

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, Dec. 10
Historic Alexandria
Candlelight Tours
 5 - 9 pm
 Gadsby's Tavern, Carlyle House,
 Lee-Fendall House
 \$20 adults, \$15 seniors, \$5 children
 703.838.4242

Kwanzaa Craft & Game Workshop
 10:30 am - Noon
 Black History Museum
 902 Wythe St. - Free
 703.838.4356

Christmas in Camp Open House
 12 - 4 pm
 Ft. Ward Park
 4301 W. Braddock Rd.
 Suggested donations:
 \$2 adults, \$1 children
 703.838.4848

Sunday, Dec. 11
The Lyceum: Holiday Favorites
 3 - 5 pm
 Alexandria Lyceum
 201 S. Washington St. - Free
 703.838.4994

Saturday, Dec. 17
Holiday Open House
 10 am - 4 pm
 Black History Museum
 902 Wythe St.
 Free
 703.838.4356

Sunday, Dec 18
Hazamir of Alexandria
Hanukkah Concert
 2 pm - 2:30 pm
 301 King St., Market Square stage
 703.883.4686

Saturday, Dec. 31
First Night Alexandria
 7 pm - midnight
 Old Town
 703.838.4200, x210

Sunday, Jan. 15
33rd Annual Martin
Luther King Jr.
Memorial Service
 7:30 pm
 Blessed
 Sacrament
 Catholic
 Church
 703.838.4800

Monday, Jan. 16
Martin Luther King, Jr. Poster
Contest and Awards Program
 1 pm
 Alexandria City Hall
 (Vola Lawson lobby)
 703.838.4356

Saturday, Jan. 28
Civil War Ball
 8 - 11 pm
 Gadsby's Tavern Museum
 134 N. Royal St.
 \$30/person in advance, \$40 at the door
 703.838.4242

Saturday, Feb. 11
Swordsmen's Rendezvous
 11 am - 4:30 pm
 Gadsby's Tavern Museum
 134 N. Royal St.
 \$5/person (reservations required)
 703.838.4242

Saturday, Feb. 18
George Washington
Classic 10-K Race
 8:30 am
 Eisenhower Avenue,
 east of Holiday Inn
 \$20 in advance, \$22 on the day
 703.991.4474

Saturday, Feb. 18
George Washington
Birthnight Banquet & Ball
 5:30 - 11 pm
 Gadsby's Tavern Museum
 134 N. Royal St.
 \$75 for the banquet & ball,
 \$30 for the ball only
 Advanced registration required
 703.838.4242

Monday, Feb. 20
George Washington
Birthday Parade
 1 - 3 pm
 S. Saint Asaph Street
 at Wilkes Street
 (the starting point)
 703.991.4474

Sunday, Feb. 26
Black History Month Lecture
and Soul Food Tasting
 2 - 4 pm
 Charles Houston Recreation Center
 905 Wythe St.
 Free (reservations required)
 703.838.4356



FYI ALEXANDRIA

www.alexandriava.gov

December 2005

A Newsletter for Alexandria Residents

Special Holiday Issue



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Help Local Businesses, Shop and Dine in Alexandria

The holiday season is an opportunity to sustain the City's economy by shopping and dining in Alexandria. Each dollar spent in an Alexandria business helps that business thrive, and it supports the employees of that business. Each dollar spent also adds to the City's tax coffers. This is because 1% of the 5% retail sales tax and 4% of the 8% meal sales tax, as well as other local taxes, go to the city or county where the sale occurs. By shopping and dining in the City, residents can strengthen the economy of the city they live in.



Copias en español del FYI en Alexandria están disponibles en las Bibliotecas de la Ciudad, el Departamento de Servicios Humanos, el Centro de Recreación Lee y la Municipalidad.

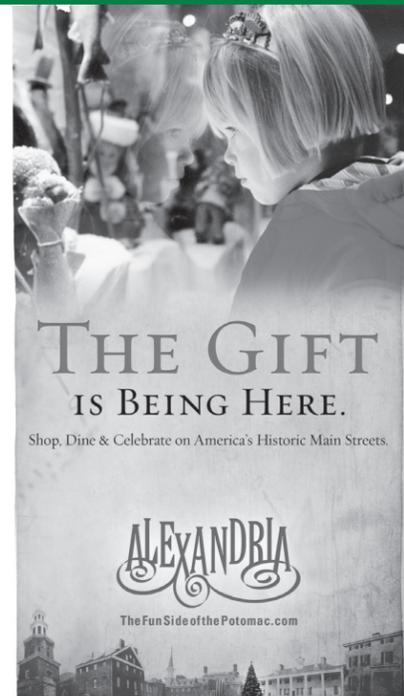
Alexandria's Holiday Season, The Gift is Being Here

The holiday season in Alexandria is magical. Being in Alexandria, whether for shopping, dining or enjoying one of the many festivities happening throughout the season, is a gift that residents and visitors alike can share.

Alexandria's many businesses are once again working with the Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association (ACVA) and neighborhood business organizations on a Citywide Holiday Program to make this season memorable and filled with experiences for the entire family. Festively decorated streets and shop windows and brightly lit holiday trees will invite patrons to take time to enjoy the holiday season and create lasting memories.

Look for holiday entertainers and carolers, Santa, and holiday elves as they stroll throughout Alexandria's popular shopping districts, including Old Town, Del Ray, and the West End.

Metro buses will display Alexandria's invitation to come for a visit as will local radio stations. Local newspapers and online media will carry advertising to encourage readers to create holiday memories in Alexandria. The ACVA will sponsor a decorating contest for both residents and commercial businesses. Voting for the favorites in each category will take place online. Details on how to participate will be announced in local newspapers and through neighborhood organizations.

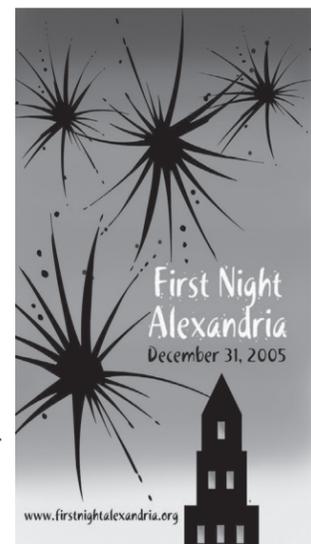


For those of us who live and work in Alexandria, the Gift is Being Here. The Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association and Alexandria's neighborhood business organizations invite others to share this gift and create their holiday memories in our City.

City Becomes a Stage for First Night Alexandria

For the 11th consecutive year, First Night Alexandria will be the City's dazzling start to the New Year. First Night Alexandria offers safe fun and entertainment for families and singles, with 28 venues throughout historic Alexandria and Del Ray. This year's celebration will showcase the area's best performing artists: singers, dancers, actors, magicians, and musicians. There also will be face painting and clowns at Jefferson Houston School, 1501 Cameron Street, and at the Mt. Vernon Recreation Center, 2701 Commonwealth Avenue. The Teen Talent Search venue, to be held at the Dr. Oswald Durant Center, 1606 Cameron Street, will feature teens from around the beltway competing for cash and prizes and a chance to win a contract to perform at First Night Alexandria 2006.

The fun begins with a kick-off ceremony on Saturday, December 31, at 5:00 PM, in the lobby of the Embassy Suites Hotel, 1900 Diagonal Avenue. Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille and City Council members, along with the First Night Alexandria Board of Directors and volunteers, will attend the ceremony. Activities at most of the venues will begin by 7:00 PM. For more information, visit the First Night Alexandria web site, www.firstnightalexandria.org.



FYI ALEXANDRIA

The City of Alexandria's Official Resident Newsletter

FYI ALEXANDRIA
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CITY LIFE

Alexandria Awarded for Chatham Square

The Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning, Eakin Youngentob & Associates, and the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority have received the Chapter Current Topic Award for Housing Choice and Affordability given by the American Planning Association, National Capital Area Chapter. The jury named the Chatham Square Project, located in Old Town, as best in the region for Housing Choice and Affordability. This award honors outstanding work in the field of urban and regional planning, outstanding planning professionals, and elected and appointed professionals who have made outstanding contributions to the field.

Alexandria Black History Museum Features: *The National Pastime in Black and White - The Negro Baseball League, 1867 - 1955*

This exhibit on display from December 6 - January 7 at the Alexandria Black History Museum, tells the fascinating story of the Negro leagues during segregation. The exhibition's 60 photographs and selection of rare artifacts acquaint visitors with great athletes who were good enough - but not white enough- to play in the major leagues. These athletes didn't wait for the door to "organized" baseball to open; they formed their own teams and leagues and played the game with as much enthusiasm as their white counterparts. The Negro leagues provided a venue for black ballplayers prior to the desegregation of major league baseball, which preceded all the major civil rights landmarks of the 1950s and 1960s.

Tickets Now on Sale for Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tours

See historic Alexandria in a whole new light this holiday season! Three of Old Town Alexandria's finest historic sites will welcome guests and open their doors December 10 for the festive Historic Alexandria Candlelight Tour program. The area's premier traditional holiday event features period music, seasonal decorations and special costumed tours. This year's tour will include Carlyle House Historic Park, Gadsby's Tavern Museum, and the Lee-Fendall House.

Tour highlights include Carlyle House's display of seasonal greens and musicians who will perform period music as the house is prepared for an 18th-century holiday celebration. At Gadsby's Tavern Museum, sip hot cider while you listen to the caroling of Singers West (West Potomac High School) and learn 18th century dancing from the Living History Foundation - a unique historical experience you can only have at Gadsby's Tavern Museum. For a Victorian Christmas, the Lee-Fendall House will feature elegant 19th century decorations, wreathing, costumed tours, and live performances.

The tour is self-guided, and the sites may be visited in any order. A free shuttle service will link the sites, which will be open from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Ticket prices for this popular event are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$5 for children ages 6-17. For information, tickets, and group sales information, contact the Gadsby's Tavern Museum at 703.838.4242 or www.historicalexandria.org.



Historic Alexandria Museum Shop

The Office of Historic Alexandria's Museum Shops are offering some unique gift ideas for the 2005 holiday season.

- Colonial Tavern glasses, perfect for entertaining in your home.
- Private label wine for Gadsby's Tavern Museum from Horton Vineyards Cameron Street Chardonnay is 100% barrel fermented and aged in new and old oak barrels (French and American). Hints of toasty oak compliment the aromas of apples and pears.
- An exclusive line of Historic Alexandria Tavern Ceramics - featuring punch bowls and plates based on archaeological fragments from Gadsby's Tavern and McKnight's Tavern. Three sizes of punch bowls, perfect for entertaining.
- Ship's Lantern - reproduction pierced tin ship's lanterns. Available in pewter or antique black, the lantern is 15 inches high for use with 6 inch candles. Pierced on three sides with a glass front.

Historic Alexandria is a must stop holiday shopping destination. Find these items and many more! Items can be purchased in museum shops at The Lyceum, Gadsby's Tavern Museum, Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, Alexandria Black History Museum, and Alexandria Archaeology Museum, or online at oha.ci.alexandria.va.us click on "shop."

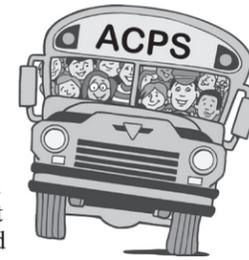


The 12th annual Walk to Fight Breast Cancer, presented by the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Safeway Food and Drug, and Z104, raised more than \$171,000 in sponsorships, pledges, and donations on Saturday, October 22. The funds raised this year exceeded annual totals from all previous years.

CITY LIFE

14 out of 16 Alexandria Public Schools Fully Accredited

Fourteen out of sixteen Alexandria public schools are fully accredited this year (scores for grades 9 through 12 are consolidated into one school that includes Minnie Howard Ninth Grade Center, T.C. Williams High School, and the Secondary Training and Education Program). Each of the 12 schools that were accredited last year are accredited again, in addition to Patrick Henry Elementary School and Cora Kelly School for Math, Science and Technology.



"I am so pleased that we are moving forward toward 100 percent accreditation," said Superintendent Rebecca L. Perry. "It's not enough in today's world just to provide every child with an opportunity to learn. It is essential that we require every child to learn."

Every ACPS school met the benchmark for English this year, which is especially significant because last year the benchmark was raised from 70 to 75 percent. Maury Elementary School met five out of six benchmarks, falling short only in science. Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics met three out of six benchmarks.

"We are seeing the results of an increased focus on curriculum and consistency in curriculum, as well as a concerted effort by teachers and administrators to engage every child. We are also grateful to our parents for taking an active role in their children's education, and to the many community members who have volunteered in our schools," said Perry.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit Is Here! It's Real! Its Now!

- Are you or a loved one covered under Medicare?
- Do you want to learn more about the new Prescription Drug Benefit?

FREE help is available for any City resident. Don't wait to sign up or you may pay a premium penalty.

If you would like additional information about the prescription drug benefit, call the Medicare office at 1.800.633.4227, the Social Security Administration at 703.274.0029, the Virginia Insurance Counseling Program at 703.228.1732, or the Alexandria Office of Aging and Adult Services at 703.838.0920.

For winter energy conservation tips and information about fuel assistance programs visit alexandriava.gov or call Citizen Assistance at 703.838.4800.

Community Wide Planning for the Landmark/Van Dorn Mall Area

The City's Planning and Zoning staff met with community members in October to refine their vision for the future of the Landmark/Van Dorn Mall area, taking advantage of the opportunity to guide the Landmark Mall redevelopment project as well as the commercial sites on Van Dorn Street. The Landmark/Van Dorn Focused Area Plan envisions modest growth in the City's West End over the next 25 years, transitioning from strip commercial areas to both residential and retail development along the Van Dorn corridor, with a major Town Center for the West End at Landmark Mall. The October meeting provided an opportunity to develop a set of guiding principles that will serve as a basis for the Landmark/Van Dorn Focused Area Plan that City Council will review in spring of 2006. Some of the principles that the community agreed upon are:



- **Address Neighborhood Needs** by locating residential, retail and office development in close proximity to one another to encourage walking and reduce car trips. New development should be built in smaller blocks with new local streets and pedestrian pathways, so that local trips don't require driving on major roads such as Duke and Van Dorn Streets. Small neighborhood centers should replace some of the commercial areas to serve residents better with local goods and services.
- **Create a Truly Multi-Modal Transportation System** by building more sidewalks to encourage walking as a substitute for short car trips, providing a conveniently located transit center to connect people to DASH and Metrobus, adding bus-bike only lanes on major roads, and adding a new local shuttle that gets people to local shops and Metro.
- **Establish an Interconnected Open Space System** including walkways and plazas through and along new developments, as well as trails and bike paths connecting Holmes Run and Cameron Run.
- **Create an Attractive Gateway to Alexandria** at the western and southern borders of the area with landscaping and notable public art or built features.

For further information on the Landmark/Van Dorn planning process, visit the Planning & Zoning web site at alexandriava.gov/planningandzoning, or call 703.838.4666.

FYI ALEXANDRIA

Is the official publication of the City of Alexandria and is published bi-monthly by the City Manager's Office. For more information, call 703.838.4300.

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