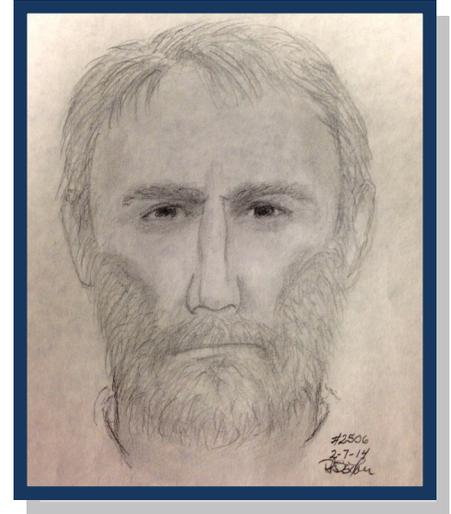
Analysis shows that "the items (bullets) exhibit the same general rifling class and characteristics and are similar in design to evidence (bullets) submitted in both Kirby and Dunning cases. However, the results of the microscopic comparisons were inconclusive. It

was not possible to identify or eliminate these bullets as having been fired from the same firearm."

The similarities and unusual nature of all three shootings occurring in Alexandria require the Police Department to consider the possibility that all cases are linked together. Detectives will continue to pursue each case individually, yet at the same time keep all options open.

On March 14, numerous news reports surfaced claiming the Police Department had arrested Charles Severance in connection with the three homicides. Contrary to these news reports, there have been NO arrests regarding the Lodato, Kirby and Dunning homicides. The Police Department is following up and exploring all possibilities, just as we do with every tip we receive. At this time, we cannot confirm a connection to any homicide or crime.

We appreciate the public's assistance throughout this homicide investigation. We will release information to the public only when we are certain it is accurate and appropriate to release. This is our obligation to the community, to the victim families, and to the integrity of the investigation. The Police Department encourages residents to continue to report information in these cases to the tip line at 703.746.6864 or crimetips@alexandriava.gov.



This composite sketch of the suspect in the Ridge Road Drive homicide was released to the public on February 7.



Police Unity Tour

On May 10, ten Alexandria Police Officers began a 2 ½ day, 230-mile bicycle ride, with the Police Unity Tour – Chapter IV. The APD riders are Deputy Chief T. Hooper, Deputy Chief D. Huchler, Captain S. Fard, Sergeant M. May, Officer J. Hewes, Officer R. Hill, Officer C. Hurrin, Officer D. Minnix, Officer R. Opsut and Officer C. Wortham. Officer Hill is riding in honor of his father, Alexandria Police Corporal Charles Hill, who was shot and killed in line of duty 25 years ago on March 22, 1989. These riders wish to express their appreciation and gratitude to those who have supported and contributed their efforts.

In May 1997, the Police Unity Tour was organized to bring public awareness of Law Enforcement Officers who have died in the line of duty and to honor their sacrifices. Each rider must raise \$1,700 to participate in the tour and does so in honor of a fallen officer. Since 1997, the Police Unity Tour has donate nearly \$14 million dollars to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. Police Unity Tour's Chapter IV, in Virginia, is one of eight chapters nationwide. Their ride takes them from Richmond, through Charlottesville, winding up to Warrenton and finally into Washington, DC. This year's riders from Alexandria Police have collectively raised over \$20,000.00 for this cause.



Lieutenant Jack Compton Receives Volunteer of the Year Award

Congratulations to Lieutenant Jack Compton on his Volunteer of the Year Award at Camp Kekoka! On February 28, Lt. Compton was honored with the 2013 Volunteer of the Year award at Camp Kekoka. He received the award for his tireless dedication to ensuring the continued partnership between the Alexandria Police Youth Camp and the YMCA.



Lt. Jack Compton (center) accepts his Volunteer of the Year Award.

APD Goes to the Aces

On June 5, the Alexandria Police Department COPS Unit invited 18 kids ranging from six-years-old to 15 from Brent Place, Ruby Tucker Community Center, Hume Springs Community, Cora Kelley Recreation Center, and ARHA, to the Alexandria Ace's Baseball Team's home opener. Officer Peter Laboy threw the first pitch for the game and took a group picture with the kids. Great weather for a great game!



The COPS Unit took 18 Alexandria kids to an Alexandria Aces baseball game on June 5.

Alexandria Experienced Lows in Part 1 Crime in 2013

The Alexandria Police Department reports that total Part 1 crime increased by 1.2% or 39 offenses, in calendar year 2013. Despite this slight increase, Alexandria continues to experience historic crime lows in Alexandria. These remain some of the lowest Part 1 crimes the City has experienced since 1966. Homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and larceny increased in 2013; while robberies, burglaries and auto thefts decreased.

Crime Type	2012	2013	Change	% Change
Homicide	0	5	5	N/C
Rape	10	14	4	40.0%
Robbery	138	115	-23	-16.7%
Aggravated Assault	96	114	18	18.8%
Burglary	252	251	-1	-0.4%
Larceny	2,467	2,546	79	3.2%
Auto Theft	320	277	-43	-13.4%
Total	3,283	3,322	39	1.2%

School Crossing Guard Angie Thigpen Named VDOT Most Outstanding Crossing Guard of 2013

Congratulate Charles Barrett Elementary School Crossing Guard Angie Thigpen the next time you see her. She was named as one of six Most Outstanding Crossing Guards of 2013 by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). Students and parents from across the Commonwealth nominated 25 crossing guards for the honor. Thigpen, a Charles Barrett crossing guard since 2006, received nominations from multiple parents in the community.

"She is such a positive presence," said Charles Barrett Principal Seth Kennard. "She often volunteers in the cafeteria each day before her afternoon shift, and is always smiling and waving at students no matter what the weather is. She makes it her mission to be sure students arrive to school safe and happy each day!"



Alexandria Police Promotes Two Deputy Chiefs

Alexandria Police Chief Earl Cook has promoted Tammy Hooper and Dianne Gittins from the rank of Captain to Deputy Chief of Police, effective immediately. Hooper and Gittins are the first women in the history of the Alexandria Police Department to reach the rank of Deputy Chief.

"I am delighted to recognize the significant contributions these fine officers have made to

the Alexandria Police Department over decades of distinguished service," said Chief Cook.

Deputy Chief Tammy Hooper has served with the Alexandria Police Department for 25 years. She graduated from the FBI National Academy, earned a graduate certificate in criminal justice from the University of Virginia, and holds a bachelor's degree in administration of justice from George Mason University. During her tenure, Deputy Chief Hooper held assignments in all four bureaus of the department, and last served as the commander of the Support Services Division over Accreditation and Property.

Deputy Chief Dianne Gittins began her career with the Alexandria Police Department in December 1989. She holds a master's degree in public administration and a bachelor's degree in behavioral science and criminal justice, both from George Mason University. Deputy Chief Gittins has broad experience within the department, having also held positions in each of the four bureaus. Most recently, she commanded the Traffic, Parking and Special Events Unit, which includes a staff of more than 60.



(left to right) Deputy Chief Dianne Gittins and Deputy Chief Tammy Hooper are the first women to achieve the rank of Deputy Chief with the Alexandria Police Department.

Wreath-Laying Ceremony

On May 5, the Police Department and Alexandria Sheriff's Office held a Wreath-Laying ceremony at Waterfront Park to honor those lost in the line of duty in Alexandria. The ceremony is held in coordination with National Police Week every year. This year, Police Week is officially May 11 through May 17, however, many events were held the previous week.



Alexandria Police Participates in Special Olympics Torch Run

On June 5, members of the Police Department and Sheriff's Office, participated in the Law Enforcement Torch Run, benefiting Special Olympics Virginia, as it passed through the Northern Virginia area. Officers carried the Flame of Hope from the Washington Sailing Marina to Jones Point, a leg of almost four miles.

Each June, more than 2,000 public safety personnel carry the Flame of Hope more than 1,900 miles across Virginia to kick off the Summer Games in Richmond. For the officers, it's about more than carrying the torch for Special Olympics Virginia. It's a mission; a serious commitment by the Virginia Law Enforcement community to pay homage to our heroes – the Special Olympics Virginia athletes and their families.

Since 1986, public safety agencies have been pounding the pavement to organize fundraisers and promote the mission of Special Olympics. The Alexandria Police Department has been partnering with Special Olympics Virginia almost since the inception of the Law Enforcement Torch Run, raising funds and awareness about intellectual disabilities.

For more information, visit the Torch Run Web site at www.torchrunva.com.



Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day

The Alexandria Police Department hosted approximately 15 kids today for Take Your Daughters and Sons to Work Day. Command staff gave a run-down of police operations to the kids, but the hit of the tour was going "hands on" with police vehicles.



USPCA Regional K-9 Trials

On April 5 and 6, 2014, the Police Department hosted the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) Region 3 Dog Trials at Hensley Park. K-9 teams from multiple states competed. Thanks to all those who came out to support the K-9 Unit!



Crime Information

Major crime and arrests from February 1, 2014 through May 31, 2014

Police Arrest Suspect in Post Office Robbery

Alexandria Police have charged Darryl Franks, 58, of Washington D.C., with Robbery in connection to the January 10, 2014, robbery of a U.S. Post Office. Franks was arrested in Washington D.C. on February 10, 2014, and is awaiting extradition.

Around 4:15 P.M. on Friday, January 10, a man entered the post office and implied that he had a weapon. He demanded money and fled after receiving currency. No one was injured.

Police Investigate Shooting at North Payne Street and Wythe Street

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a shooting that occurred in the area of N. Payne Street and Wythe Street on Sunday, February 23, 2014.

At approximately 6:30 p.m., police responded to for multiple calls of shots fired. Upon arrival, officers located an adult male victim suffering from a gunshot wound to the upper torso. The victim was transported to an area hospital where he is listed in stable condition. Detectives and crime scene investigators continue to work in the area.

The investigation is ongoing. Anyone with information about this incident is asked to contact Detective Dan Gordon with the Alexandria Police Department at 703.746.6685.

Police Warn of Thefts of Property

The Alexandria Police Department has recently seen an increase in reports of items stolen from shopping carts while victims were shopping at stores in Potomac Yard Center, including Target, Shoppers, and T.J. Maxx. There have been at least six incidents in the past two weeks.

These and all personal theft cases may be prevented by utilizing simple tips regarding your personal belongings:

- Do not leave your purse or wallet unattended in your shopping cart while browsing.
- Keep your purse closed.
- Carry only items that are needed.
- Take only the credit cards or cash you plan to use.

Please call 703.746.4444 to report a theft of belongings to the Police Department.

Alexandria Police Add Two Red Light Cameras

The Police Department has begun using two additional cameras as part of the Red Light Photo Safety Program. The system will work the same as it has the past three years; photo enforcement cameras will capture still images and video of red-light violators. A warning period is in effect through June 30, 2014. A warning notice will be issued to the vehicle's registered owner for any violations. There will be no fines during this warning phase. Fines will be issued for all citations starting on July 1, 2014.

The new photo-enforcement cameras are located at two intersections:

- S. Patrick and Gibbon Streets (southbound)
- Duke and S. Walker Streets (westbound)

Cameras operate 24-hours a day and capture images of every vehicle running a red-light at those intersections. The Department's program is administered by Redflex Traffic Systems. Each violation will be reviewed and approved by the Police Department prior to being issued.

Police Warn of Utility Bill Phone Scam

The Police Department is warning residents about a scam involving phone calls from a person claiming to be a utility company employee, demanding immediate payment of utility bills. The caller claims electric service will be cut off unless the bill is paid within a matter of hours, usually by using a pre-paid debit card such as a "Green Dot card" or "Moneypak". APD has taken at least eight reports of this fraud in recent months. The suspects are identifying themselves as Dominion Power employees, but may change their methods.

Companies may call customers whose bills are in arrears to remind them payment is due. They NEVER ask for specific payment information, only direct customers how to make a payment.

At-a-Glance: 2014 Crime Statistics*

OFFENSE	2013	2014	% CHANGE
Homicide	3	1	-66.7%
Rape	3	6	100.0%
Robbery	31	89	87.1%
Aggravated Assault	41	35	-14.6%
Burglary	103	89	-13.6%
Larceny	1,054	969	-8.1%
Auto Theft	97	99	2.1%
Total	1,332	1,257	-5.6%

*Crime statistics are for January 1 through May 31, 2014, and are compared to the same period of the previous year. The numbers in the chart are raw and unverified. They are not the final crime statistic values and may be changed by our review process.

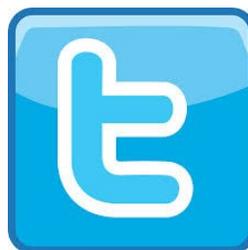
Have You Seen Us?

Want to know more about your Police Department? Follow us on social media. Our Facebook page is online at facebook.com/AlexandriaVAPD. Our Twitter page can be found at twitter.com/AlexandriaVAPD. Our Twitter and Instagram handle is @AlexandriaVAPD.

These social media platforms allow you to follow what's happening at APD from information about crime to crime prevention tips and information about what our officers have been doing. Stay informed. Don't be afraid to retweet us, tweet at us or comment on our Facebook page.



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