Independent
Mark Shiffer runs for council

**Former tech exec, professor to challenge Democrats and Republicans**

BY MISSY SCHROTT

Mark Shiffer, a non-profit owner with a background in data and technology, is running for council as the only Independent against a crowded slate of six Democrats and two Republicans in November.

If elected, Shiffer said he plans to serve on council full-time and to focus on schools, affordable housing and transportation.

The candidate was raised by a single mother in New

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**On the rebound**

**T.C. boys’ basketball to reset after another coach abruptly fired**

BY ALEXA EPITROPoulos

Shortly after school started in September, players on the T.C. Williams High School boys’ basketball team and their parents learned their third coach in three years would not return for the season.

The firing of Brett Sullivan as head basketball coach came after the appointment of James L. Parker as athletic director in August. Sullivan had only been on the job for one year. He had been hired in 2017 and his tenure followed the controversial, abrupt departure of Coach Bryan Hill in October 2016.

SEE COACH | 14

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**EVERY NIGHT LIGHTS**

Supporters, opponents of illuminating T.C.’s stadium face off at hearing

BY MISSY SCHROTT

Despite a lawsuit, years of neighborhood opposition and an alleged verbal contract that was upheld for half a century, the city moved forward with the Parker-Gray Stadium modernization project — which includes adding lights to the T.C. Williams field — at a planning commission meeting Tuesday night.

The 5-2 vote to recommend approval of the proposal to city council, was not taken lightly and required nearly seven hours of discussion.

During a public hearing period that lasted until the early morning, a relatively balanced number of supporters and opponents took to the microphone with emotional and often heated testimonies.

SEE LIGHTS | 6

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**IN inside**

**Potomac Yard power**

Dominion Power plan to replace a power line under Route 1 and install a new line under Potomac Avenue has been scrapped.

Page 5

**Pets**

Are dogs or cats smarter? A scientific take on this age-old question.

Page 20
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WEEKLY BRIEFING

Blessed Sacrament named a Blue Ribbon school

Blessed Sacrament School has been named a 2018 National Blue Ribbon School by the Department of Education for the second time, the department and the school announced on Monday.

U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recognized 349 institutions as Blue Ribbon schools this year, a measure that’s based on a school’s overall academic performance or progress in closing achievement gaps in student subgroups.

This year, there were 300 public schools and 49 private schools recognized. Blessed Sacrament is one of eight Blue Ribbon schools in Virginia.

The Blue Ribbon program has been in existence for 36 years. As part of the program, up to 420 schools can be nominated each year. Each school falls into one of two subgroups: exemplary high performing schools and exemplary achievement gap closing schools. Blessed Sacrament was an exemplary high performing school.

Each honoree will be celebrated at an awards ceremony in the District on Nov. 7 and 8.

- aepitropoulos@alextimes.com

Governor to visit T.C. Williams for academy opening

Gov. Ralph Northam will visit T.C. Williams High School for the opening of the Governor’s Health Science Academy on Friday afternoon.

The academy – the first public-private partnership of its kind in Virginia – allows students to begin a career in health care and earn college credit, while simultaneously filling a need in the health care workforce shortage. Students in the program can earn a maximum of 22 college credits through the program.

The inaugural group of 108 students entered the academy in July through a summer bridge program.

The ribbon cutting isn’t open to the public, but members of the media have been invited to attend.

- aepitropoulos@alextimes.com

City to consider pilot program for dockless mobility devices

The city is hosting an open house regarding dockless mobility devices, such as e-bikes and scooters, this weekend.

The city will host the event on Saturday at Judy Lowe Neighborhood Park at 7 E. Del Ray Ave. from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Representatives from companies that offer them for rent will be at the event, and attendees will be able to take free tours of tall ship Godspeed, a waterfront beer garden from Port City Brewing Co., a pop-up Pizzeria Paradiso, live music and more.

The park delay is also impacting events scheduled to take place during the rest of October, including Port City’s waterfront beer garden, which has been reduced to Oct. 20 and Oct. 27. It was originally scheduled to span both weekends.

The release said the new park is expected to open later this fall, though no date was mentioned.

- mschrott@alextimes.com

Portside festival moved as waterfront park opening postponed

The park at the foot of King Street won’t be ready to open in time for the Portside in Old Town Festival planned for Oct. 12 to 14, Visit Alexandria announced Monday in a news release.

The event will still take place at a new location, Waterfront Park and the Alexandria City Marina, adjacent to the unfinished King Street Park at the Waterfront.

Visit Alexandria said in the release that the park won’t open in time for the event due to “extraordinary weather circumstances” which caused flooding along the waterfront last month.

The festival, which is kicking off Visit Alexandria and the city’s new waterfront programming series Portside in Old Town, will feature three days of free tours of tall ship Godspeed, a waterfront beer garden from Port City Brewing Co., a pop-up Pizzeria Paradiso, live music and more.

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- mschrott@alextimes.com
DOCKLESS

FROM | 3

demonstration rides on the devices.

Dockless mobility devices are typically shared or rechargeable transportation devices. Several companies offer them in the District of Columbia, which started a pilot program to test the devices. Arlington and Montgomery counties have also started pilot programs.

Dockless vehicles have been making their way into Alexandria from Arlington and the District in recent months, but a city news release said the city doesn’t allow the devices to be left on public property in Alexandria by rental companies or customers.

City staff will prepare a recommendation for city council to consider this fall. The recommendation will take into consideration public feedback and the results of pilot programs in the region.

City council hasn’t made a decision on how to regulate the devices during a proposed pilot period or beyond.

-aepitropoulos@alextimes.com

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington hosts Seeking Hope and Healing

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge and Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington hosted a day-long meeting Saturday to educate the community and brainstorm solutions to solving the opioid crisis in Northern Virginia.

The meeting, titled Seeking Hope and Healing in the Midst of the Opioid Crisis, took place at Good Shepard Church in Alexandria and drew more than 120 attendees.

Speakers at the event shared their expertise and personal stories about opioid addition. They included Dr. Michael Horne, director for clinical services at Catholic Charities and an expert on opioid addiction; Dr. Paul Niemiec, director of counseling with the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania and a priest who talked about faith in the context of opioid addiction.

-mscrott@alextimes.com

Dave Druitt, a former heroin addict and parishioner of Church of the Nativity in Burke.
Dominion drops plan for new power line

BY ALEXA EPITROPOULOS

Alexandria faces a budget shortfall for the Potomac Yard Metro after Dominion Power announced last week it isn’t moving forward with a planned 230 kV line in Potomac Yard.

Dominion Power’s initial plan was to replace its aging power line underneath Route 1 in Alexandria and install a new line under Potomac Avenue. As part of the deal, Dominion was to give the city at least $14.6 million, which was, in turn, to be incorporated into the Potomac Yard Metro budget.

The plan falling through means the Tier II special tax district facing Potomac Yard residents will still go into effect after the Potomac Yard Metro opens. The tax district isn’t set in stone, though, as residents still plan to oppose the district. The concept of a special tax district has faced opposition since the start, especially as council approved an exemption from the tax district for residents of Potomac Greens.

Mila Yochum, president of the Potomac Yard Civic Association, said the group had mixed emotions about the plan falling through. “We’re disappointed, but we’re also slightly relieved at the same time. The construction and the inconvenience of the construction on Potomac Avenue, we’re relieved on that front. We’re just disappointed because the special tax was tied to it,” Yochum said.

Dave DePippo, who represented Dominion Power at a council legislative meeting last week, said that, while all the information the utility company had in 2017 and earlier in 2018 suggested that its lines in Alexandria were overloaded, a power flow study conducted in July of this year has altered its earlier conclusions.

DePippo said Dominion no longer considers the replacement option, which it estimated to cost $340 million, as the best choice. Instead, the utility company intends to pursue an alternative approach, which involves relocating and undergrounding the North Potomac Yard Substation, rebuilding the Glebe substation and expanding Occoquan.

Dominion estimates that plan will cost $170 million, or half the original amount. But the only work that would take place in Alexandria for now would be undergrounding the Potomac Yard substation.

“Because of that, PJM, Pepco and the company agreed that they can no longer put Potomac Avenue as an option given the $170 million cost difference,” DePippo said at the meeting. “It’s not justifiable anymore.”

Dominion now forecasts that the line under Route 1 in Alexandria won’t need replacing for 20 to 25 years.

SEE DOMINION | 29

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The lights decision before the planning commission was divided into two separate docket items—the first, a text amendment proposal to increase the maximum height of light poles at city fields to 80 feet and the second, the stadium modernization proposal itself.

Sparks flew during the text amendment discussion when the stadium’s opponents accused the city of fast-tracking the installation of lights throughout Alexandria, since the change would apply to all congregated recreation facilities—recreational areas that require an expanse of unobstructed area—throughout the city.

“Why would the planning commission, the city council and the city attempt to vanquish the Alexandria community with the placement of 80-foot lights on all fields, schools and, yes, dog parks?” Bill Goff, a resident who lives adjacent to T.C. Williams High School on Bishop Lane, asked.

City staff denied those claims when Commissioner David Brown directly asked whether the city was intending to “open the barn door to all kinds of new lighted facilities.”

Principal Planner Nathan Imm said that was not the intent, and that each project would still have to apply for a special use permit.

“One of the most logical areas this would be applied to would be in the improvement of existing facilities when they come up for either renovation or rehabilitation,” Imm said. “What this is looking at is trying to say that you can go higher if it provides an improvement.”

Staff argued that the motivation behind the amendment was to ease the burden of lights on neighboring properties, not to harm them. According to the presentation, new lighting technology has proven that higher light poles can direct light more downward than shorter poles, resulting in less light spillage onto adjacent properties.

“It’s unfortunate that this text amendment has been associated with the T.C. Williams issue, where there are a number of other factors at stake,” Planning Commission Chair Mary Lyman said, “because really this is an amendment to protect the neighbors by using new technology that will allow less light to spill into them. ... I think it’s been clear that there’s no plan to run around the city lighting everything up.”

Commissioner Melissa McMahon pointed out that according to the language of the amendment, higher lights could only be installed if the increase in height was demonstrated to reduce the light impact on surrounding properties.

The commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the amendment.

The evening became even more heated when the commission transitioned to the next docket item, a site plan for the modernization of Parker-Gray Stadium.

Staff presented a proposal involving new restrooms, concessions, a press box, ticket vending, track improvements, sound system upgrades and, since the text amendment had been approved, 80-foot light poles. They also detailed the extensive community engagement process that had taken place.

During the presentation, staff dropped a new piece of information: that the hours of operation for the lights had been expanded from 8:30 p.m. on weekdays to 10 p.m., to comply with Title IX, a federal law that calls for equal treatment of genders in regard to education programs and activities.

“In crafting the time limits, staff was really focused on the Friday and potentially Saturday games that are regularly scheduled for the boys or men’s athletic events, and we failed to take into account that many of the women or female events are routinely scheduled during the week,” Planning Director Karl Moritz said. “Title IX requires that we have equal accommodation for both genders in terms of athletic facilities and programs.”

During a public hearing period that took place from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m., 32 speakers spelled out their cases, dividing into pools of supporters and opponents.

The opposition was composed almost entirely of residents living adjacent to T.C. Williams High School, some of whom are involved in the lawsuit that was filed against the city and the school board in August.

Several of the speakers are multigenerational residents of the Seminary Hill area. Their testimonies relied on the history of their neighborhood, the unjust treatment they claim they’ve received from the city, the negative impact lights would have on their quality of life and the binds of a promise to never light the field they said dated back to the 1960s.

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– Mary Lyman, chair, planning commission
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"I’m tired, I’m exhausted, I’m flabbergasted and I’m upset that we still have to have this conversation when there is a promise in place," Andrea Mackey, a resident whose home abuts the T.C. Williams property, said. "I feel like this city is completely bullying my neighborhood, my family."

Regarding quality of life, several neighbors expressed concern about the amount of time the field would be lit, especially now that the hours have been expanded to 10 p.m. Those neighbors said they wouldn’t have a problem with the proposal if there were only going to be Friday night lights at six home football games a season, but because the proposal involves lighting seven days a week, they get no relief.

On the other side of the argument, Alexandria City Public Schools parents, students and staff spoke about the necessity of lights. Their comments revolved around athletic teams being at a disadvantage in comparison to competing jurisdictions, the sense of community a new stadium would bring to ACPS and the fact that times have changed.

“These students need more space to engage in positive, competitive activities that have the power to change their lives,” said Sydney Martinez, a parent of two T.C. Williams athletes.

Martinez said her 10th grader was so passionate about the topic that she had done two science fair projects about sky glare and light spillage and learned that the new technology would reduce impacts on neighbors.

Once the public speakers had presented their cases, the planning commissioners weighed their options.

Commissioners McMahon and Stephen Koenig agreed that there was a need for an upgraded facility, but said the impact on the neighbors was too great.

“The additional light and sound into the evening hours on a regular basis will have a substantial adverse impact on the adjacent residents’ properties and the character of the neighborhood, and I will not be supporting it,” Koenig said.

McMahon said there were several land use considerations with the project that are not being met, including the fact that the project would dominate the character of the neighborhood.

“When I’m thinking of a neighborhood made up of a school and small, detached single family homes, when you make improvements to a sporting facility that’s going to allow it to be used every day until 10 o’clock at night, this to me is going to make it dominate, greatly dominate the neighborhood that already exists there,” McMahon said.

Following Koenig and McMahon’s comments, Commissioner Nathan Macek expressed his support for the project.

“We don’t have a plan B here and we can’t keep punishing our students at the expense of the situation,” Macek said. “I’m persuaded by the need for this facility both through the application as well as those who spoke in support of it. I do think that there’s been a lot of work to mitigate the impacts, and the technology helps.”

Commissioners Lyman, David Brown, Melinda Lyle and Maria Wasowski expressed hesitant support for the project under the condition that ACPS take certain steps to be a better neighbor.

“There are things that are not always easy to do, they’re not always simple to do, but they can be done to make ACPS a better neighbor, to make this school a better neighbor to the community, and then hopefully find ways for the two to coexist,” Wasowski said. “I really want to vote in favor of this because I think it’s important for the community as a whole, but I would feel more comfortable if some of these things were part of what we’re voting on.”

Before the vote, the

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Orleans, Louisiana and New Jersey. He went on to earn an undergraduate degree in math from Cornell University and a master’s degree in computer science from California State University, Long Beach. He was also a Ph.D. candidate in computational neuroscience at Boston University.

Before moving to Alexandria in September 2017, he taught computer science at alma mater Cal State, Long Beach, and worked as director of engineering at MediaMath in Boston, where he specialized in data science and artificial intelligence. Now, he researches climate science as president of the Cambridge Climate Institute, a nonprofit he co-founded with his wife.

Though his background is unconventional for a council candidate, Shiffer said his understanding of science would help him grasp city issues.

“I don’t think people realize what science is really about,” he said. “People think it’s about expertise, but really what you learn when you get a degree in science is how to become an expert in something. If you look at my career, it’s spanned industries, and that’s the case because I sort of have a talent for coming into an industry, coming up to speed quickly and then being able to address the problems that I see.”

Shiffer said he decided to run for council after getting involved with the Clover College Park Civic Association.

“I started sort of talking to more people and looking what was going on throughout the city, and basically it was the lack of transparency and accountability and truly working with the citizens that galvanized me to get into it,” he said. “I’m for a strong partnership between city government and citizens, and the fact that we didn’t have that, that sort of just drove me into it.”

Shiffer specifically wants to work with Alexandria City Public Schools to find solutions to capacity, maintenance and accreditation issues. He said he is especially interested in addressing these issues because of his two children – an 11-year-old who just started school at George Washington Middle School and a 4-year-old who will enter the ACPS system next year.

Regarding transportation, Shiffer said he didn’t think the city was approaching alternate transportation like Metro, buses and biking in a reasonable way.

“It would appear from the policies and the way things are done that we’re trying to force people into those modes of transportation, which is never a good idea,” he said. “You want to improve those modes of transportation and make them convenient and then people will move to them.”

Shiffer also wants to pursue creative solutions to affordable housing that are neighborhood-approved.

“I’ve talked to some people who have suggested there’s this new trend of micro-houses, ... building these on existing properties,” he said. “In places where the residents are willing to experiment with that kind of stuff, I think we totally should. We can change zoning laws to increase density in different ways, without destroying the character in the city.”

While he has ideas, Shiffer said he doesn’t have all the answers.

“No leader is going to come in with all the solutions to all our problems and ... we don’t have that large of a staff. They’re not going to have all of the solutions either,” he said. “We have a city of 160,000 people. A lot with advanced degrees, a lot of professionals, a lot of smart, civically engaged people, and I think part of the thing that got us to where we are is that the city doesn’t tap into that reservoir enough.”

Ming Tung, an engineering manager who worked with Shiffer at MediaMath, said his collaborative attitude would translate well to a position on city council.

“Modern politics is a bit like herding cats,” Tung said, “and that’s a very hard thing to do, but ... there’s two types of politicians: there’s the kinds of people who just want to engage their interested constituents, and there’s the people who want to engage everybody, who want to ... remind people we’re all in it together, and he’s definitely the latter kind.”
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– Tammy Mann, Ph.D., CEO, The Campagna Center

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– Jane Hess Collins, public relations and communications consultant, founder of Heard, a nonprofit arts program serving underserved populations

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What’s kind of a little bit different about him is that he’s a listener. He has opinions just like we all have opinions, but he actually takes in what other people have to say. The best way to put it, he kind of refines his position based on input. He seems to be really sensitive to the fact that other people have sensitivities, and he may not have all the answers, so he really takes into account other peoples’ perspective.”

– Roy Byrd
and the interim, one-year tenure of Walt Coleman, who coached the 2016-17 team.

After firing Sullivan, Parker hired Darryl Prue – a former D.C. basketball star who played collegiately at West Virginia University, then professionally overseas – as coach. Prue was officially introduced to parents and players on Sept. 24 by famed Georgetown University coach John Thompson.

Though many parents expressed excitement about Prue, some are also frustrated about the turnover of the last several years.

Jeff Harold, a parent with one son who graduated from T.C. in 2017 and two others trying out for the team this year, said the turnover has created a lack of consistency.

“I have two kids that are freshmen there now, so I would just like to have some kind of stability,” Harold said ahead of the coach announcement. “... You want your kids to have someone that they can go to, a constant person outside the home that reinforces things that they [learn] at home, which a lot of coaches do. You want to have that person and every year it changes, so you have to [re]build the relationship.”

Alexandria City Public Schools declined to discuss the reason for removing Sullivan, citing its policy of not commenting on personnel issues.

Parker said, however, that hiring Prue is part of ACPS’ strategy of recruiting high-profile talent to lead teams. Parker, a former player himself who has long worked in the sport, has a particular focus on basketball. He previously worked as director of sports for the Amateur Athletic Union.

Parker said it’s important to attract high-profile coaches to make sure teams recruit and retain the best players. Well-known coaches also appeal to parents.

“When you’re publicly funded over a private school that may have more discretionary income to do more things with, there’s other things we have to do to attract kids and keep parents here,” Parker said. “Part of it is hiring high-profile and high-quality coaches, part of that is making sure we have great partnerships with organizations like Nike or Adidas, where kids feel like ‘Wow, I’m part of something big.’”

When it comes to the amount of coaching turnover the team has had, Parker said it’s time to look forward and not back. He said his goal is to build a foundation for the team moving forward.

“We told the players we can’t change the past – whatever happened in the past happened. I wasn’t here in the past, so I can’t speak about what happened in the past, but what I can speak about is where we want to go and what we want to do,” Parker said.

“What we want to do is have a basketball coach that has a lot of contacts, not only in this area, but nationally, that can help them better themselves as basketball players and as young men, and can also bring some clout, so we’ll be able to raise more money for the program so we can do things,” he continued.

Because ACPS won’t comment on Sullivan’s departure, the circumstances remain cloudy. Sullivan was informed that Parker was doing an assessment of his performance in the position shortly before Labor Day and was told the first week of school that he wouldn’t return to the role, according to a former member of the coaching staff.

Sullivan’s removal from the position echoes the dismissal of Hill two years ago on Oct. 31, 2016. Parents, at the time of Hill’s dismissal, told the Washington Post that Bill Campbell, a member of the Alexandria School Board, was behind Hill’s departure. Campbell denied those claims at the time.

One parent, who spoke to the Times on the condition of anonymity, said they weren’t surprised by

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**COACH**
FROM | 1
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Sullivan’s departure, especially with the appointment of a new athletic director. The parent said they believed Campbell had orchestrated Hill’s firing and that Hill’s departure had, in turn, led to more turnover.

The parent said if Hill had not been fired in 2016, they believed the discussion about turmoil would not be taking place and that the team would have been more successful over the past few years.

Campbell’s older son played on the basketball team at T.C. before graduating in 2017 and his younger son, who is a senior, is trying out for this year’s varsity team. Campbell said his sons have also been impacted by the instability.

“I’m almost positive when it comes to the varsity team, no one’s been impacted more than our family. I have a son that’s started on varsity since his freshman year. He has had as many coaches as possible. This will be his fourth coach in four years,” Campbell said. “Certainly, as a player and as a parent, you prefer stability first and foremost. You want positive interactions that’s going to make your high school experience something to remember.”

Campbell described Sullivan positively. He said he found out about Sullivan’s dismissal at a parent-and-coach event early in September.

“I liked Brett. I certainly thought he treated the boys well and I did have two boys play for him. ... They went through the season. It was a tough season, but I thought they enjoyed playing, which is the most important thing,” Campbell said. “I didn’t interact a lot with Coach Sullivan, and then I thought he was absolutely professional and a gentleman in terms of how he handled the announcement [of his dismissal from the team].”

Despite the turnover, many parents expressed excitement about Parker’s appointment of Prue.

“I think change is hard, but one of the things we felt last night is that it was a really good step in making sure everyone feels confident in the decision,” Mary Fluharty, a parent of a T.C. sophomore who played on the freshman team last year, said.

Fluharty, a former employee at T.C. Williams, said she supported the process.

“The role of athletic director has also changed a fair amount. Change is necessary to move a program forward and I certainly understand [Parker] hiring someone he feels comfortable with, someone he’s worked with,” Fluharty said.

Prue, who coaches for Team Takeover at the Amateur Athletic Union, the same organization Parker used to work for, was a basketball star at Laurence Dunbar High School in D.C. in the 1980s.

He was recruited by Thompson to play at T.C. before graduating in 2017. His younger brother, who is a senior, is trying out for this year’s varsity team. Campbell said his sons have also been impacted by the instability.

“Certainly, as a player and as a parent, you prefer stability first and foremost. You want positive interactions that’s going to make your high school experience something to remember.”

– Mary Fluharty, parent, T.C. Williams boys’ basketball
ALEXANDRIA SPORTS ROUNDUP

The Alexandria Times sports roundup includes records and game results for the prior week in two sports per season for Alexandria's four local high schools: Bishop Ireton, Episcopal, St. Stephens and St. Agnes and T.C. Williams. Records will be presented alphabetically, while results will be listed by date.

This fall, the sports included are football and field hockey. We will also be running photos with captions from games and encourage readers to send timely photos for submission to newstips@alextimes.com. We will continue covering games from various sports, as well as running sports features about Alexandria athletes.

BOYS' FOOTBALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bishop Ireton</td>
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<td>Episcopal</td>
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<td>SSSAS</td>
<td>4-1</td>
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<tr>
<td>T.C. Williams</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Scores this week:
- Sept. 26
  Episcopal W 34-17 @ Collegiate
- Sept. 27
  B.I. L 34-6 @ SSSAS

GIRLS' FIELD HOCKEY

<table>
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<th>School</th>
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<tr>
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<td>SSSAS</td>
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<tr>
<td>T.C. Williams</td>
<td>6-1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores this week:
- Sept. 26
  B.I. W 6-0 vs. Paul VI
- Sept. 27
  Episcopal W 1-0 @ Holton-Arms
  SSSAS W 3-0 vs. Connelly School of the Holy Child
- Sept. 29
  Episcopal L 6-0 @ St. Catherine's
  SSSAS L 2-1 vs. James Madison
- Oct. 2
  Episcopal L 2-1 vs. Georgetown Visitation

COACH FROM | 17

Georgetown, but opted to go to West Virginia University instead. After playing professionally overseas, he became a coach.

Parker said Prue would be a good role model for players and would be able to coach them and prepare them for the future, whether it’s in the NBA, in a sports-related career or something else entirely.

“We’re trying to push them to be great. They can’t just be average – they have to be great, because, at the end of the day, even if you play basketball, that’s going to end at some point of time and you’re going to be relatively young,” Parker said. “Even if you make $30 to $40 million, you’re going to be 51 or 32 years old and you’ll still have a lot of living to do, so what’s next?”

Parker said the goal is to make players into leaders on and off the court, and to help them plan for what’s ahead.

Being high-profile is really about being high-profile in your world – that everybody looks at you as a high-quality coach and a high character individual ... It’s not about being popular, it’s about credibility.”

– James Parker, athletic director, T.C. Williams

PHOTO/ACPS
Lisa Willis, a Team USA gold medalist and former WNBA player, will coach T.C. girls’ basketball.

“It’s very important, when you have a coach, that it’s not about the wins and losses, but about the development of the player and making sure they’re doing what’s right, because it’s using basketball, not letting it use you,” Parker said.

Parker said the hiring of Prue and the hiring of girls’ basketball coach Lisa Willis is part of a movement by the athletic department to hire high-profile individuals in each sport. He said the athletic department’s next step is appointing a lacrosse coach.

He said high-profile means different things in every sport.

“Being high-profile is really about being high-profile in your world – that everybody looks at you as a high-quality coach and a high character individual,” Parker said. “... It’s not about being popular, it’s about credibility.”

Open gym has started for T.C. boys’ basketball players and tryouts will be held in November. The first game of the season is Nov. 14 against Potomac High School.

- aeptropoulos@alextimes.com

Parents,

Do you want to see your student athlete in the Alexandria Times?
Send us photos to newstips@alextimes.com!
Documentary details life of SNL, film star Gilda Radner
BY RICHARD ROEPER

When "Saturday Night Live" creator Lorne Michaels assembled the original Not Ready for Prime Time Players in 1975, the first cast member he hired wasn't Chevy Chase or John Belushi or Dan Aykroyd. It was Gilda Radner. By that point, the 28-year-old Radner had made a name for herself in comedic circles via her work with the Second City troupe in Toronto and on the syndicated National Lampoon Radio Hour alongside the likes of Belushi, Chase and Bill Murray. But in the early years of "SNL," when Radner gave us obnoxious TV news commentator Roseanne Rosannadanna, hard-of-hearing old lady Emily Litella and nerdy Lisa Loopner, she became rock-star famous and created a body of work that has influenced generations of comedic performers.

In Lisa D’Apolito’s affectionate, well-crafted but maddeningly short “Love, Gilda,” when Radner gave us obnoxious TV news commentator Roseanne Rosannadanna, hard-of-hearing old lady Emily Litella and nerdy Lisa Loopner, she became rock-star famous and created a body of work that has influenced generations of comedic performers. In those early clips, we see an effervescent girl performing mini-routines for family and neighbors. Radner was a little overweight as a child, and apparently that was a cause of embarrassment to her mother, who put her on diet pills when Radner was just 10. (As an adult, Radner would battle bulimia.)

D’Apolito takes us through touchstones in Radner’s career, from her work with the 1972 Toronto cast of “Godspell,” which included Martin Short, Eugene Levy and Andrea Martin, and her time with the National Lampoon Radio Hour in New York in 1974, when John Belushi called Radner and told her she could be “the girl in the show.” In a nice touch, D’Apolito enlists Amy Poehler, Melissa McCarthy, Maya Rudolph, Cecily Strong and Bill Hader to read excerpts from Radner’s journals. Chase, Short, writer-producer Alan Zweibel and Gilda’s brother Michael share memories.

Alas, we don’t hear from the mercurial Bill Murray, Radner’s "SNL" partner in comedy and onetime romantic interest. In Lisa D’Apolito’s affectionate, well-crafted but maddeningly short “Love, Gilda,” we are reminded of Radner’s sunny brilliance as a performer. We see how easy it was for millions of fans (and a Who’s Who of co-stars) to fall in love with her. We're blown away by her courage as she battles cancer - and we feel the loss all over again when Radner dies in 1989 at just 42. "Love, Gilda" was made with the cooperation of the Radner estate, giving D’Apolito unprecedented access to a gold mine of Radner’s written journals, her personal audio and videotapes and home movies of her childhood in then-booming Detroit.

See Gilda | 21

Are dogs or cats smarter?
Science has the answer, based on raw brain power | Page 20

Foliage season
Take time to appreciate the fall colors and plant more trees for the future | Page 22

October events
Make s'mores at a firepit, celebrate Seaport Day and more | Page 24
Are dogs or cats smarter?

Science has the answer

When it comes to raw brain power, one beloved pet pulls ahead

BY KIM GILLIAM

Dog owners say their pets are smartest because they are loyal, joyful and trainable. Cat owners say their pets are smarter for completely different reasons; cats are independent, cunning hunters with boundless curiosity.

So, which pet has the edge over the other?

We now officially know the answer to this age-old question, and some of you aren’t going to like the answer. A team of researchers counted the number of neurons in dog and cat brains and found that one had twice as many as the other. The answer is ... dogs. At least when it comes to raw brain power.

A study published in the journal Frontiers in Neuroanatomy in December 2017 counted cortical neurons in the brains of eight different carnivorous animals. The dogs studied included a golden retriever, which had 627 million neurons, and a smaller mixed breed dog with 429 million. The cat studied had 250 million neurons by comparison.

Dogs had the most neurons of any carnivore, even though they didn’t have the biggest brains. They were found to have about as many neurons as a raccoon and lion, while the cat’s neuron count was similar to that of a brown bear. Previous studies indicating carnivores need greater brain capacity than prey appear to be unfounded. It now appears that there isn’t much difference at all.

Neurons are where the brain processes information, so the more of them an animal has, the more cognitive ability it has, i.e. the more information it is able to process. Cortical neurons are thought to be responsible for decision-making and problem-solving. As you might expect, humans have a great many more, with an average of about 16 billion neurons, whereas orangutans and gorillas have about 8 to 9 billion.

“I believe the absolute number of neurons an
animal has, especially in the cerebral cortex, determines the richness of their internal mental state and their ability to predict what is about to happen in their environment based on past experience,” neuroscientist Suzana Herculano-Houzel from Vanderbilt University said. “Our findings mean to me that dogs have the biological capability of doing much more complex and flexible things with their lives than cats can.”

Note that neurons are not the only one way of measuring intelligence – some consider brain size and structural complexity for example. It’s also important to note that researchers suggest caution in pitting different species against each other in a study such as this, as different species are often intelligent in different ways, each shaped by evolution to solve the problems in their natural habitat.

The bottom line? Cats and dogs are likely “geniuses” within their environment, no matter how many neurons they have.

Regardless of what science says, it’s likely that cats and dogs are both geniuses within their environments, no matter how many neurons they have.

Kim Gilliam co-owns Frolick Dogs, an indoor dog gym in Alexandria, with her husband, Kevin Gilliam.
Take time this October to plant trees and reap the benefits

By Marty Ross

It’s the season of the trees. After all their hard work keeping things green and cool this summer, deciduous trees are putting on their final performance of the year.

Now, while they’re flaunting their finest costumes, is an appropriate time to take stock of what trees do for us. It is also a good time to plant new trees for the generations to come.

We appreciate trees for their magnificence and beauty through the seasons, but it’s easy to forget all the ways they contribute to our quality of life. A handsome tree in the front yard makes a house a much nicer place. Oaks, maples, lindens and other deciduous trees lining city streets shelter whole neighborhoods and fill them with character. Trees mark ancient trails and punctuate contemporary landscapes, subtly defining our view of the world.

Trees are one of the most massive elements of our environment. In the process of photosynthesis, they remove carbon dioxide from the air and replace it with oxygen. Their extensive root systems filter the water in the soil. Trees provide food and shelter for wildlife, especially birds and the insects they need to survive. Without trees, the world would be dreary and inhospitable.

With increasing urgency, arborists and urban foresters are studying trees in cities, public gardens, parks and the countryside to try to determine which trees are the most adaptable to changing climate conditions, including extreme weather events such as droughts and flooding.

The Chicago Botanic Garden started its Trees for 2050 project specifically to help the garden decide how to replace about 400 trees recently lost to infestations of the emerald ash borer. Of 50 different kinds of trees at the botanic garden, the study found that 40 of the native and well-adapted exotic species remain good choices until 2050, said Phil Douglas, curator of woody plants at the Garden. By 2080, as the climate continues to change, only 11 of the species in the initial study will continue to thrive in Chicago and the Upper Midwest, he said. The Garden’s research resulted in an interactive online database to help residents of Chicago – and throughout the Midwest – make the best choices for their home gardens.

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When fall days turn cool, keep an eye on neighborhood gingko trees. Their handsome leaves seem to turn from green to gold overnight. Before you know it, the leaves fall in golden pools under the trees.

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SEE TREES
New senior living community with wellness emphasis

Brandywine Living at Alexandria is a brand new 116-suite community located next to Cameron Station and just minutes from historic Old Town. It features amenities such as a movie theater, pub, therapy pool and a beautiful dining room with restaurant-style dining. Residents enjoy the best of both worlds: life in an elegant community with friends and supportive care and the convenience and variety of a vibrant residential and retail neighborhood.

As part of their “Escapades … for Life!” program, Brandywine Living offers an array of educational, entertainment and health and wellness choices tailored to each resident’s needs and desires, while their chefs make the fine dining experience as close to home as possible.

AT A GLANCE

Address: 5550 Cardinal Place, 22304 (GPS Address is 450 South Pickett St. 22304)
Neighborhood: West End
Parking: Free Garage Parking
Dining: Restaurant and 24-hour options available
Wellness Offerings: Licensed nurse 24/7, house doctors, and on-site therapy
Contact: Samantha Tricoli at 703-940-3300 or Stricoli@brandycare.com

security and peace of mind in knowing Brandywine’s commitment to quality and customer service is at the heart of everything they do.

Licensed nurses are on site, not on call, 24/7. These compassionate, highly skilled, clinical experts focus on the well-being of the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Brandywine’s Wellness Team provides individual assessments, medication administration, health monitoring and health education. They also provide assistance in coordinating care with the family and the doctor.

Brandywine Living opened its doors in spring and is accepting new residents. Call today to schedule a visit. Brandywine is available seven days a week.

The fiery autumn colors of maple leaves are fall’s flashiest foliage show. If your neighbors have maple trees, appreciate them but plant something else. Diversity is the secret to a healthy urban forest.

Homestyles

A diverse tree population provides resilience, Kingzette said – so if you love dogwoods or redbuds, plant one, by all means, or even three, but not a dozen of them in your home garden, or you risk losing your whole planting. Urban foresters learned this the hard way when elm blight drastically changed urban landscapes years ago. The emerald ash borer infestation has reminded them again, vividly, of the possible consequences of over-reliance on a single species.

Careful planting, such as avoiding planting under utility lines and too close to houses, sidewalks or driveways, will also help ensure that trees have a long and healthy life. It is important to choose trees that fit their spot, Kingzette said. A small tree, such as a fringe tree, is likely to be a more appropriate choice near a patio than a towering oak. Sweet gum trees, with their prickly fruits, are great habitat trees, but don’t plant them near a sidewalk.

A warming climate will expand the choices in colder areas, allowing warm-zone trees, such as crape myrtles, to thrive farther north, but “don’t just plant southern species – plant tougher species,” Kingzette suggested. Turn to your local horticulturist to paint your home?

As part of their “Escapades … for Life!” program, Brandywine Living offers an array of educational, entertainment and health and wellness choices tailored to each resident’s needs and desires, while their chefs make the fine dining experience native trees that can resist bugs and blights,” he said. “Natives are susceptible, too.”

A diverse tree population provides resilience, Kingzette said – so if you love dogwoods or redbuds, plant one, by all means, or even three, but not a dozen of them in your home garden, or you risk losing your whole planting. Urban foresters learned this the hard way when elm blight drastically changed urban landscapes years ago. The emerald ash borer infestation has reminded them again, vividly, of the possible consequences of over-reliance on a single species.

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BETHANY HOUSE GARDEN OF LIGHT GALA
Bethany House of Northern Virginia is hosting its 7th Annual Garden of Light Gala at the Crowne Plaza Old Town Alexandria. Join them for a night of delicious cuisine, lively entertainment and exciting auction prizes donated by local and national businesses. Bethany House of Northern Virginia provides emergency shelter and supportive services to victims of domestic violence throughout Northern Virginia and D.C. metro communities. At this event, you will not only enjoy food and fun, but you will also hear powerful stories about how your contributions to Bethany House help women and children escape from the darkness of abuse and into the light of safety, freedom and independence. You won’t want to miss this year’s Garden of Light. Help Fund the fight against domestic violence.

Time: 6 to 9 p.m.
Location: Crowne Plaza, 901 N. Fairfax St.
Information: www.bhnv.org/garden-of-light

PASS THE PLATE POT LUCK
Woodlawnevents/Richmond Highway

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.
Location: Springfield Town Center, 6500 Springfield Mall
Information: alexandriaradiology.com

OCTOBER 5

CARPENTER’S SHELTER’S OCTOBERFEST ONLINE AUCTION
Fall into the giving season with Carpenter’s Shelter’s OctoberFest Online Auction. Participants will have the chance to bid on a variety of items and experiences for every budget and all funds raised will go toward serving the more than 650 homeless and formerly homeless people who will connect with Carpenter’s Shelter this year.

The auction begins at midnight on Friday, Oct. 5 and ends at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 19. You’ll have two weeks to bid high, bid often and make a difference.

Prep: bid to bid on items such as tropical vacations, diamond jewelry, skydiving adventures and date night tickets for museums, concerts and incredible local restaurants.

Time: All Day.
Location: Online
Information: goo.gl/c79BKM

OCTOBER 6

23RD ANNUAL ART ON THE AVENUE
Art on the Avenue is a multicultural arts festival celebrating the community’s diversity through the arts in the Del Ray neighborhood. Every year, more than 50,000 visitors stroll down Mt. Vernon Avenue in Del Ray between Bellefonte and Hume Avenues. The event features more than 300 artists (jewelers, silversmiths, beadiers, woodworkers, pottery makers, soap crafters, glass makers, unique painters, sculptors, fabric artists and more), musicians (Irish, folk, rock n’ roll, country and more) and food vendors (hot dogs, BBQ, Indian, crab cakes, chocolate bananas dipped on a stick and homemade cider donuts). Activities for children include stuff-your-own scarecrow, paint-a-pumpkin, lotus flower design and weave screen art.

Time: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Location: Mt. Vernon Avenue
Information: artontheavenue.org

OLD DOMINION BOCCE TOURNAMENT
Attend the inaugural Old Dominion Bocce Tournament to support the Prevent Cancer Foundation. Inspired by nine years of working with the Vigilucci’s World Beach Bocce Championship in Del Mar, California, the Old Dominion Bocce team invites friends, family and soon-to-be friends for a day of bocce, great food, beverages (courtesy of sponsor Stone Brewing Co.) and music. The event is open to teams of all skill levels. Please register in advance.

Time: All day
Location: Belle Haven Country Club, 6023 Fort Hunt Road
Information: 703-815-1977

MAYOR ON YOUR CORNER
Mayor Allison Silberberg will host her next monthly coffee, “Mayor on Your Corner,” on Oct. 5, 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., at Clyde’s at Mark Center. There is no need to RSVP and no charge to attend. There is a $5 flat fee for pastries and coffee.

Time: 10 to 11:30 a.m.
Location: Clyde’s at Mark Center, 1700 N. Beauregard St.
Information: visit www.allisonsilberberg.com or contact kyle.heriman@alexandriavi.a.gov

OCTOBER 10

VOLUNTEERS ARE THE HEART OF ALEXANDRIA
Volunteer Alexandria will hold its annual Volunteers are the Heart of Alexandria event on Oct. 10. The celebratory event commends volunteers for their outstanding service to the city. A select few volunteers who have gone the extra mile to give back to the community will receive an award during the event for their dedicated efforts.

The recently announced winners are: James Durham, recipient of the Marian Van Landingham Lifetime Achievement Award; Jane Powell, recipient of the Joan White Grassroots Volunteer Service Award; Odalís del Cid Reyes, recipient of the Youth Volunteer Service Award; Celia Boertlein, recipient of the RSVP Northern Virginia Award and Marjorie Windelberg, recipient of the Emergency Preparedness Award.

Time: 6 to 8:30 p.m.
Location: The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, 600 Dulany St.
Information: www.volunteeralexandria.org/volunteers-are-the-heart

BODEYS AND VOICES: TOOLS FOR CREATIVITY
Attend a workshop for artists who want to deepen their own creative process. Using elements of dance and theatre, participants form a shared experience that explores the intersection of art, individuality and community. The event is open to adults of all abilities. Tickets are $40.

Presented as a collaboration between Local Motion Project and Torpedo Factory Art Center.

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.
Location: Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union St.
Information: www.localmotionproject.org

OCTOBER 12

FEMALE STRANGER BEER DINNER WITH PORT CITY Join Port City Brewing Co. and Gadsby’s Tavern Museum as they honor the anniversary of the Female Stranger’s death with her specialty beer, the Long Black Veil. This special craft beer was inspired by the famous tale of the Female Stranger, who died at the tavern on Oct. 14, 1816. Enjoy great local beers on the anniversary weekend and learn the history surrounding her tragic story. The evening will include four courses. Tickets are $85.

Time: 7 to 11 p.m.
Location: Gadsby’s Tavern Museum, 134 N. Royal St.
Information: alexandriavi.gov/shop

FALL FIREPIT FRIDAY
The weather is getting cooler and it is the perfect time of year to enjoy roasted marshmallows and hot dogs around a firepit. On Oct. 12, there will be two firepits on the playground behind Fairlington United Methodist Church. Participants are encouraged to make your own gourmet s’mores bar with different chocolates, cookies, grahams, crackers, marshmallows and toppings. There will also be hot dogs to roast for dinner, chips and drinks and baby pumpkins to decorate. The evening is free and all are welcome.

Time: 6 to 8 p.m.
Location: Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King St.
Information: www.eventbrite.com/e/obc-breast-cancer-awareness-walk-tickets-50268645873

OCTOBER 14

AREAWIDE! Facilitator, poet and author Ka’Nikki Jakarta, in partnership with the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association, presents “AREAWIDE!” an event that brings family and friends together in recognition of October Awareness Month. Eleven poets and spoken word artists will bring awareness through poetry and story-telling focusing on breast cancer, depression, LGBT history, Muslim heritage, bullying prevention and domestic violence. There will be a short open mic portion of the show. This event is family friendly, open to the public and free. RSVP by sending an email to: greatpublishing@yahoo.com.

Time: 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Location: Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association, 201 Prince St.
Information: www.nvfaa.org

OCTOBER 20

SEAPORT DAY 2018 Seaport Day is an annual community festival celebrating the mission and programs of the Alexandria Seaport Foundation and Alexandria’s maritime heritage. The event will feature live music, nautical activities, wooden boat display, children’s activities, lawn games, beer, food and wine. Alexandria Seaport Foundation improves the lives of young people in need of direction, through academic tutoring, project-based learning and the craft of wooden boat building.

Time: All Day
Location: Waterfront Park, 1 Prince St.
Information: www.alexandriaseaport.org
Union Street Public House

Union Street Public House, an Old Town fixture since it opened in 1986, welcomes back Jeremy Waybright as executive chef. Waybright helmed the Union Street kitchen in 2013 and 2014 before leaving to take on the opening of Bos Shepherd’s in D.C. It was there that Washington Post critic Tom Sietsema first noticed Waybright, naming him one of the city’s top chefs. Waybright worked extensively with Brian Voltaggio, refining his skills as a self-described “American chef, through and through” before returning to Union Street. Waybright defines American cuisine as a blend of the best locally sourced ingredients, with a touch of the cultural influences that make the regions of the country unique, each in their own way. He admits to a special connection to the low country and a southern style, and looks to the Chesapeake Bay for inspiration.

Union Street also offers 1986 The Whiskey Bar, a separate venue inside the restaurant that’s named for the year Union Street opened. Step inside the copper-topped Whiskey Bar and enjoy more than 250 whiskeys, including a number from Virginia distillers in a subdued and polished atmosphere. The Whiskey Bar is open Wednesday to Saturday evenings from 5 p.m. to close.

This is an advertorial.
Our View

Good news from Alexandria schools

There are three encouraging reports about Alexandria schools in this and last week’s Times, two involving Alexandria City Public Schools and one from Blessed Sacrament School.

First, ACPS received good marks from the state in its accreditation process, as 14 of 16 schools in the city received full, accreditation from the State Board of Education for the 2018–19 school year.

The best news of all is that Jefferson-Houston School, which had been denied accreditation for six years running, was accredited with conditions. While Jefferson-Houston still has significant work ahead to get to where everyone wants the school to be academically, receiving accreditation with conditions is still an enormous achievement.

Two other ACPS schools that had been partially accredited last year, William Ramsay and Francis C. Hammond, received full accreditation this year.

Excitement over these results must be somewhat tempered, however, because the results were boosted by the state’s change in its approach to assessments, and this transition year benefitted ACPS.

The accreditation process is moving from one solely based on Standards of Learning results to one that is more comprehensive and uses SOLs as a component but not as the entirety of assessing performance. During this transition year, districts were assessed using both methods and were allowed to use the best results.

For instance, four ACPS schools that were fully accredited last year, and are again fully accredited under the old system, would have been accredited with conditions under the new system: Douglas MacArthur, Matthew Maury, Mount Vernon and George Washington. This means without improvement in the areas flagged by the new system, ACPS is likely to have more schools in the not fully accredited category next year.

Still, we celebrate the progress, particularly for Jefferson-Houston.

The second piece of news regarding ACPS that we consider overall good news is the approach being taken by new T.C. Williams High School athletic director James L. Parker toward new coaches. In this week’s Times front page story about coaching turnover on the T.C. Williams boys’ basketball team, “On the rebound,” Parker describes his philosophy of bringing in high-profile coaches to Alexandria’s only high school.

While the recent coaching switch in the near term does continue a several-year trend of turmoil at the helm of T.C. boys’ basketball, in the longer run it’s a great shift in philosophy.

Parker is right that hiring coaches with broader experience, a wider range of contacts and more renown in their respective areas is going to help T.C.’s student-athletes going forward. The hiring of former D.C. star Darryl Prue, who played professionally overseas, to coach the T.C. boys and former WNBA player Lisa Willis to coach the T.C. girls, are exciting first steps in this new direction.

Finally, this week, Alexandria’s Blessed Sacrament School, affiliated with the Catholic Diocese of Arlington, was one of just eight schools in Virginia and 49 nationwide to receive the 2018 National Blue Ribbon School Award. It was the only school in the Diocese to receive this designation.

Blue Ribbon schools are selected by the U.S. Department of Education for academic achievement. This is the second time in 10 years that Blessed Sacrament has been named a Blue Ribbon School.

Well done to ACPS and to Blessed Sacrament. Your achievements are encouraging and affirming.

Opinion

“Where the press is free and every man is able to read, all is safe.”

- Thomas Jefferson

Don’t forget about Dyke Marsh

To the editor:

We welcome your Sept. 27 article in the Alexandria Times, “Taking a Time-out in Alexandria,” but in the discussion of recreational areas you missed a critical park. You included the Mount Vernon Bike Trail, Jones Point Park and Fort Hunt Park, but you omitted another important one in that corridor – the Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve.

Dyke Marsh is a freshwater, tidal preserve on the Potomac River just south of Alexandria, a natural jewel which former U. S. Senator John Warner called "a magnificent little oasis."

The 485-acre preserve, managed by the National Park Service, is one of the last tidal wetlands on a river once lined with marshes. Tidal freshwater marshes are rare, says Dr. Elizabeth Wells, a retired botany professor. This wetland complex is one of the most significant temperate, tidal, freshwater, riverine marshes in the national park system. Thus, it is a national treasure as well.

Congress added Dyke Marsh to the national park system in 1959 “so that fish and wildlife development and their preservation as wetland wildlife habitat shall be paramount.” Today, it has 300 known species of plants, 6,000 arthropods, 38 fish, 16 reptiles, 14 amphibians and more than 250 birds. Like all wetlands, Dyke Marsh provides ecological services: flood control, water quality enhancement, habitat, fish nursery, shoreline stabilization and recreational opportunities.

It’s been excavated, dumped in and invaded by non-native plants. Because dredging hauled away more than half the wetland from 1940 to 1972, the whole system is destabilized and Dyke Marsh will be completely gone by 2035 without action, concluded the U.S. Geological Survey. After many years of deliberation and fits and starts, NPS has finally started restoration.

SEE DYKE MARSH
**My View | Hal Hardaway**

**Let's better celebrate our waterfront**

Alexandria needs to do a better job of celebrating our waterfront. Many residents may not be aware of the many facets of our storied history. Here are a few highlights:

Alexandria’s waterfront history spans more than 400 years, and that’s just non-Native American – Alexandria Archaeology has dug up a 13,000 year old Clovis point. For starters, John Smith cruised by circa 1608, surveying the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Also in the 1600s, John West built a tobacco wharf at the foot of Oronoco Street for exporting tobacco to England. Trade there led to a tobacco inspection station circa 1730. Note that Alexandria’s seal shows tobacco scales superimposed on a sailing ship. Such activity led to the Virginia House of Burgesses chartering the town of Alexandria in 1749, and George Washington surveying the original lots and naming the streets.

Hometown boy George Washington helped precipitate the French and Indian War when he tangled with the French in 1754 in the Ohio River Valley. As a result, in 1755, British General Braddock arrived at Oronoco Street with 25 ships and troops, to fight the French and Indian War, which triggered the Seven Years War in Europe, India and the West Indies. This in reality was the first world war, and it was rooted in Alexandria.

A suspected warehouse of Robert Hooe, the first mayor of Alexandria, was recently unearthed on the 300 block of South Union. Hooe’s privateers ran the Royal Navy blockade to run arms from the Caribbean to the colonies during the American Revolution.

It’s fitting that General George Washington’s aide and early Alexandria mayor, John Fitzgerald, built a warehouse that is still extant at the waterfront’s epicenter – it’s now the Starbucks at the foot of King Street. In 1790, the first marker for the District of Columbia, of which we were part until retrocession in 1847, was laid in Alexandria.

Moving to the 1800s, seven Royal Navy ships seized Alexandria in 1814, while the White House was burning. The mayor rowed out with a white flag and wisely surrendered, as Alexandria’s fighting-age men were away defending Washington. Otherwise the Brits would likely have leveled Alexandria. These same ships sailed onward to Baltimore and attacked Fort McHenry, inspiring Frances Scott Key to write our national anthem.

In May 1861, Union troops landed on Alexandria’s waterfront and marched to the Marshall House Hotel – now The Alexandria – resulting in the first officer fatality of the war.

Battery Rodgers, a Union coastal artillery unit, was built in the vicinity of Franklin Street. It was constructed to prevent Confederate Navy ironclads from sailing up the Potomac and attacking Washington. The United States Military Railroad barge/

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The opinions expressed in letters and columns are those of the writers only and do not reflect the views, nor receive the endorsement, of the Alexandria Times.
October is archaeology month

Each October, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources sponsors archaeology month to raise awareness about the Commonwealth’s rich archaeological sites and collections. During the month, Virginia celebrates local archaeology with public events at libraries, museums, historical societies, clubs and active archaeological sites. These events serve to enhance public appreciation for Virginia’s diverse heritage on both land and water.

This year’s statewide theme highlights “Shipwrecks and Archaeology in Virginia’s Waterways” – fitting given the recent archaeological discoveries on Alexandria’s historic waterfront. While not technically shipwrecks, in the past three years archaeologists on contract with developers have uncovered the remains of four ship hulls used as part of the land-making process along the Potomac River during the late 18th- and 19th-century.

Think of the four ships like a foundation on which the city is built. Additionally, the remains of wharves, warehouses, dwellings, industries, privies and thousands of artifacts have emerged from the waterlogged depths at the river’s edge.

The City of Alexandria is built upon its past. The ground beneath modern Alexandria is a record of this past and contains an array of archaeological sites, features and artifacts. Recognizing the importance and uniqueness of these historic resources, the City of Alexandria passed an Archaeological Protection Code nearly 30 years ago. This has enabled the recovery of information about Alexandria’s history and the preservation of sites that otherwise would have been lost, that span thousands of years of human occupation.

Alexandria Archaeology now manages more than 2,000,000 artifacts collected from more than 200 archaeological sites scattered across the city. Celebrate archaeology month with a stop by the Alexandria Archaeology Museum, on the third floor of the Torpedo Factory, to learn more about the city’s maritime heritage and archaeology events taking place this month.

Out of the Attic is provided by the Office of Historic Alexandria.

**Weekly Poll**

**Last Week**

What piece of the Alexandria City Public Schools accreditation news do you think is most significant?

- **35%** - Jefferson-Houston’s accreditation conditions
- **28%** - William Ramsay and Francis C. Hammond’s full accreditation
- **28%** - The Virginia Department of Education’s new accreditation system
- **8%** - Other

**This Week**

Should city council pass a text amendment that allows lights of up to 80 feet in city parks?

- **A) Yes**
- **B) No**
- **C) I don’t know**

Take the poll at alextimes.com
DOMINION

While the majority of council members responded positively to the plan not moving forward due to the disruption it was anticipated to cause, some worried about how to explain the abrupt change to residents or if Dominion Power would reverse its decision again.

“I have to go back to residents, especially in Potomac Yard, as we’ve prepared them for all this digging, everything that’s going to happen, to now say that’s not going to happen, yes, people may be happy with that, but people are also going to be annoyed with me, because I’ve given them the message that the sky is falling and now it’s not falling and they’ve gone out and prepared themselves for that,” Councilor John Chapman said.

DePippo said power flow changed significantly as two generating units at Possum Point Power Station to the south in Dumfries were slated to go offline. The decision to decommission the units changed PJM’s annual power flow model between 2017 and 2018 and this year’s model showed no overloads in Alexandria and, therefore, no need to replace the line now or in the near future.

“The impact of that on the lines, in terms of the amount of load they can handle, has changed dramatically. So they now have a lot of headroom. ... In 2017, it had no headroom, it was over 100 percent,” DePippo said.

DePippo said that in 2017 it was impossible to know about Possum Point’s potential closure. He said the transmission side of Dominion Energy didn’t find out about Possum Point’s closure until the rest of the public did due to state laws that prohibit communication between the distribution, transmission and generation sides of the utility business.

“The generation side cannot talk to the transmission side – we’re functionally separate, on our computers, emails, in our meetings. We’re not allowed to meet and talk about certain things,” DePippo said.

Mayor Allison Silberberg and Councillor Del Pepper expressed concerns that Dominion Energy decision makers might change their minds once again.

“While I’m relieved [since] this has caused such a stir throughout the community – it was very upsetting to a number of people – and we will have to figure out this $14.6 million shortfall, but in terms of relief, it still does beg the question, [Dominion’s] basic argument was ‘We must have more power. We must have more energy,’” Silberberg said.

DePippo said, while there has been growth in the area and an uptick in the amount of energy used, Possum Point’s projected decommissioning is now expected to fix the overloading problem.

“We kept saying you needed more power to be reliable and certainly the load forecast shows you have growth, but the real point is it was because we had lines that were overloaded. ... It’s not that you needed more – you needed more ways to get it there. Your freeways were blocked,” DePippo said. “... With this change, and having Possum Point resources moved away, it relieved the congestion for this area.”

Vice Mayor Justin Wilson also expressed concern that the issue might crop up again. He asked, if Dominion proceeds with the rebuild option rather than the reconstruction option, would there be outstanding concerns that would need addressing in the future.

DePippo said there would be outstanding issues, but they would be neither in the purview of the City of Alexandria or Dominion Energy.

City Manager Mark Jinks said he plans to develop a recommendation on how to bridge the funding gap for the Potomac Yard Metro by the end of the year. The station’s redesign is also slated to come in front of the planning commission and city council by the end of the year.

Yochum said Potomac Yard Civic Association members have a meeting with city staff at the end of the week to discuss other options to eliminate the special tax district. She said the group is working to see the removal of the district through.

“We will try our best to eliminate it. It’s one of the reasons Potomac Yard Civic Association have mobilized because, as a city, it should be fair and the fact that there is a tax on a community, it’s not fair,” Yochum said.

- ae@pitpoulos@alextimes.com

DYKE MARSH

DYKE MARSH FROM | 26

Dyke Marsh is “the nearest thing to primeval wilderness in the immediate vicinity of the city,” wrote naturalist Louis Halle in 1947. Northern Virginians can enjoy a little slice of wilderness daily for free. Fall is an opportune time to observe many birds migrating through or arriving for the winter.

Because the federal government had the foresight to save it and locals tenaciously advocated for its survival, Dyke Marsh, while injured, has not fallen prey to the bulldozer and asphalt spreader. Visit www.fodm.org and www.nps.gov/gwmp to learn more.

-Glenda Booth, president, Friends of Dyke Marsh

OBSERVATION

OCTOBER 4, 2018 | 29

Obituary

Paul E. Gatza

Paul E. Gatza of Alexandria passed away Sept. 9, 2018 while traveling in Romania. Loving husband to the late Anne (Mellor) Gatza and uncle to beloved nieces and nephews. He enjoyed visiting with family and friends, traveling the world, playing the concertina and building miniature models. Paul was a material engineer for the U.S. Army’s research laboratory at Ft. Belvoir, retiring in 1997. He worked with the American Society for Testing and Materials, receiving the Distinguished Service Award in 1999. His positive spirit and caring, compassionate nature will be missed by all who knew him. A service celebrating his life is planned for later this year in Alexandria. Memorial contributions can be made to one of his favorite charities, ALIVE Inc.
Week Words

31. Red gem
33. Soil
35. Caped Lugosi of horror
36. Historic Hun
37. Devoid of vegetation
38. Apply blessed oil to
40. They make muddy beds
42. “Bye” somewhere
44. Winter coat
45. Kelly Clarkson was the first
46. Many, many years on end
48. Sudden powerful wind
50. Heavy-hitting-soft sounds
51. Type of boom
53. Funny lady Tracey
54. Heretofore
57. Rose protector
58. It’s in Kansas
59. Wasn’t behind a leader?
65. They’re all grown up
67. Part of a staircase
70. Come after
72. Not fitting a purpose
73. Saint ___ of the Caribbean
75. Chore to restart a lawn
76. Emulated a hungry cougar
77. Least possible
78. “Who ___ to judge?”
79. Relating to public worship
81. Travels all over the place
83. Room 204 and 205 separator?
84. Sealed tightly
85. Cut back, as staff
86. Landed on the ground
88. Sprinter’s stat
92. Jenny’s sound
93. Hawaiian tourist gifts
94. “Weeping” tree
95. Natural healing plant
101. Fix anew
103. “___ Mr. Nice Guy!”
105. Bringer, as of good tidings
108. Intestinal obstruction
109. Way up in an atlas?
111. Said twice, a western U.S. city
112. Hearty meat entree
114. Mountain feature
115. Mimicking one
116. Place drones move about
117. ___ out a victory
118. Ms. Lane of comics
120. View through binoculars
123. Work a checkout
124. God Almighty's position
125. Whirling water
127. Hawaiian food staple
128. ___ Pedro
129. Food scrap

I CAUGHT 15 FISH

By Timothy E. Parker

ACROSS
1. Be able to buy
7. Bested
13. Provider of finger foods
20. Ritzy evening affair
21. Melodic, in music
22. Go beyond worrying
23. Four fish
26. Singer Cara
27. Electric company measurement
28. Seating level with bleachers
29. “Unfortunately for me”
30. Long-nosed fishes
32. Run, as a committee
34. Chesapeake Bay yield
36. NBA rival, once
39. Unsympathetic sounds
41. Puerto __
43. Likely to creep you out
47. Salsa quality
49. Fargo screen travelers
52. Yearly ceremony, e.g.
55. Altar declaration
56. Three fish
59. Unsympathetic sounds
61. Collette or Duggan
64. Three fish
68. Termite’s kin
71. Synagogue (var.)
75. Dashboard meas.
76. Gordon of the major leagues
77. Regatta tools
78. Dickens character Heep
80. Wee bit of color
81. Impromptu bookmark
82. Termite’s kin
87. Terse command
89. Agents
90. Termite’s kin
91. Suffix with organ
92. Termite’s kin
93. Microwave job
94. “I can’t complain”
95. Three fish
96. Canton in security?
97. Two Declaration of Independence signers
98. Type of great ape
100. Prefix meaning 2-Down
102. Horse controller
104. U-turn from neatnik
106. EPA-banned insecticide
107. Taking visual notice
109. Miss Piggies?
110. Unobtrusive attention-getter
111. Look at with beady eyes
112. Usd a new marriage
113. Look at with beady eyes
114. In for the moment
115. Terse command
116. Unobtrusive attention-getter
117. Prefix meaning 2-Down
118. Ms. Lane of comics
119. Unobtrusive attention-getter
120. San ___, Calif.
122. Place to wheel a cart
124. Steal cattle off a ranch
125. Whirling water
126. Make text corrections
128. ___ Pedro
129. Food scrap
130. Make more balanced
131. Winter cap feature
132. Hold in high ___
133. Bury ashes in a vase
134. Shelled snack
135. Said twice, a western U.S. city
136. Wily and tiptoeing
137. Into the moment
138. Bury ashes in a vase

DOWN
1. Spot of wine?
2. Gettysburg Address starter
3. “I can’t complain”
4. Type of great ape
5. Microwave job
6. Gordon of the major leagues
7. Regatta tools
8. Dickens character Heep
9. Wee bit of color
10. Impromptu bookmark
11. Suffix with organ
12. Terse command
13. Chair weaver
14. Old Greek meeting place
15. Help off the road?
16. Protect, as in glass
17. Iranian spendable
18. Pound or Cornell
19. Agents
20. Prefix meaning 2-Down
21. Horse controller
22. U-turn from neatnik
23. EPA-banned insecticide
24. Taking visual notice
25. Miss Piggies?
26. Termite’s kin
27. Two Declaration of Independence signers
28. Horse controller
29. U-turn from neatnik
30. EPA-banned insecticide
31. Spot of wine?
32. Horse controller
33. Termite’s kin
34. Two Declaration of Independence signers
35. Termite’s kin
36. Two Declaration of Independence signers
46. Many, many years on end
71. Synagogue (var.)
77. Spot of wine?
78. Horse controller
79. Spot of wine?
81. Spot of wine?
87. Spot of wine?
89. Spot of wine?
92. Spot of wine?
96. Spot of wine?
97. Spot of wine?
98. Spot of wine?
October 10, 2018. If necessary, GC”, on or before 3:00 p.m. on "ITB NO. 190905 MV Roof via email with the notation, All questions must be submitted site visit following.

The pre-bid conference will take place in the 6th floor conference room 610-2, with a 3:00 p.m. on October 15, 2018. The time of receipt shall be determined by the system time stamp in the Vendor Self-Service. Any bids received after that date and time shall not be considered. MAILED OR HAND-DELIVERED PAPER BIDS SHALL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Offerors submitting electronic bids in Vendor Self- Service should also send (1) original response on a USB flash-drive, labeled as “ITB 190905, MV Roof GC” on or before 3:00 p.m. on October 15, 2018 to Financial Services Department/Procurement Office, 1340 Braddock Place, Suite 620, Alexandria, Virginia.

ITB documents may be obtained at the above Procurement Office website at https://www.acps.k12.va.us/ purchasing. Registration on the Vendor Self Service system at https://acps.munisselfservice.com/ is required.

Meloni Hurley Acting Director of Procurement

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING DEPARTMENT NOTICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

The following request has been received for administrative review and approval. For information about this application or to comment, visit the City’s website at www. alexandriava.gov/planning or call (703) 746-4666.

Special Use Permit #2018-0099

1320 Prince Street – Proposed Business: Restaurant Request for a new administrative Special Use Permit for a restaurant; zoned CL/ Commercial Low Zone APPLICANT: Whitney & Jason Langone PLANNER: Ann Horowitz-ann.horowitz@alexandriava.gov

In accordance with section 11-500 of the zoning ordinance, the above listed request may be approved administratively by the Director of Planning and Zoning. If you have any comments regarding the proposal above, please contact Planning and Zoning staff at 703.746.4666 or email the planner listed no later than October 25, 2018

Alexandria Board of Architectural Review Old & Historic Alexandria District

LEGAL NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing will be held by the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review on WEDNESDAY, October 17, 2018 beginning at 7:30 PM in the City Hall Council Chambers, second floor of City Hall, 301 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia on the following applications:

BAR #2018-00352 Request for new construction at 1101 North Washington Street Applicant: Toll Mid-Atlantic LP Company, INC

BAR #2018-00420 Request for alterations at 325 Queen Street Applicant: Michael C. Maibach

BAR #2018-00422 Request for alterations at 414 Duke Street (Parcel Address 412 Duke Street) Applicants: Tom Danby & Laura Machanic

BAR #2018-00425 Request for alterations at 731 Bernard Street Applicants: Daniel & Robin Troutman

An informational presentation by staff on the status of the Potomac Yard Metro station. Information about the above item(s) may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Zoning, City Hall, 301 King Street Room 2100, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, or at www. alexandriava.gov/dockets.

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FOR SALE

BANNISTERS FOR SALE $300.00. Brenda R. Adams 703-622-3017

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**103 Franklin Street | $1,119,000**
Stunning renovation of this brick townhouse with garage and driveway parking! Features include stylish kitchen with separate wet/coffee bar, open concept main level with generous natural light, large bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms, two wood-burning fireplaces, expertly finished garage space for parking/storage. Unbeatable location near parks, river, trails and shopping/dining on King Street.

**514 Tobacco Quay | $672,500**
This beautifully renovated 2-bedroom, 2-bath townhouse is located in a quaint, private community just a block and a half from the Potomac river and four blocks to shopping and dining on King Street. Lovely back patio, open floor plan, wood-burning fireplace, natural light, hardwood flooring throughout and assigned parking! Large attic with ample storage and potential for future expansion.

Lauren Bishop
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LaurenBishopHomes.com
109 S Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314