Happy Holidays
and a Peaceful New Year!
– From Christine Roland Garner

**Beverly Hills**

$964,900
Spacious 4 bedroom, 2.5 bath Arts & Crafts home with a fabulous Great Room and Master Suite addition, 2 fireplaces and 3 finished levels. Fenced yard with deck, patio, mature landscaping and off street parking.

**Beverly Hills**

$974,900
Spacious 4/5 bedroom, 4 bath home with a fabulous Great Room and Master Suite addition with over 3,100 sq ft of living space. Gourmet kitchen, breakfast room and home office. Custom built-ins throughout, rooftop deck & rear stairs. Lower level recreation room, fenced yard with wrap around deck and off street parking.

**Rosemont**

$717,000
Deceivingly spacious 3 bedroom, 2 bath brick home ideally located blocks from METRO, Old Town and Del Ray! Light filled living room with fireplace & formal dining room. Updated kitchen with granite counters. Three main level bedrooms & updated bath. Huge finished lower level with access to the lovely fenced yard.

**Mt. Vernon Grove**

$524,000
Awesome opportunity! Spacious 5 bedroom, 2.5 bath home on over 1/3 acres across from the Mansion House Swim and Tennis Club. Generous room sizes, 2 wood burning fireplaces, main level family room and recently finished lower level with high ceilings. Upper level with 5 bedrooms including a Master Suite with sitting room and fireplace. Hardwood floors, attached garage and lots of potential.

**Seminary**

$550,000
Wonderfully updated and surprisingly spacious 5 bedroom, 3 bath home with a new kitchen, 3 season sunroom and 3 finished levels. Beautiful yard, (approx. 10,000 sq ft) with patio & off street parking. Close-in neighborhood just minutes to Old Town, Arlington & D.C.

**Belle Haven**

$749,000
Beautiful 4 bedroom, 3 bath home situated on a quiet cul-de-sac. Spacious living room with fireplace & formal dining room with French doors to the family room. Home office with custom built-ins and bay window. Three main level bedrooms including a Master Suite plus a 2nd Master Suite on the 2nd floor with a sitting room!

**Sherwood Forest**

$499,000
Spacious 4 bedroom, 3 bath home with attached garage convenient to Old Town & Ft Belvior. Open floor plan with lots of light, gleaming hardwoods and new windows! Kitchen with granite breakfast bar, ample counter & cabinet space! Lower level family room with fireplace, full bath & 2 bedrooms has access to the large fenced yard.

**Fairfax Homes**

$349,000
Charming 4 bedroom, 2 bath rambler on nearly 1/2 acre close to shopping & restaurants in Kingstowne & Rosehill. Living room with picture window and dining room. Large kitchen with newer appliances, ample counter and cabinet space and an adjacent mud room with access to the yard. Sundecked family room with new windows looking out to the beautiful yard with a manicured lawn, patio and mature trees. Gleaming wood floors throughout, new AC & Heat!
Dear Reader,

I proofread but know we make mistakes, so to make a game of it, we encourage you to find the errors we missed. The entry who finds the most wins a $25.00 gift certificate from an area retailer or restaurant.

Anne Marie Bradford, of Alexandria beat out all the other entries by catching 31 (a record since we started this monthly contest!) grammatical and punctuation errors in our November 2012 edition. Bradford has won a gift certificate from Chez Andrée restaurant.

If you think you have a keen eye and a sharp pencil, send your catches to mary@thezebra.org, or by mail to ZEBRA, PO Box 6504 Arlington, VA 22206.

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Publisher's Note: I called my Dad this month and asked if he could remember the name of the little tree we had one year. He quickly said, “Scotch”! A few days later he sent me a card with a drawing and this true story:

My Dad Remembers a Special Christmas

It was 1976. There had been “up” years and “down” years, but this was my family’s lowest. The year before was a great year and money was abundant but something had gone wrong. The economy was upside down and it landed on us. I knew it was only a temporary setback, but this Christmas was going to be very tight.

In every Christmas past we had loads. This year I had to speak to my wife and tell her a truth, “Honey there is no money this year.” We talked late into the night about our options and came to some answers. First we decided that whatever money we had would be spent on the children. Next we would call the retailers and tell them not to spend any money on us as we could not buy gifts for them. They understood because we were not alone when the economy declined. We also decided that we must tell the children the truth about what was going on. My oldest was 10 and the youngest was 7. They listened but I don’t think they knew what it meant when dad said, “Kids we don’t have any money this Christmas.”

All they ever knew about money was that it just always came out of daddy’s pocket. They never thought how it got there. So this

December 2012

The Zebra

2301 N. N. 6th St.
Arlington, VA 22214
703-224-8911
thezebra.org

PUBLISHER’S NOTE

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The deadline for the receipt of all new advertising materials is 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, seven days prior to publication. Materials and space reservations will be accepted for proofs uncharged camera-ready repeat ads until 5:00 p.m. Friday, the week before publication. Cancellations and changes cannot be accepted after Monday, the week of publication and no refunds will be made after that time. For advertisers wishing to see a proof before publication, the deadline for approval is Wednesday, seven days prior to publication.

For advertising information call 703-919-7533

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The mid-1990s. She was an accountant. He was a restaurant manager. She was the daughter of Patsy Ticer, the then Mayor of Alexandria. He was from the Alsace region of Eastern France and had immigrated to America. She had piercing eyes, dark hair and facial angles that could have graced any fashion magazine as a reincarnated Natalie Wood. He was pure European sophistication with a charmed accent, wavy hair controlled with a run of his fingers and a delightful glimmer in his eyes. Each loved dogs. Each had a dog. And each had difficulty locating housing that would accept their canine companions. Enter fate, luck, magic or a little bit of all three (it can’t hurt) – ingredients to a secret soup, stirred for days until the melding of flavors had reached its most potent. A modern-day fairy tale courtesy of a pet-friendly apartment building on Alexandria’s Bashford Lane where one day, while each was walking their own dog, the accountant and the restaurant manager met. No, this is not the book jacket summary of the latest Harlequin romance or a classic Barbara Cartland novel. This is the true story of Margaret and Laurent Janowsky, local restaurateurs and keepers of an Old Town flame, so to speak, when they purchased La Bergerie, one of Alexandria’s most revered French restaurants, in 2000 from brothers Bernard and Jean Campagne-Ibarcq. The Janowskys chose to make few changes to the elegant venue on Lee Street, while instead capitalizing on the traditions of exceptional cuisine and five-star customer service that had originally brought acclaim to the Campagne-Ibarcq brothers. As a result of the Janowsky’s efforts, La Bergerie (labergerie.com) is celebrating its 36th anniversary this year – an Alexandria icon with enduring appeal that has stood the test of time. However, never ones to rest on their laurels, Margaret and Laurent had a strong desire to put their own stamp on a restaurant – from the ground up this time, foundation to weathervane. So in June 2011, they purchased a 1925 Del Ray house at 205 East Howell Avenue and began restoration the following October on what would become Del Ray Café, a casual, unpretentious eatery that would complement the tenor of its neighborhood, offering good food, reasonably priced, in a relaxed, idyllic French farmhouse atmosphere.”The community was ripe for this concept,” Margaret exclaimed. Both Janowskys share a commitment to sustainability, and this philosophy encompasses the mission statement of the restaurant – “Local. Natural. Organic.” – as well as its refurbishing, while also embracing the Del Ray community conscience towards “green” trends. “It’s all Margaret,” when Laurent is asked about East Howell’s transformation. While she, in turn, sings the praises of Vice President Brandon Burg of Virginia Commerce Bank who helped them secure an SBA loan and Margaret is quick to point out that she worked with local businesses whenever possible to keep the project within the community, benefiting the community. Larson Koenig Architects, two blocks away, and Harry Braswell, Inc. Contractor, a half mile away, shared Margaret and Laurent’s vision and sustainability credo. From sketches to scaffolding, these companies were instrumental in making Del Ray Café a reality. The two-story facade was in a rather sad state of disrepair before renovations began. But the previous owner had done some upgrades inside, installing several kitchenettes with the original intention of renting out individual office space. Margaret donated the kitchenettes to Habitat for Humanity and, refusing to waste any usable materials, relocated all the fixtures to areas in the building that would best serve the restaurant. Blending the old and the new (much like a secret soup), the

Alexandria Sensibility, European Flair

PHOTO: HARRY MERRETT

PHOTOS: SUZAN HALE THOMAS
house boasts reclaimed pinewood floors, restored vintage lanterns, a large antique mirror and even an authentic cow bell hanging on the rear entrance door to announce guests.

From the tables and chairs to the carpet and window treatments, even the red gingham napkins and waitstaff shirts, sustainable or recycled fabrics and materials were selected. The state of the art kitchen utilizes the most energy-efficient processes available. A custom water filtration system and on-demand hot water heaters as well as a multi-faceted recycling and composting program were also implemented throughout the entire operation.

The menu, created by the Janowskys and Sylvain Tonello, executive chef over both restaurants, again adheres firmly to the “Local. Natural. Organic.” mission. Product is selected because it is natural (not altered chemically or synthesized in any form), organic (free of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and preservatives) and local (supporting farmers, suppliers and producers who share the Janowsky’s commitment to sustainable agriculture). The café offers numerous gluten-free menu options and is also a peanut-free environment for the safety of all its customers.

With breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday, brunch on Saturdays, Sundays and major holidays, dinner seven nights a week; and an extensive children’s menu for each service, the menu is resplendent with options. Among them, such French classics as Egg Benedict, Croque Monsieur and Madame, Duck Leg Confit and a variety of crêpes. Simple pearls of genius dot the offerings as well: a warm croissant with butter and organic jam to start your day or ratatouille with seasonal vegetables for lunch. The desserts are sumptuous with the Chocolate Mousse the equivalent of culinary bliss. Opened in May 2012, Del Ray Café (delraycafe.com) features a glimmering, pristine white farmhouse with red front doors and a wrap-around, screened-in porch, navy shutters and window boxes overflowing with tousled fresh herbs highlight the landscape. Just beyond a white picket fence stands a vintage Coca-Cola cooler repurposed as a garden planter alongside old Jack Daniel’s whiskey barrels converted to rain collectors. The ambiance is fun, colorful and enticing. You want to go inside. (This writer would like to live there!)

Host to neighborhood foot traffic, including families with strollers, as well as driving diners amply provided for with a large private parking lot behind the farmhouse (including a special entrance for disabled patrons), Del Ray Café welcomes all, whether you arrive on foot, by car or even by bike. And a diverse and knowledgeable staff are there to ensure you feel like a member of the Janowsky family and the Del Ray community. Along with their daughter, Sandrine, and son, Marcel, Margaret and Laurent are a homegrown family, living their commitment to sustainability on every level. They honor the past with La Bergerie and honor the future with Del Ray Café, like a delicious, warm and inviting secret soup brought to the family table for everyone’s nourishment.

Kabbalistic Healing is an alternative to psychotherapy that uses a model of the human psyche that is derived from Kabbalah, Jewish Mysticism that has been used for centuries for achieving wholeness. It is a transformational process that teaches us that we are whole in our brokenness and allows us to love and respect our true self.

It is appropriate to issues that would bring one to counseling, including relationship difficulties and self-esteem issues. It also addresses the mind body connection. Sessions can be in person or over the phone. Call 703-521-4898.

“By way of nourishment, not by way of knowledge.”

— Rabbi Isaac the Blind

Anne Alden
Kabbalistic Healer

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Chapel to be Restored at Virginia Theological Seminary

On October 22, 2010, fire ravaged and destroyed the 1916-century Immanuel Chapel on the Virginia Theological Seminary Campus located at Seminary and Quaker Lane on October 22, 2010. Established in 1823, the Seminary is one of the oldest educational institutions in Virginia. Many members of the Episcopal clergy were ordained in the chapel. It had also been the site of weddings and funerals. Former president Gerald Ford, once a Virginia resident, attended services at the chapel, including the Sunday after taking the oath of office.

Now, the Alexandria Planning Commission has given its unanimous approval to rebuild the beloved landmark. The 20,000-square-foot chapel will be certified LEED Silver and boast a 900-square-foot addition to Packard-Laird Hall, the Seminary’s welcome center.

Reliving its Grandeur, Old Town Theater Reopens

Since the Old Town Theater closed in January, new owner Rob Kaufman of PMA Properties has been restoring it to its classic form to live out some faded grandeur, in time for its Dec. 12 reopening. Originally opened as the Richmond Theater in 1914, Old Town Theater was the first permanent theater constructed in Alexandria. The owners reportedly operated a vaudeville theater on the first floor and a dance hall on the second floor until around 1932, and the dance floor was later replaced with a balcony. The cinema was twinned in 1980 and re-opened as the Old Town 1-2.

As Kaufman and the construction crew prepared for extensive renovations, many Old Town residents pleaded with Kaufman to keep it open as a theater, after it fell on hard times when moviegoers migrated to the multiplexes with expensive Dolby Sound systems and grander screens. A local production company will operate the theater as a live performance venue. A full calendar of matinee and evening performances featuring comedy, music, magic, and dance will be offered along with weekly appearances from nationally touring entertainers.

In addition to soft drinks and concessions, a gourmet, light fare menu will be offered, as well as a select list of beer and wine. Special events, catering, and full service production capabilities will also be available.

As an interesting aside, in June, Old Town residents awoke to signs posted for “COMING SOON...Hooters Restaurant” at 815 1/2 King Street, site of the vacant theater. The Hooters chain is known primarily for its waitstaff of mostly young, attractive waitresses usually referred to as “Hooter Girls” whose revealing outfits are played up to restaurant patrons. But, Kaufman assures there will be no fried chicken wings or scantily clad waitresses anytime soon. The signs had been a hoax. “I don’t know who posted those signs but I found the prank very funny,” Kaufman said. “Many people didn’t which is unfortunate. There appear to be a lot of people who have lost their sense of humor.”

Alexandria’s Board of Architectural Review approved Kaufman’s plans to revitalize the building, and Kaufman has signaled that the theater as a live performance venue will be the Old Town Theater’s role going forward.

UPDATE:
La Strada Restaurant to Close
December 31

The economy and family health concerns have struck an award-winning and well-loved Italian eatery at 1905 Mount Vernon Avenue. They will serve their last meal on December 31, 2012.

The La Strada family opened Osteria 1909 next door to La Strada in November 2011. Osteria, which has its own separate kitchen from La Strada, will not be affected by the closure.

Commonwealth’s Attorney Sengel Plans Retirement in 2013

On December 4, 2012, Commonwealth’s Attorney S. Randolph Sengel released the following statement: “At the conclusion of my current term as Commonwealth’s Attorney as December, 2013, I will have served over 34 years as a prosecutor for the City of Alexandria, including 16 years as the elected Commonwealth’s Attorney. I will not seek re-election in 2013 as I intend to retire from office when my current term ends. Service in this office is always a collaborative effort. I am honored to serve with a skilled, dedicated and professional staff of assistant prosecutors and support personnel. We have worked very hard to establish the highest standards of efficiency, fairness and accountability in the prosecution of criminal cases. I am certain that the office has a great depth of talent and experience which will sustain these efforts. I appreciate the support the City has extended to my office. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.”

DASH Sponsors Drive at the King Street Metro

DASH representatives will be at the King Street Metro Station collecting donations for Toys for Tots. Help make this holiday season special for Alexandria’s disadvantaged children. DASH will be on site inside the entrance to the King St. Metro station on Tuesday, Dec. 18 from 4 - 7 p.m. and

See UPDATE on page 8
FALL IN LOVE with OLD TOWN COMMONS

Discover Smart City Living at EYA’s newest neighborhood in Old Town Alexandria. Old Town Commons is just steps to historic King Street, Braddock Road Metro, and the waterfront. These new homes offer spacious open floor plans with gourmet kitchens, and reserved parking.

New condominiums from the $300s
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EYA.com

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735 N. ALFRED STREET, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

Prices subject to change without notice.
Old School to Become New School

Alexandria’s Planning Commission approved a $36-million proposal to rebuild Jefferson-Houston School at Cameron and North West Streets. The project plans a 130,000 square foot L-shaped, Art Deco flavored modern facility surrounding a turf athletic field.

The project also includes improvements to the Durant Arts Center, which occupies the same section of land as the school. The school’s gym, field, play areas and a white-box-theater will be available for community use to varying degrees.

Enrollment is expected to grow to approximately 700 students in grades kindergarten through 8th grade, a sizable increase from its current enrollment of 364.

If approved by City Council the new school might be ready in the fall of 2014.

Shoppers, Start Your Engines

New Shopping Mecca Takes Shape at National Harbor

BY JOHN ANKUNDEL

W eeks after Maryland voters gave the green light for what could become a $1 billion MGM casino along the banks of the Potomac by 2015, National Harbor Founder Milt Peterson dug another shovel in the ground on a $100 million outlet shopping mall which could throw open doors to price-conscious outlet shoppers by the end of next year.

The 340,000 square foot Tanger Outlets National Harbor will complement the scores of restaurants, retail and hotels already open, including the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, the largest non-gaming hotel on the eastern seaboard. Developed by Peterson and opened in 2007, National Harbor now comprises 350 acres of prime real estate along the scenic Potomac River in Prince George’s County.

Tanger Outlets will be located at the base of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and directly accessible from the Capital Beltway, I-295 and Indian Head Highway, and Peterson said the new center will serve as a leading outlet destination for the five million residents in surrounding Maryland, Virginia and D.C.

“The Tanger Outlets brand is synonymous with quality and we are thrilled to partner with them to bring these high quality retail brands to the area,” said Peterson, chairman of the Peterson Companies. “This is an exciting new chapter in the evolution of National Harbor and we believe it will be a tremendous complement to our existing shopping, dining, entertainment and hospitality offerings.”

More Update on page 9

City of Alexandria Prepared for 2012-2013 Winter Weather

As the 2012-2013 winter season approaches, emergency response, including snow and ice removal operations, continue to be a top priority and core service for the City of Alexandria’s snow response teams, public safety and emergency management.

Residents are reminded that sidewalks, driveways, and entrances abutting residences and businesses are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner, occupant or business for snow removal. Snow and ice must be cleared from all paved sidewalks abutting your property within 24-72 hours of the end of the snowfall, depending on the storm response level.

When up to eight inches of snow or other winter weather conditions are in the forecast, city snow removal crews will first work to make snow-covered roads and sidewalks passable for emergency vehicles and ensure schools are accessible. Roadways and/or sidewalks may not be completely clear for as many as 80 to 120 year olds and grocery store gift cards. Every little bit helps, and is greatly appreciated.

Families receive a special Infant and toddler items, gifts for their children’s gifts before the Distribution Day in time to wrap 10 to 12 year olds and grocery store gift cards. Every little bit helps, and is greatly appreciated.

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West End Safeway Slated for Rehab

The Safeway supermarket on King Street in West End Alexandria will likely close early next year for redevelopment into a larger store with more amenities.

Safeway spokesman Greg Ten Eyck said the store, located at 3526 King St., is awaiting final comments from the city to receive a building permit. The store will close after the final permits have been received, he said.

“We don’t expect that happen until sometime in early 2013,” Ten Eyck said. The supermarket will be closed for about a year for remodeling, he said. The pharmacy will remain open, operating out of a mobile unit.

The current store is 44,000 square feet. The remodeled store will be 61,000 square feet and offer a wider selection of products, outside seating area, bakery, deli, floral department and dry-cleaning service through Bergmann’s. The new store will also feature a Starbucks.

New Hope Housing Awarded Freddie Mac Foundation $50K Grant

New Hope Housing has been awarded a $50,000 grant from the Freddie Mac Foundation for its permanent supportive housing program for families in need in Northern Virginia.

The New Hope Housing program provides long-term housing with ongoing support services for previously homeless families in which a parent has a significant disability. The program helps support the parent(s) to ensure stability for the family and a supportive home environment for the children. New Hope Housing currently assists 14 families with permanent supportive housing, and the Freddie Mac Foundation provides critical funds to maintain the program.

New Hope Housing is a nonprofit agency providing shelter, transitional and permanent housing, outreach and support services for homeless families and single adults in Fairfax County, the city of Alexandria, Arlington County, and City of Falls Church. New Hope Housing is committed to finding creative and lasting solutions to end the cycle of homelessness by offering homeless men, women and children the services they need to change their lives and succeed.

In FY 2012, New Hope Housing served over 1,500 individuals including more than 250 children. For more information, visit www.newhopehousing.org.

Bishop Ireton senior rowers, Lyndsay Martini and Allison Lee each signed College Commitment Letters this week.

Lyndsay, daughter of Christopher and Beth Martini and a resident of Falls Church, VA, committed to rowing at University of Virginia.

Woodbridge, VA resident and daughter of Richard and Kelly Lee, Allison will be going north to Boston College.

Bishop Ireton Athletic Director Bill Simmons commented that these two seniors represented the best of Bishop Ireton’s student-athletes. Their families and teammates were on hand to cheer on their commitment, and both women thanked their team and their coaches for always pushing them to do their best.

More Just Window Dressing
Walker Home of 1125 King Street was named winner of the 2012 Old Town Window Wonderland Contest.

Pictured here, (l to r): Patricia Washington, CEO, ACVA; B. Giannini-Gambino Walker, Walker Home; Mayor Euille; Alphonse Costanza, Walker Home; and Amy Rutherford, Old Town Boutique District. Photo by SPotted MP

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Celebrate Christmas at Mount Vernon

Featuring festive daytime programming, themed decorations, historic chocolate making, and more! Meet Aladdin, the Christmas Camel.

Christmas at Mount Vernon: Nov. 23 ~ Jan. 6
Visit MountVernon.org/Christmas for more information

George Washington's Mount Vernon

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703-780-2000 | MountVernon.org/Christmas

A rendering of the planned new Safeway

UPDATE from page 8

Senior Crew team members Lyndsay Martini and Allison Lee sign college commitment letters.
Mike Oliver:
Alexandria’s Secret Santa

ne does not often get to sit down in a chair next to Santa Claus; the usual seat is on his lap. But Mike Oliver, who is Santa’s number one helper in Alexandria, took time during a respite after the busy Christmas rush to be interviewed about the numerous activities that led to his selection as an Alexandria Living Legend.

A transplanted West Virginian, Mike Oliver was born in Parkersburg, the second son (behind Art, Jr.) of Art and Lura Oliver. His father was Secretary/Manager of an American Automobile Association (AAA) affiliate which in addition to the usual AAA duties also fulfilled many functions normally handled by a state’s Department of Motor Vehicles. His mother was his father’s bookkeeper.

Mike’s father had a second, secret identity. He was Santa Claus’s local alter ego appearing at many events, especially those for the Community Chest (now United Way). Clearly, Mike comes by his Santa’s helper role naturally and for years he wore the Santa suit he inherited from his father until he received a generous donation which enabled Mike to replace the deteriorating family heirloom. The sleigh bells he uses to announce Santa’s arrival are the same bells his father used.

Mike received his BA degree from West Virginia University (WVU) in 1961. (Several years ago, he was named WVU’s Outstanding Alumni for Community Service.) While at WVU in Morgantown, he met Mary Linda Burks, who received her BS degree in 1961 as well. They married on December 27, 1961 and have just celebrated their Fiftieth Wedding Anniversary.

Mike established close ties with his daughters’ schools and their activities. He coached Alexandria Soccer Association Manager and retired after 24 years. (For many of those years she was the Cafeteria Manager at T.C. Williams High School.)

Mike enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves in 1959, eventually attaining the rank of Sergeant 1st Class (E7) before retiring in 1973. He had the distinction of serving in the 80th Division, his father’s old World War I unit. The newlyweds moved to Richmond and Mike went to work for VEP, continuing with them until 1965.

That same year, Mike, Linda, and baby Kathleen, moved to an apartment in Fairlington. Shortly afterwards, Mike began working at the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (which became the U.S. Office of Education in 1980). He retired in 2000 as Student Financial Specialist. They bought their first Alexandria home in 1967 and Sarah joined the family two years later.

The next year, Mike’s mentor, Bob Miller, recruited Mike into the George Mason PTA. PTA became a theme in Mike’s life as George Washington (PTA President three times) was followed by Minnie Howard (PTA President twice) and T.C. Williams. He served as Alexandria PTA Council President (1984-85) where he was supported by an excellent Board of parents and teachers. In nominating Mike for the Living Legend recognition, Harlene Clayton described Mike as “a life-long cheerleader at T.C. Williams football and basketball games.”

He and Linda are “Grandpa and Grandma Titan” at these events to this day.

Mike established close ties with his daughters’ schools and their activities. He coached Alexandria Soccer Association...
LEGENDS from page 10

In 1979, Mike began volunteering at Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically (ALIVE!) as the representative of his church, St. Clement Episcopal. He pitched in everywhere: delivering furniture and participating in the Turkey Trot collection of food donations. He served as the ALIVE! Board President (1993-1994). Throughout this thirty plus years of involvement with ALIVE!, Mike served as Santa’s Helper for the children of the ALIVE! Child Development Center. He fulfills other Santa duties throughout the community for various organizations and schools, including 25 years as the City’s Market Square Santa as well as for Del Ray and North Ridge tree lightings. For all these appearances, Mike accepts no payment but instead requests any donations go to the ALIVE! Child Development Center.

Mike does find occasional time for himself and enjoys blue grass, folk, and Celtic music. He and Linda have been active members of St. Clement Episcopal Church for over 40 years. Mike has been a Sunday School teacher and Vestry member serving as Junior and Senior Warden. During this time, he participated in various other church activities such as selling Christmas trees and helping with the church’s winter Overnight Hypothermia Shelter for men. Pam St. Clair who also nominated Mike for Living Legend recognition tells about a time when she needed someone to fill in at the Overnight Hypothermia Shelter. She called Mike who readily agreed to fill in at the last minute. It was only later that she discovered it was Mike’s birthday and he put his plans on hold to be there for the shelter clients.

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Given all that Mike has accomplished in Alexandria, it is not surprising that he was named the Alexandria Times’ Citizen of the Year in 2007.

Whether dressed in his red suit with an excited youngster on his lap or in his regular clothes, Mike Oliver has truly become an Alexandria Living Legend.

Sherry Wilson Brown is director of Agenda: Alexandria

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Mayor Bill Euille greets Blanche Maness and 2013 Legends nominees Maudy and Gilbert Mays.

NOVA Honors Living Legend Nominees with Musical Salute
The 2013 Living Legends of Alexandria nominees were honored with a musical tribute at NOVA’s Schlesinger Center on December 6. Nominees, nominators, board members and council are seen here gathered for pre-concert refreshments.
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American Idol?

“The fault, dear Brutus, in not in our stars, but in ourselves.”

Act I, Scene ii - Julius Caesar by William Shakespeare

I was a baby boomer and grew up in the era of Fifties idealism, raised on optimism and the calamitous changes of the 1960s and 70s. Back then in my na"<i>vite Polynesian mind, my life was simple – high school, graduate from the Naval Academy, go to sea, go to war, distinguish myself there, and in a civilian career, maybe run for Congress and continue to serve my country. During my formative years I lived in Ohio, Colorado, North Carolina, Germany, Thailand, Virginia, California and Virginia (again), and visited 23 countries as a result of my Navy career. During those years I saw some very ugly scenes, some corrupt and also some very magical places. Yet through it all, I truly believed that nothing compared to the good old USA.

Today, however, that idol has been permanently smashed. The past three decades have been a moral and ethical rollercoaster that has caused me to question the very oath I took as an Officer in the Navy.

After days, months and years of standing watch on a warship in a freezing rain, riding ‘point’ in a patrol boat on some godforsaken river or dodging IEDs on some hideous back street in Baghdad, I found myself asking, ‘What am I doing?’ Who am I protecting? Exactly what country am I defending? Was my country, this place I called ‘home’ – a place ever looking up to cross the street or greet someone. streets texting on Facebook and Twitter without enduring sacrifice. Americans walk the streets where our citizens enjoy the fruits of our success being one.

And for nearly 200 years, we enjoyed beginner’s luck, choosing the right fight, supporting the right people and beliefs, interests and livelihoods. They, and not the oil industry was ramping-up to quench the envy of the automobile manufacturing world economy boomed, people had babies, Detroit was smashed Nazi Germany, forced a then-belligerent same goodness.

As an amateur historian, I can see the easy comparisons to the Roman and British Empires. Our technological innovation, wealth, boundless enthusiasm and rugged individualism once considered virtues, had now taken on the ugly veneer of arrogance. This great country had once appeared to the rest of the world as the global adolescent, the new kid on the block and a shining light for others. And for nearly 200 years, we enjoyed beginner’s luck, choosing the right fight, supporting the right causes and through it all, we were known for our magnanimity in victory.

Our common sense and our sense of decency were our greatest attributes, and these virtues led us to world leadership. We honestly believed that our system of democracy and our very way of life was good and the rest of the world should share in that same goodness.

World War II was the turning point. Our armies smashed Nazi Germany, forced a then-belligerent Japan to its knees, brought our GIs home, got them into college or into a home with the GI Bill, our economy bloomed, people had babies, Detroit was the envy of the automobile manufacturing world and the oil industry was ramping-up to quench that thirst. We were enjoying the fruits of ‘Empire’ without ever needing to shoulder the burden of being one.

Today, however, we have become a fat country where our citizens enjoy the fruits of our success without enduring sacrifice. Americans walk the streets texting on Facebook and Twitter without ever looking up to cross the street or greet someone. We care more about what Lindsay Lohan wore on the red carpet at the Oscars than about our neighbor down the street with leukemia. "Super-sized" portions have us eating ourselves into a permanent plus size society. Our kids play video games more appropriate for an Army Ranger battalion; we watch ‘reality’ television shows about Honey Boo-Boo, and business ‘Sharks’ as they eviscerate some young entrepreneur with a new idea. "Democracy" has so consumed our art and cultural pursuits that we vote to determine the most ‘talented’ singer or dancer. The ‘Voice’ and ‘American Idol’ are just a couple of the events that have produced such tragedies. We vociferously rail against taxes and super-PACs, yet we turn right around and give presidential candidates $1.5 billion in campaign contributions and add some $14.5 billion to their PACs.

This is the same country where the comatose housing market is not a sign to take heart and we are the envy of the world leadership. We have defended our country’s citizens’ lives, rights, beliefs, interests and livelihoods. They, and not the headline-grabbing political, sports, entertainment and business gurus that take main stage in the media, are the ones who have truly sacrificed, carried the heaviest burden and have lived up to the oath they took.

Has our culture been so exposed to so much political, economic and social corruption that we have become numb? Have we become a paper tiger? That's tough to defend if you find yourself walking point in Afghanistan.

Don’t get me started on Congress......

Finally, our justice system has become an oxymoron where ‘equal justice under law’ now carries a hefty price tag and even the very wealthy or the select few can afford to have their affairs handled by ultra-high priced lawyers. The middle class and cutting our workforce, creating a reverse welfare system for the wealthy and well-to-do. That's tough to defend when you are walking point in Afghanistan.

For all this I am disappointed in what we have become as a nation, going down the same road that took down Rome and Britain, offering no defense to bankrolling new mortgages. This same country glorifies ‘equality’ and ‘fairness’ yet we can’t see the folly of increasing the tax burden on the backs of the middle class and cutting our workforce, creating a reverse welfare system for the wealthy and well-to-do. To this end, I believe that we need to take a hard look at our justice system and try to make it less of a joke and a farce.

I think Shakespeare got it right. Marcus Fisk is a retired Navy Captain, Naval Academy graduate, actor, sculptor, pick-up soccer player, and playwright. He and his wife Pamela live in Alexandria.
After the hoopla of the holidays is over, and the decorations are put away, what are we left with? A house that suddenly feels bare and unwelcoming inside, and grey skies, cold and gloom outside. That’s no good folks! Plan now for a Pick-me-up Program for your house and have what you need on hand to smoothly transition into an uplifting new look. With a few well-placed hints, you might get everything you need as holiday gifts!

Color is the key… embrace it, don’t fear it! No matter what your décor is, there’s always a bright color that can be added for that exuberant pop. It’s like an instant facelift for the room. Like many of my clients, I do often gravitate toward neutrals, and neutrals from top to bottom can be a wonderful thing. But, the dead of winter is not one of those times, and it’s great that a neutral décor can also serve as the “blank canvas” backdrop for whatever accent color perks up your spirit.

Because most of my clients are somewhat reserved, I have to do some convincing to get them to upholster dining chairs in a bold green fabric, try a piece of red or pink furniture in their living room, or go for an indigo blue headboard. But once they see it in context presented in a sketch I prepare, most people really “get it” and are very enthusiastic.

In addition to furniture for color splashes, I also love quirky accessories! I never overdo it, but I also never finish a room without at least one bold statement piece; if it’s a treasure that emphasizes the client’s personality or interests – even better! You can find amazing deals for these special additions on Etsy, Ebay and Overstock, but the most stunning usually come from my “to-the-trade-only” sources.

Color makes us happy and banishes Winter Blahs. Give it a try. Don’t Fight the Bright! Call me for back-up if you get cold feet!

Ginger Rodriguez is an Alexandria interior designer and can be reached at info@westbayinteriors.com

“What I don’t like about office Christmas parties is looking for a job the next day.”
—— Phyllis Diller
N eed a special gift for that special someone? Or just a late shopper — by design or procrastination — frantically searching? Forget the big box compression chambers and chain department store emporiums, head for the specialty shops!

As with every yuletide season some of the most spectacular and desirable gifts can be found at THE SHOPS AT MOUNT VERNON at the Mount Vernon Estate. As a sampling, consider an un-aged 3.75 ml bottle of G. Washington’s personal whiskey, created at his reconstructed distillery. It is hand-bottled with a handmade special Mount Vernon label and sells for $95. If you would prefer something a little more distinctive to the taste buds try a bottle of the 2-year aged rye from the distillery for only $185.

Something that is destined to become a holiday keepsake, passed on from generation to the next, is the Red and Harton snow globe that plays “Carol of The Bells.” It rests on a silver plated base that depicts many of the buildings on Mount Vernon Estate including the Distillery and Grist Mill. It is priced at $55.

Either for a little girl or a serious doll collector there is the Baby Madame Alexander “Suzanna” doll priced at $89.95. She is dressed in a delicate pink traditional southern bell dress worn in 18th century Williamsburg as she is a joint offering from Mount Vernon and Colonial Williamsburg.

Finally there is the one MUST for every holiday season — The Mount Vernon Christmas Ornament. This year’s presentation, priced at $18.95, is a glazed porcelain rendition of Mount Vernon Mansion inspired by artist G.F. Gilman’s 1878 original painting and framed with ornate gold. The back is inscribed with Eliza Powel’s compliment to Martha Washington in 1787.

“The elegant hospitality exercised at Mount Vernon … renders it a most delightful Residence to your Friends.” A short distance north on the George Washington Memorial Parkway toward Alexandria, from Mount Vernon Estate and Gardens is the Belle View Shopping Center. Any shopper seeking last minute gifts needs to visit THE VIRGINIA FLORIST and RICHARD CARROLL at 1632 and 1600 Belle View Blvd. respectively.

Once again Owner Kevin Gireen of The Virginia Florist has stocked his enterprise with some of the most unique items in the Washington Metropolitan area. The same is true of his shop in the Hollin Hall Shopping Center on Fort Hunt Road.

As tangible proof of that, check out the various selections of glazed pottery offered by the Emma Bridgewater Co., entitled “Black Toast.” Created at Stoke-on-Trent in England these pieces bear the wording “mashed potatoes,” “strawberries and cream,” and other foodstuffs. There are serving dishes, bowls, cups, and glass ware of all shapes and sizes. The various pieces range in price from $19 to $105.

This collection is joined by another that is featured in the shop’s front window: Known as Juliska it comes from Czechoslovakia and is known as “Country Estate.” Each piece of dinnerware highlights a different building on an English Estate. This collection is the result of a dual endeavor between Juliska designers and Deborah Sears, renowned designer and painter of his Ceramics in England.

One of the most eclectic shops in Belle View Shopping Center is Richard Carroll. As stated on their card, “Purveyors of precious jewelry, art glass, home decor, fashionable women’s clothing and women’s/men’s accessories.”

In the latter category is an assortment of men’s ties that speak to any number of events and causes. For the politician, real or wannabe, there is the Eisenhower/ Nixon or Harry S. Truman creations. Then for the cautious type or pragmatist, whichever the case may be, there is the pro-nuptial agreement cravat. They are all priced at $29.99.

For wine lovers there is the combination wine bottle stopper/cork screw made out of turned wood and metal by Anna Ruggiero of South Carolina at $39.99. For male recipients there is an elegant wooden handled razor for $49.99. And, for any ladies on the list there are the pashmina scarves at $18.99.

Throughout the shop the buyer is attracted to such a wide range of possibilities that it is often hard to make a selection. So, for those with a large list, Richard Carroll is the place to go.

In Old Town Alexandria some of the very best deals this holiday season can be found at GALLERY LAFAYETTE in Gatsby’s Arcade at 320 King Street. Unfortunately this marks the last holiday season for owner Todd Healy at this location since he has lost his lease due to the expansion of Coldwell Banker.

Consequently there is a wide array of items on sale that would please any aficionado of this historic seaport city. Some of Healy’s most unique offerings this year are jigsaw puzzles of 19th century prints colored by Healy. They are priced at $25 each.

There are many items now discounted 50 percent. They include Old Town maps at $5.56, Rock Glasses — a box of four priced at $22.50, Old Town note cubes at $6.48, and tote bags at $15 just to mention a few.

Complementing the many sale items are Gallery Lafayette’s myriad of historic prints in all sizes, framed and unframed. Todd’s annual Old Town calendar featuring his hand painted Old Town homes and buildings, and many other items that have been the mainstay of many Old Town homes’ decor for nearly 40 years.

And, of course what would the holidays be without a visit to the one shop that is the essence of the season — THE CHRISTMAS ATTIC at 125 S. Union St. If it’s Christmas it’s there — in abundance.

There is everything from the tried and true Christmas ornaments and scenery display items by Department 56 to the whimsical, such as the white or red Spanish wine named “Bitch” at $16.95.

Another, with the label “Boosm Boom,” a Syrah, sells for $21.95. Speaking of Department 56, in addition to their various pieces such as a Dickens Village, they now have an ornament line known as “Bead It.” Each is a self-made ornament constructed by the buyer with separate faces and other parts of their choosing. The price per piece differs.

In the true spirit of Christmas of spreading good tidings throughout world
There’s no better way to enjoy the holidays than taking in a performance of Signature Theatre’s production of *Dreamgirls*. A fictionalized account of Diana Ross and “The Supremes” as they rose to fame, *Dreamgirls* was a 1985 smash Broadway hit as well as an acclaimed 2006 motion picture. In both, the actresses to emerge as the real stars of their productions were not those portraying “Deena,” the lead singer of the trio, but, ironically, “Effie,” the replaced group member who laments her tragedy in the musical number “And I Am T elling Y ou I’m Not Going.” This song catapulted Jennifer Holliday and Jennifer Hudson to genuine fame, and the same can be said for Signature’s “Effie,” Nova Y. Payton. She steals the show every time she steps on the stage, with a vocal range and dynamic presence that will cause the hairs on the back of your neck to stand...

and, perhaps, even applaud.

Don’t miss Signature’s *Dreamgirls*. Payton’s performance alone is worth the price of admission. Extended through January 13, visit signature-theatre.org for tickets.

— Mary Wadland

Pictured here, Headstrong lead singer Effie White (Nova Y. Payton) climbs the charts single-handed. Photo by Christopher Mueller.

**Signature’s ‘Dreamgirls’ Sparkles**

**SCOTT MEEKS**

**Need more help?**

**Crunchy Scott’s Top 5: Last-Minute Tips for a Green Holiday**

**TRIM YOUR TREE!**

**#1 Nail Polish Ornaments**

Eco-friendly holiday ornaments don’t always involve popcorn garlands and pine cones. Here’s a crafty project that’s easy and eco-chic.

First, dig up all those half empty bottles of nail polish. If you don’t have any, make a plea to the women in your life. Next, get some of those cheap, glass balls from the craft store. Remove the hanger and pour in your nail polish. Swirl the paint around until the inside is covered. Let it dry upside down. After an hour or two you can replace the cap and hang your ornament.

So why is this crunchy? Nail polish is a hazardous waste product, so instead of your leftovers ending up in the trash, you’ve transformed it into an ornament that will be the talk of your holiday party.

**#2 Recycled Snowflake Ornaments**

Not into making your own ornaments? How about buying some that are made from recycled glass? Even better, the artist behind these abstract snowflakes is a local gal. Her name is Alison Sigethy and her snowflakes add a touch of eco-glitz to any tree. You can buy them from her studio at the Torpedo Factory in Old Town Alexandria. They’re $25 each. Her website is www.AlisonSigethy.com.

**GREEN PRESENTS!**

**#3 For her...**

Perfume again? Not exactly. How about a SOLID PERFUME from Truly-Life. TL is based in the Del Ray neighborhood of Alexandria and its owner, Mellenie Runion, is a goddess of all things eco. Her solid perfumes are made from beeswax and essential oils and they’re under $10. Mellenie also makes soaps, lotions and lip balms. Order from Truly-Life.com or pick up her soaps at Whole Foods.

**#4 For him...**

Books are the bomb when it comes to guy-gifts! And author Matthew Iden’s *A Reason to Live* is the perfect eco-inspired present for the man in your life. Iden is from Alexandria, his book is about a DC Homicide Detective and it’s an e-book! How green is all that? Order from Amazon, Barnes & Noble or his site, Matthew-Iden.com.

**“HAPPY” HOLIDAY FARE**

**#5 Local treats**

Let’s face it, food is a huge part of the holidays. And if you’re looking for tasty stocking stuffers, something sweet to take to that last-minute holiday soiree or maybe an extra special cookie to leave Santa – you’ll find plenty of local options at The Happy Tart. It’s a 100% gluten-free bakery in the Del Ray neighborhood of Alexandria. Check ‘em out at HappyTartBakery.com.

So decorations - check. Presents - check. And food - check! Feel better? I hope so because if you follow my 5 festive tips, your holidays are sure to be stress-free, inexpensive and totally crunchy! I’ve got more recipes and craft ideas on my site, www.CrunchyScott.com. Happy holidays!!!

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December 2012

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Use the Power of Hypnosis to convince your brain that your stomach is full after the appropriate amount of food. Empower yourself to feel satisfied with smaller portions and eliminate excess fat. No pills. No surgery. Programs are now available in private sessions or small groups.

Call (703) 341-6655 today for your FREE Confidential Consultation, or visit www.VirginiaHypnosis.com for more information.

**PROCRASTINATION from page 14**

there are **TEN THOUSAND VILLAGES** at 915 King Street. An enterprise of the Mennonite Central Committee, they provide vital fair income to third world people by marketing their handicrafts and telling their stories throughout North America.

Items in this shop are not to be found anywhere else. Some of the most unusual include the Haitian River Stone that include two faces — one happy and one sad — priced at $16.

There are also the hand carved wooden Hippo eyeglass holders from Kenya, that make the hippo look as if he were wearing the spectacles and the coffee/tea mug from Vietnam. The latter is accompanied by Fair Trade Tea from various parts of the world.

In Alexandria’s West End Fox Chase Shopping Center there is AUTHENTically AMIRh at 4609 Duke Street. Every item in this shop is handmade by the Pennsylvania Amish and personally brought to Alexandria by the shop’s owner Christopher St. Pierre.

For the child who seems to have everything it’s a pretty sure bet they don’t have handcrafted wooden toys, such as tractor trailer trucks, trains, and various pull toys representing an assortment of animals. Prices range from $35 to $85 depending on the item. For little girls there are Amish dolls and various pull toys representing an assortment of animals. Prices range from $35 to $85 depending on the item. For little girls there are Amish dolls from $19 to $25.

Adult gifts cover the gamut from home and office furnishings to home accessories such as hoom, woven place mats at $10 each, quilted table runners, for $65 and hot mats for $10 each.

Alexandria’s Quaker Lane area features two must-visit shopping spots that will thrill not only the last shopper but also anyone hunting for that something out of the ordinary. They are **ONE GOOD TERN** at 1710 Fern Street and **GREEN STREET GARDENS** at 1721 Quaker Lane.

One Good Tern is primarily geared to the fun loving bird watcher as compared to the more serious ornithologist. To emphasize that point one of their most popular items is a book entitled “Bird Watching for Cats” by Kit and George H. Harrison. It is described as “an entertainment guide for indoor felines” by One Good Tern owner Charles Studholme. The cover alone draws in the shopper as the leering cat’s eyes stare out. It sells for $19.95.

Other items include a wide selection of fun socks made in the USA, lose women that feature all varieties birds at $9.99 a pair and “Adments” by Charley Harper, so called because “they are not just for Christmas,” according to the store’s primary salesperson, Sheila Morris. They are priced at $19.99. Finally, there is a large selection of Amber jewelry from $16 to $100.

At Greenstreet Gardens, in addition to an overwhelming variety of floral possibilities that includes poonsettias ranging from $5.25 to $50 of all colors and variations, they have one of the most varied gift shops in the area.

How about a miniature “TV Set” that is also a music box for $170. Or perhaps a music box Christmas ball with a winter scene inside $95 or elegant jewelry box with a winter panorama for $100.

Anyone interested in creating the ultimate holiday home display should consider the Mark Roberts’ limited edition Santas which start at $20 and go up to $400. For less wallet impact there are snow globes at $40 and frazer fir candles by Archipelago at $30. The latter brings a Christmas tree scent to any room, even those with artificial trees.

And last, but not least, are gifts for pets. The four legged kinds of course that rule the family. For the best of those choices go to **BARKLEY SQUARE**, otherwise known as Karing By Katrina. Once a bricks and mortar shop in the Del Ray section of Alexandria in gifts and services are now found only on-line at barkleysquare.com.

Barkley Square treat for pets include holiday meals at $14.95, a chicken treat in the shape of a tree at $3.50, and a gingerbread man at $3, to mention only a few of the delicacies awaiting pets this holiday season.

Barkley Square Gourmet Dog Bakery and Boutique specializes in delicious treats, gifts and furnishings for dogs and cats. They also provide reliable and friendly pet sitting services.

Happy shopping! Have a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS and a rewarding and prosperous NEW YEAR!
You can find this wonderful hot sauce at www.chili-willy.com. They have some really good recipes on the site. Check out the Winter Cabbage Soup. I'm making some this weekend!

HEAT INDEX

You can find this wonderful hot sauce at www.chili-willy.com. They have some really good recipes on the site. Check out the Winter Cabbage Soup. I'm making some this weekend!

Contributed by Mike Sade

Caring for Your Holiday Poinsettias

Deck the halls with a holiday classic: poinsettias. Available in shades from traditional red to pastel pink, to purple, to white, to marbled and painted shades, you can easily find a plant to match your seasonal décor.

These timeless holiday bloomers do more than spread good cheer. According to studies by NASA, poinsettias purify indoor air, removing common household pollutants released by things like building materials, plastic grocery bags, inks, and man-made fibers.

Keep your poinsettias looking their best by following our list of do's and don’ts.

Poinsettia to-do list
• Transport your poinsettia in a sleeve or roomy shopping bag that covers the plant.
• Place your plant in bright, indirect light—enough light to read by.
• Give poinsettias temperatures of 65º - 70º F.
• Water when soil is dry to the touch.
• Remove any decorative plastic or foil sleeves around the pot. Set the plant in a saucer to catch water from drainage holes.

Don’t do to poinsettias
• Don’t expose plants to temperatures below 50º F.

Are poinsettias poisonous?
Despite oft-repeated tales regaling the toxicity of poinsettias, these holiday trims lack a poisonous punch—to people or pets. Some individuals who are allergic to latex may experience a mild reaction if they contact the plant's milky sap. Other than that, this holiday charmer is a mild-mannered, safe addition to your seasonal celebrations.

A Few More Tips
• Place poinsettias in indirect light and away from hot or cold drafts. Water poinsettias only when the soil is dry. Don’t allow plants to sit in water overnight.
• Remove poinsettias from sleeves as soon as you get them home.
• Keep plants warm. Temperatures below 50º F shorten the plant’s life.

Always mention seeing us in the Zebra for an additional 10% discount!

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Parkway (GWMP) realize that in fact a people-oriented national superhighway gray slabs of pavement may make them feel ashamed of. “It should be such a work as no man to whom it is dedicated. Such a structure, such as would comport with the character of a monumental thoroughfare, an array of units combining the natural, historic and recreational sites with over 7,000 acres of parkland along its 40 miles mostly paralleling the Potomac River shoreline. There are 25 possible stops in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C., many associated with the first president.

The first part built, the pre-World War II Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway, was designed for vehicles going 35 to 45 miles per hour (mph). In its successor, the George Washington Memorial Parkway, anticipated speeds of 50 to 60 mph. Post-war sections have longer curves and continuous safety medians.

When the first segment from Arlington Memorial Bridge to Mount Vernon was dedicated in 1932, the parkway was hailed as “America’s Most Modern Motorway. In builder, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Public Roads demonstrated principles of modern highway design such as overpasses, cloverleaves, limited access, widely-spaced exits and entrances and free-lined right-of-way. The road became a model all over the world. Its plans were the first to develop Germany’s Autobahn.

In 2005, the Virginia section of the parkway was designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as an “All-American road” in the National Scenic Byways program because of its multiple intrinsic qualities that are nationally significant and one-of-a-kind features. Today the George Washington Memorial Parkway has two sections: the 25-mile Virginia section from Mount Vernon estate north to I-495 and the seven-mile Clara Barton Parkway in Maryland.

[cedex]

The parkway was built in stages from 1929 to 1970. It is a group of local business people called the Mount Vernon Avenue Association, who in the 1890s hatched a grand plan for a national road from Washington to Mount Vernon. They envisioned each state having a section with grand monuments honoring in most famous and noble people, an American Way. The road project idea was set aside in the 1890s when between 1892 and 1896 the Washington, Alexandria and Mount Vernon Electric Railway was built through Alexandria to Mount Vernon Estate, a popular trolley that transported Mount Vernon visitors, locals and even farm goods.

In the early 1900s, as tourists in automobiles mushroomed and getting to Mount Vernon was six-hour slog via what some called an “unsightly” U.S. 1, Congress decided to celebrate the bicentennial of George Washington’s birth by authorizing the construction of the Mount Vernon Memorial Parkway, connecting sites associated with the first president and offering recreational opportunities. The first segment was completed on time in 1932. “Stop-and-go construction, hampered by funding disputes, proceeded for the next 40 years. By the late 1940s, the road went as far north as Spout Run. The northern part of the parkway was mostly built in the 1950s and 1960s. A major driver was deciding to locate the Central Intelligence Agency’s (CIA) headquarters at Langley. President Eisenhower formally opened this part of the road to traffic at a 1959 ribbon cutting. By 1962, the parkway reached the new Beltway to facilitate traffic to the new Dulles Airport. While crawling through Congress over the years, the parkway plan survived a number of hurdles. The Potomac River Corporation unsuccessfully pushed a hydroelectric dam above Great Falls and Chain Bridge. In what may be an early example of those infamous Congressional “earmarks,” some members of Congress decreed the parkway proposal as “ pork.” Threatening to defend it, Michigan Representative Louis Cranston labeled it “the most extravagant piece of road building that this country has ever known.” New York Congressman Fiorello La Guardia complained that it was “sured material,” really a local project deceptively disguised as a memorial: “A Memorial, how many appropriations have been passed in thy name?” he thundered. The bill passed.

Originally, the parkway was supposed to go from Mount Vernon to just above Great Falls in Virginia, and in Maryland, from Fort Washington to just above Great Falls. The Maryland part was never built, some say because there was no equivalent to the CIA and Dulles Airport driving it on the Maryland side. A Mary-

![See EXPLOR on page 30](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

There are many scenic vistas from the parkway, including this one at Dyke Marsh. Our Old Town Alexandria location is still... Exclusively yours.

THE NUGGET... wishes you a Happy Holiday season... and invites you to reserve a time when you would like to come and visit the new Alexandria location. At The Nugget, you can schedule an appointment to:

- Shop for Jewelry... (we have an extensive selection with generous holiday discounts)
- Design your Engagement and Wedding Rings
- View Precious and Semi-precious gemstones
- Design a Custom piece of Jewelry
- View Vintage and Estate Jewelry
- Have your Jewelry appraised for Insurance and/or Estate purposes
- Repair or Custom Re-design an existing piece of family jewelry
- Restring your pearls
- Design corporate logo jewelry
- Arrange for Charitable Fund Raisers with Jewelry from The Nugget
- Design Family Crest Jewelry

STARTING DECEMBER 15TH... CALL or E-MAIL to let us know when you want to come and what you are interested in viewing, so we can give you spot personal attention and have just what you are looking for ready to show you. We can also be your “personal shopper” and bring a selection of jewelry to your office... so you can afford, purchase and have it gift wrapped by us right at your office.
year was its first moment at reality.

After talking to the children, I think they started to understand a little. As the days went by and we got closer to Christmas the thoughts of a tree started to worry me. Again it was time for the truth. “Kids we don’t have any money for a Christmas tree this year!” This realization brought out the tears. “But that means we won’t have a tree?” asked the youngest. “Sorry,” I said, “Looks like it’s not going to happen.” This bothered both my wife and me. I said, “Maybe we can get some sort of tree for less money.”

The next day my wife and I found some money somewhere. Ok, we dashed in some old soda bottles in the back of the garage. We loaded all the kids in the shop pickup truck and went down to the local tree stand. I left everyone in the truck while I went off, hat in hand, to talk to the tree man. He said that the cut-off trees and those not worthy of being in the lot were over in the corner and if I found something I wanted, he’d set a price. I went back to the truck and got the whole family. We all walked over to the tree. We came upon a small little tree laying on its side. It was a most pitiful looking thing. It stood about four feet tall with four limbs at its base, four in the middle, and four at the top with one spire poking upright. The trunk itself was twisted but glowing. Yes there was life in this tree had tried so hard to this tree had tried so hard to try to happen.” This bothered both my wife and me. I said, “Maybe we can get some sort of tree for less money.”

Now what if your employer can’t afford to hire a professional ergonomist? Well, there are still many ways to be proactive when setting up your office environment:

Understand the Ultimate Goal

Having a special chair is often viewed as the be-all, end-all of correct office ergonomics. While an ergonomically-designed chair can certainly do wonders, remember that the ultimate goal is to achieve balance between finding a work chair that fits you, provides good support and minimizes stress on the back, and using it correctly in relation to your work environment.

Get Suited to Your Work Surface

Don’t just buy a new chair, ask yourself “what type of chair will fit your work station?” Examine how long you sit all day and how you sit at your desk. Are you semi-seated (similar to sitting on a bar stool) or do you sit straight up? Do you need to adjust your chair? Where is your computer in relation to your body?

Determine your appropriate work surface (which takes into account the position of your arms, elbows and hands in relation to your desk’s height and your laptop or desktop computer) and be sure to have a chair that allows you to attain this specific height.

The correct surface level can vary from profession to profession (for example, architects and draftsmen often prefer to sit higher), and the final decision as to what’s appropriate is thus determined by each individual.

Work for Your Health

January 2013

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS from page 3 of that little tree named Scruff.

no tree will ever take the place of our Christmas.

a lot of great big trees have been presents that went under the middle, and four at the top with one spire poking upright. The trunk itself was twisted but glowing. Yes there was life in this tree had tried so hard to try to happen.” This bothered both my wife and me. I said, “Maybe we can get some sort of tree for less money.”

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Merry Christmas Mr. Lincoln

1862: New General’s Christmas Attempt to End the War Fails

Christmas season 1862 was anything but “peace on earth — goodwill toward men” when it came to the American Civil War. Instead, it heralded another horrendous battle between the North and South that solidified the realization that the nation was in for a long, brutal struggle that would soak the earth with blood.

Following the Battle of Antietam, which remains the costliest battle in terms of lives lost in a single day in American history, there was a feeling of optimism in the North that the war could be brought to an early end. This evaporated on December 16, 1862 with the final shots at the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia.

As the smoke cleared and both sides disengaged, The Union counted 12,700 killed, wounded, and missing while The Confederacy suffered 5,300 in those categories. And, President Abraham Lincoln concluded that his newly appointed General of The Army, Burnside, had gotten him no closer to peace that the one he had just removed from Command.

The genesis of the Fredericksburg battle occurred on November 7, 1862, when Lincoln replaced General George B. McClellan with General Ambrose E. Burnside. Totally frustrated with McClellan’s overly cautious approach to combat, Lincoln saw Burnside as someone who would be more aggressive in taking the war to the Confederacy and thereby bringing it to an early conclusion.

Shortly after taking command, Burnside proposed a bold move to take the 120,000 troops of The Army of The Potomac from its encampment near Warrenton to Fredericksburg. The plan had a two-fold objective: First, to position an overwhelming Union force between General Robert E. Lee’s Confederate forces and Richmond, the Capital of The Confederacy, and secondly, establish a secure supply line for the Union forces.

Lincoln not only gave his full support to Burnside’s plan but urged that it be activated quickly. With the support of his Commander In Chief, Burnside did just that, putting his troops on a fast march for Fredericksburg on November 15.

He also initiated a new command structure dividing the Union juggernaut into three “grand divisions.” The first arrived just opposite Fredericksburg on November 17. This fast pace and change in strategy caught Confederate Commanding General Robert E. Lee off-guard after he had also split his 78,000 man force into two units — one under the command of General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson and the other commanded by General James Longstreet. Jackson and his forces were in the Shenandoah Valley and Longstreet was in Culpeper. Neither was anywhere close to Fredericksburg.

However, the weakness of Burnside’s strategy was that he could not establish his Fredericksburg base of operation without first crossing the Rappahannock River. He also had to bring in engineers and pontoon bridge equipment to enable his troops to cross because the regular bridges had been destroyed earlier in the war.

Both the engineers and equipment were delayed through a series of events ranging from Washington bureaucracy to bad weather which caused his troops to arrive before the work was completed placing them in a critical defensive position. Fredericksburg is situated in a geological bowl bordered by the river on the east and hills on the west. Burnside had counted on a swift, unopposed crossing of the river. That was now impossible. But, Lincoln was counting on the Burnside plan because winter was closing in which would soon bring fighting to a near halt until spring, allowing Lee time to rebuild after the Antietam slaughter. Inaction was not an option.

In the meantime, Lee had made strategic adjustments to his plans and now ordered both Jackson and Longstreet to head for Fredericksburg. Longstreet’s forces arrived November 19 and fortified the hills behind the city with heavy artillery.

Jackson arrived a week later and took up a position 20 miles downstream on the Rappahannock.

This dual positioning gave Lee two advantages over Burnside. He oversaw a long stretch of the river that Burnside needed to cross and he held high ground forcing the Union troops to literally fight an uphill battle.

Burnside came up with a bold plan to have his engineers build pontoon bridges in three locations thereby presenting the Confederate forces with multiple defensive actions and splitting their effectiveness. He theorized this would allow him to get his superior forces across the river, route Longstreet and his troops and force them to retreat toward Richmond.

Burnside put his plan in motion on the morning of December 11. As the Union engineers pushed their bridge pontoons into the river, rifle fire rang out from the Fredericksburg side. The Union troops were sitting ducks. After nine attempts by the engineers the effort was halted due to heavy casualties.

Frustrated, Burnside decided to blast Fredericksburg into oblivion by turning the 150 cannons of General Henry Hunt loose. He assumed that this barrage would obliterate Longstreet’s infantry troops thus allowing his engineers to complete their pontoon bridges.

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The Union tries building pontoon bridges to cross the river at Fredericksburg.
open space -- a 600 yard gap in Jackson’s defense line.

The Confederate General, upon learning of this gap, ordered it filled from his reserve troops and subsequently drove the Union forces to the Richmond Stage Road. But, the Confederate counterattack was then stopped by Union artillery.

When Union forces were unable to dislodge Jackson’s defenses, Burnside abandoned his original plan and ordered Major General Edwin Sumner’s Right Grand Division to attack. This meant Union forces had to leave the city and advance over open ground to the base of the hills guarded by Confederate infantry protected by the stone wall and overseen by Confederate cannonade above.

The outcome was predestined. Advance after advance met with withering cannon and rifle fire. In just one hour 3,000 Union soldiers lay on the battlefield. Not one even got close to the stone wall.

Burnside’s fruitless assault continued through December 14 and 15. Then, on the evening of December 15-16, under the cover of darkness, Burnside gave up the assault and withdrew his remaining troops to Stafford Heights as his engineers destroyed the very bridges they had paid so highly to construct.

The Battle of Fredericksburg was over and the hopes for a quick end to the United States Civil War vanished with it. Lee had suffered approximately 5,300 casualties while Burnside’s numbers reached nearly 13,000.

As bloody as it was and as significant a victory it was for the Confederacy, the Battle of Fredericksburg, in the final analysis, had little impact of the outcome of the war except to guarantee its elongation for another three years. The North was more than able to replenish its supply of troops and supplies for the future while the South struggled to do the same.

On December 31, 1862, instead of any New Year celebration President Lincoln met with General Burnside to discuss what went wrong with his grand plan to end the war early. On that same day the Union’s ironclad “Monitor” sank in a storm off the east coast.

A friend of Lincoln’s, who visited him in the White House following the Battle of Fredericksburg, reported the President asking rhetorically, “What has God put me in this place for?” and stating, “If there is a place worse than hell, I am in it.”

The only good thing to come out of December 1862 was that the U.S. House of Representatives on December 10 passed legislation to formally create the State of West Virginia. It came about when the citizens of western Virginia refused to secede from the Union and join the Confederacy.
Alexandria’s Misplaced Honors

Freedman’s Cemetery: A reminder of our inextricable link to the institution of slavery

As significant as it is, the discovery of Freedmen’s Cemetery is only a small part, historically speaking, of this site. Through the efforts of Alexandria’s archaeological team, it has been established that its identifiable history dates back at least further south. They were trying to get to Alexandria to be behind Union lines. And, since in many cases, they were not legally free, they were considered “contraband,” said Pam Cressey, Alexandria archaeologist, at the 2008 Memorial competition event.

Over the years, from its reversion to private ownership, the plot underwent a wide array of uses. Prior to the city’s acquisition it was the site of a gasoline station and office buildings. Some of the graves even stretched under South Washington Street, according to URS Greiner Woodward Clyde, a cultural resource management firm who conducted test excavations in 1999-2000.

Rediscovery of the cemetery occurred in 1987 through archeal research by then City Historian T. Michael Miller. In 1997 Lillie Finklea and Louise Massoud formed the Friends of Freedmen’s Cemetery “to protect the site and increase awareness.” In 2007 the City officially acquired the site which lead to the removal of the gasoline station as well as the office buildings immediately behind it on Church Street. Following that an archaeological dig commenced to identify as many grave sites as possible.

In May 2007 a rededication/reconsecration ceremony was held highlighting by 1,800 luminaries acknowledging those buried there. It also signified the opening of a design competition for the memorial.

It is intended that, upon completion, the memorial site will be a solemn and reverent place, offering opportunities for reflection, commemoration, and education. As Cressey noted at the time, the ultimate goal of the memorial is to say “Yes, your name will be remembered.” As significant as it is, the discovery of Freedmen’s Cemetery is only a small part, historically speaking, of this site. Through the efforts of Alexandria’s archaeological team, it has been established that its identifiable history dates back at least

Anyone driving along Alexandria’s South Washington Street, entering or leaving the City, has noticed the construction underway on the southwest corner. Most know that it is site of the future Contraband and Freedmen’s Cemetery Memorial to be dedicated to fired slaves who were buried on the site during The Civil War.

But, how many actually know the history behind the cemetery’s establishment, its years of desecration, and its ultimate rediscovery and rededication? Of how it was rediscovered, originally in the 1990’s by the Alexandria Brick Company, and then again during the construction of the new present Woodrow Wilson Bridge?

The original burial land was established by the federal government in January 1864 by Brigadier General John P. Slough, military governor of Alexandria and Superintendent of Contraband, who confiscated it from a family of Confederate sympathizers who fled the area upon the occupation of Alexandria by Union forces at the commencement of The Civil War. During its existence it became the final resting place for an estimated 1,700 freed slaves and some African American Union soldiers.

However, in the latter case, many of those soldiers, who were being treated in the city’s hospitals, demanded that they be interred in the “Soldiers Cemetery” on Wilkes Street along with their white comrades. That caused the transfer of many already buried at Freedmen’s Cemetery to Alexandria National Cemetery in 1865.

The last recorded burial at Freedmen’s Cemetery took place five years after its establishment in January 1869. Most of those buried there had been residents of what is now Old Town Alexandria and rural areas adjacent to the city. A record book from that period provides the names, ages, sex, and in some cases, the cause of death and next of kin of those buried there. More than 800 were children under the age of five.

In 1869 when federal control of the city ended, Freedmen’s Cemetery, which had never been purchased by the federal government, reverted to private ownership. From that point on it went through a series of uses that obliterated not only the history of the site but also, in many cases, the gravestones themselves.

“The story of this site is the story of survival. The slaves who came here did so through Confederate lines from a wide array of uses. Prior to the city’s acquisition it was the site of a gasoline station and office buildings. Some of the graves even stretched under South Washington Street,” said Pam Cressey, Alexandria archaeologist, at the 2008 Memorial competition event.

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13,000 years.
That occurred with the discovery of a Clovis Point. It comes from an era known to archaeologists as the Paleo-Indian period that took place between 18,000 and 12,000 years ago. Until this discovery, the oldest known Alexandria artifact was a 9,000 year old Kirk point found at Jones Point Park.

Discovery of the Clovis point provides the first concrete evidence that Native Americans inhabited Alexandria during the Paleo-Indian period. Clovis points were crafted and used by bands of hunters as the glaciers from the last Ice Age began to melt. Discovery of the tool indicates that the Freedmen’s Cemetery site was once occupied by early Native Americans.

Upon analysis it was concluded that the broken point was once part of a spear that had been reworked or reshaped so that it could continue as an effective implement. Clovis is often identified by its ground, concave base, bifacial blade, and fluted channel, which allows the point to be halved or attached to a spear.

After the Civil War, Freedmen’s Cemetery was transferred to the newly created Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands. When Congress curtailed the Bureau’s functions in 1868 the cemetery was closed. In 1917 it was conveyed to the Catholic Diocese of Richmond which maintained the oldest southern Catholic cemetery, Saint Mary’s, immediately across South Washington Street, in the Commonwealth. In 1946 the plot was rezoned for commercial use and sold. The rest is history -- before and into the future.
‘Tis the season to enjoy a bit of effervescence and ascending stars in our glasses – in short, ‘tis the season for Champagne and other bubbles. Good thing the Vino Vixen™ has been sampling the bubbly all year round and perfectly pleased to be your guide to pouring the perfect potion for the season...

The Basics

Champagne VS Sparkling

Champagne is a region in France – just outside of Paris. Only those sparkling wines produced in Champagne, France may rightly be called “Champagne.” The designation “Champagne” was legally protected in 1919 with the Treaty of Versailles – the treaty that ended World War I. All countries who signed this agreement committed to protecting the Champagne denomination. Sparkling wine from Spain would be called Cava. From South Africa – Cap Classique. From Germany – Sekt. From Italy – Asti. Although the United States was not a signatory to the Treaty, the majority of the American wine industry respects the Champagne designation and refrains from labeling their sparkling wine as “Champagne.”

The Grapes

Champagne is produced with one or all of three grapes – Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Pinot Meunier. A Champagne produced solely with Chardonnay grapes is normally referred to as a “Blanc de Blanc” (white wine from white grapes). If made Pinot Noir and/or Pinot Meunier are used, the Champagne is normally labeled “Blanc de Noir” (white wine from black grapes). The prime difference between the two is that blanc de blancs are typically a bit more delicate and blanc de noirs have a tad more backbone. As a general rule of thumb, I serve blanc de blancs as aperitifs and blanc de noirs with food. The third type of Champagne is Rose. A rose is beautiful to look at, and even more gorgeous to sip. Produced in two ways – most typical with a bit of Pinot Noir or Pinot Meunier added to the Champagne cuvee. The other method is allowing the skin of the “noir grapes” (Pinot Noir, Pinot Meunier) to stay in contact with the must long enough to impart the desired salmon or pink color. Rose Champagne is not sweet.

VINO VIXEN PICKS

Under $20

Two of my favorites:

Jean Baptiste Adam $15
Cremant D’Alsace - Alsace, France

The winery was founded in 1614 and remains in the same family today. Cremant is a French term for a sparkling wine outside of Champagne that is produced in the Méthode Champenoise (the Champagne method) – meaning this sparkler has the veritable quality of a Champagne for half the price. This is a delicate Cremant with fine, pinpoint bubbles, and light citrus fruit. Great value and all that French on the label makes it look misleadingly expensive.

Domaine Chandon $15
Sparkling Rose - Carneros, CA

This gorgeous salmon colored sparkler gets that lovely hue with an added dose of Pinot Noir just before final bottling (triose). The fruit is bright and lively with notes of juicy strawberry and a hint of green apple.

Under $50

Piper-Heidsieck -$38
N/V Brut - Champagne, France

Toasty oak with just a hint of nutmeg, and a lingering citrus finish. This Champagne has been one of my favorites this year. It has the structure to complement a meal, and the balance to enjoy as an aperitif. For a stunning visual presentation of their Champagne, check out their website at www.piper-heidsieck.com.

Taittinger -$38
N/V Brut Reserve - Champagne, France

This Champagne is the Audrey Hepburn of Champagnes. Delicate, refined, and elegant. The perfect aperitif to kick off a party – for two or two

IN A BOX

This is Jim, taking it easy in a Christmas box.

— Kelsie, Alexandria, VA

Send your Cat in A Box photos to mary@thezebra.org and we’ll get them published as soon as we can.
hundred and two. Has a creamy mousse (bubbles) and notes of pear and a hint of floral.

Over $50

Veuve Clicquot - $58
2002 Vintage (Gold Label) - Champagne, France
Produced only in exceptional years, the most recent being 2002, this Champagne is big, yeasty, and very gutsy. Skip the typical yellow labeled Veuve and spend a few extra dollars for the vintage. 2002 is made up of 60% Pinot Noir, 7% Pinot Meunier and 33% Chardonnay from only Premier or Grand Cru lots. This Champagne has powerful notes of brioche and hints of spice. Not for the shy or reserved, this Champagne is a show stopper. Clicquot is famous for their whimsical Champagne cases and buckets that often accompany their prestige bottles. Ask your retailer if she has any extra in the back room with your purchase.

Gosset - $80
1999 Grande Millesime - Champagne, France
Founded in 1584, Gosset is the oldest Champagne House in France. With over 400 years of experience, you just know they can turn out a fabulous Champagne. The 1999 vintage is 56% Chardonnay and 44% Pinot Noir. The blend results in a racy Champagne with notes of apricots and fig – a very exotic and evocative wine. $80 is a relative steal for a Champagne of such complexity and quality. This one will age well for at least 8 more years – growing more complex and interesting with each year.

The Last Word
Now is the time to find Champagne values. Retailers stock up during the holidays and for the New Year’s celebrations. Distributors and importers often run discounts during this very competitive period and are vying for your palate’s attention. Check the Times Community wine inserts and ads for prices even lower than I listed here.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all!

The Vino Vixen™ is Mari Stull
- Syndicated wine columnist, correspondent for Wine Taste TV, and member of the Society of Wine Educators. See her picks in this month’s Travel Girl Magazine. Have a wine question or comment for Mari? She can be reached at VinoVixen@vinovixen.org.

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Packaged in an elegant, petite box, it’s like receiving a little (budget-friendly) gift every month. November’s Birchbox for women (they also have one for men) included good-size samples of Archipelago body soap, Lulu Organics hair powder, Mox Botanicals lip butter, a SVDXOY snack, and a full-size ModelCo lengthening mascara featuring a mirror on the tube for easy applications on the go. Visit birchbox.com for more information.

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703-717-9151
’TIS THE SEASON OF BRIGHT LIGHTS AND MERRIMENT, BUT NOT IF THOSE LIGHTS ARE FLASHING ON YOUR DASHBOARD

They are there to warn you of a possible problem that either is occurring or is about to occur. There are red ones and yellow ones. In keeping with the season, keep a sharp eye out for the red ones – they are the really important ones. Many of these lights are in the form of symbols depicting the operating system experiencing trouble.

There are three red lights that appear when particularly critical trouble arrives:

**Engine Temperature Light**
If this warning signal comes on while the car is in operation stop as soon as safely possible and call for help. However, NEVER open a hot radiator. Doing so can result in severe scalding.

**Engine Oil Light**
If this appears while driving, again stop as soon as it is safe and seek help. If the car is only low on oil add what is required. If this extinguishes the warning light you can then continue. But, it is wise to have the engine checked for any leaks as soon as possible.

**Battery/Alternator Light**
This indicates that trouble is brewing within the vehicle’s electrical system. This warning light does not mean you have to stop immediately. But, it does require investigation as soon as possible or the vehicle will stop on its own and that usually occurs at the least convenient time and location.

In addition to these three harbingers of trouble there are a whole series of other warning lights in most of today’s vehicles that are important alerts of potential trouble. But, these indicators most often do not require immediate stopping.

**The Anti-Lock Brake System Light**
ABS is an alert to have the vehicle’s brakes checked. This should not be delayed any longer than absolutely necessary in order to prevent serious damage to the overall braking system which can result in a major expense.

**SRS**
If the Supplemental Restraint System (SRS), which pertains to the seat belt and air bag, comes on after your seatbelts have been properly engaged it’s a warning to get the restraint system checked. If this is not operating properly driver and passengers could be at serious risk in the event of an accident.

With the price of gasoline today, it is financially prudent to have your vehicle operating as efficiently as possible. One way to accomplish this is to make sure the tires are properly inflated at all times.

That’s what the Tire Pressure Monitoring System (TPMS) is designed to do. And, in many vehicles, there is a dashboard light for that as well. If it glows check all tires for the proper pressure. Low tire pressure not only reduces gasoline mileage but also results in undue wear on the tire which shortens its life span at the least and/or possibly can cause an accident in a worst case scenario.

**Check Engine Light**
Many vehicles also have a Maintenance Service Light. If that is illuminated it’s time for a regular checkup or there could be a malfunction within the engine of some nature.

All dashboard warning lights are there to alert the driver of some possible trouble. They are NOT to be ignored. That is particularly true of the Check Engine Light.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has mandated standards for pollution control in order to lower greenhouse emissions. The Check Engine Light or, in some vehicles, the Service Engine Soon Light, is a warning that your vehicle is not in compliance with these standards.

However, don’t rush to get service before you check the gas cap to make sure that it is properly tightened. A loose gas cap can cause this light to illuminate. A few clicks while tightening is sufficient.

If the light remains on after a few days of driving then service is needed.

If the light is flashing seek service as soon as possible. This means you are damaging the catalytic converter which is an expensive item to replace coupled with repairing the root cause of the problem.

During this holiday season enjoy the decorative lights shining throughout area. But, don’t ignore the ones on your vehicle’s dashboard or any others referred to in your owner’s manual. It’s a sure way to take the “jolly” out of this half-yolly time of year.

Editor’s Note: Washington Magazine in May 2012 selected Automotive Service Garage and Olde Towne Auto Body, 500 N. Fayette St, Alexandria, VA, owned and operated by President Dennis Whitestone, to its list of Top 70 Auto Repair Shops in the Washington Metro Area.
Are you ready to set some big goals for 2013? Or are you ready to address the goals you previously set in 2012 and never got around to achieving?

As a Board Certified Hypnotist, I help people take control of their lives. My job is to help my clients get from where they are in life to where they want to be. We help people lose weight, quit smoking, overcome fears, improve confidence, and much more. In this column, I’ll share with you some tips I’ve found to be helpful in setting goals and actually reaching them.

You may have heard of SMART goals. SMART is a helpful acronym to guide people setting goals. When you arrange the following themes in order, they spell the word “Smart.”

Specific:
What do you want to accomplish? Do you want to lose weight, or do you want to lose 20 pounds of unnecessary fat and fit into that suit you haven’t worn in five years? Do you want to feel more comfortable speaking in public, or do you want to receive five new testimonial letters from business groups for whom you’ve spoken?

The more specific you make your goals, the better odds you’ll have of achieving greatness.

Measurable:
How are you going to track your goals? How do you know when you’ll be done? This may be just an extension of having truly specific goals, but it opens up the pathway to breaking a larger goal down into smaller ones.

I once had an airline pilot as a client who described the task of flying a plane as starting out with a perfect plan, and then constantly trying to get back on course. He shared that the moment the plane leaves the gate, it is as if it was already off course. The role of the pilot is then to adjust for the wind, communicate with the ground, and safely land the plane at its destination. How will you track your progress even in moments if you get off track?

Attainable:
Is your goal realistic? Reaching a new goal may require some creativity, passion, and work. Is it something you can actually do?

How will you go about doing it? For example, if you want to lose weight, you’re going to have to change some of your behaviors. Do you have the skills necessary to reach the goal? I often give my clients the metaphor that I can help an opera singer remove her stage fright, but her performance at hitting specific notes comes down to practice. I can help the golfer remove negative thoughts and performance anxiety, but it’s up to him to pick the right club.

Relevant:
It needs to be YOUR goal. Can a real estate agent set the goal to make the world’s biggest pancake? Sure she can … but why?

We work with teenage athletes frequently in the office. They respond very well to hypnosis. I recently had a gymnast who absolutely loved the sport and wanted to overcome a fear of jumping and flying through the air, and a baseball player who told me he hated baseball and only played because it was what his dad wanted. Which client do you think was the easiest to motivate?

When a client shares a goal or a benefit they’d like to achieve through our process, I’ll often ask, “What is it going to feel like once you’ve done that?” We call this Emotional Identification, the naming of an emotion that’s either driving or fright, but her drive to overcome those fears.

Tangible:
What is it going to be like a month from now, a year from now, or even five years from now? Perhaps this is a goal that may take some time. Perhaps a bit of urgency is really what you need to stop procrastinating.

Keep track of your process, consider finding an accountability buddy, or seek the help of a professional who can help guide you efficiently to achieving your result.

As a final thought, well-formed goals should always be positive. Give yourself positive incentive to achieve those goals, and strive toward what you want – not what you don’t want.

Jason Linett is a Board Certified Hypnotist and the Director of Virginia Hypnosis, a solution-oriented hypnosis practice in Alexandria, Virginia. For more information, visit www.VirginiaHypnosis.com or call (703) 341-6655 for a free confidential consultation.
Zevents

A Broadway Christmas Carol
Now thru December 23
MetroStage
1201 N Royal Street
Alexandria
MetroStage.org
This legendary production returns to MetroStage for the third straight year featuring Tracey Stephens from the Capitol Steps, Russell Sunday, and Michael Sharp as Scrooge. Laugh out loud, roll in the aisles funny. Perfect for the holidays. Ticket time and prices vary.

Santa Claus is Coming to Town
Now thru December 23
Every Saturday and Sunday
Bike and Roll Alexandria
Old Town
Alexandria
Santa and Mrs. Claus are back in Old Town Alexandria to take pictures with children every Saturday and Sunday between Thanksgiving and Christmas. The cost for pictures is $15 for a 5x7 photo print, with other photo packages available on site. Present by popular demand, this exhibit examines artwork on a very intimate scale, with all work being no larger than 5 inches in any direction. This all-media, juried exhibition includes 112 small works by 68 artists.

Downton Abbey Marathon
December 26 – 28
Beatley Central Library
The library is airing seasons 1 and 2 in late December to give fans a chance to catch up on the series before season 3, which has already aired in the United Kingdom, runs in the United States beginning Jan. 6. Marathon will run from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 26, 12:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Dec. 27 and from 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Dec. 28 at Beatley Central Library. Tea and biscuits will be served.

5x5(x5)
Now thru December 30
Torpedo Factory
105 North Union Street
Alexandria
Torpedofactory.org/target
Back by popular demand, this exhibit examines artwork on a very intimate scale, with all work being no larger than 5 inches in any direction. This all-media, juried exhibition includes 112 small works by 68 artists.

First Night Alexandria
December 31
Old Town Alexandria
firstnightalexandria.org
703/746-3301
This annual New Year’s Eve bash takes over Old Town Alexandria with over 100 performances at 21 indoor venues, with live music, dancing, and children’s face painting and games. The afternoon’s Fourth Annual Fun Hunt is joined by all-new activities for families – and dogs! First Night’s beloved fireworks finale returns at a NEW location, with a spectacular display over the Potomac River at midnight. Afternoon activities, 2 to 5 p.m. Performances, 7 to 11:45 p.m. $15 before December 17; $20 after. Children 12 and under and active military are free.

“Up Close and Personal”
Now thru January 7
The Art League
105 N. Union St. Studio 21
Alexandria
TheArtLeague.org
Suzanne Vigil layers colored pencil on acetate to create highly realistic, tightly focused, un-posed portraits.

Dreamgirls
Now thru January 13
Signature Theatre
4200 Campbell Avenue
Arlington
Signature-theatre.com
703/588-9771
Dreamgirls captures the spirit and hope of Motown when a girl group from Chicago makes it big. In a business controlled by men, the female lead fights for recognition, fellowship and love as superstardom challenges their musical and cultural identity.

Joy of the Season Exhibit
Now thru January 20
Torpedo Factory
105 North Union Street
Alexandria
Torpedofactory.org/target
An all-media exhibition featuring work by five Torpedo Factory artists. The artists were asked to respond to the question, “What does the winter season mean to you?”

Tavern Toddlers
Now thru April 30
10:30 am – 12 pm
Gadsby’s Tavern Museum
134, North Royal Street
Gadsby’s Tavern.org
703/646-4242
A special program for toddlers (walkers through 36 months) and their caregivers, featuring a weekly open playtime in the historic ballroom on Mondays, excluding Federal holidays, through the end of April. Craft changes weekly. $7 for a group of three, which must include one adult, or purchase a 5-week pass for $30. No reservations necessary.

If you want to have an event listed, please send an email to mary@thezebra.org.
Abner is a very sweet little guy. He’s a bit hard of hearing, but nothing distracts him from flying to his foster mom and dad.

Baylie is housebroken and crate-trained, love to play, but might not do so well with a cat as I am fascinated by squirrels and would chase them if they let me.

Coaster is a healthy Cocker looking for a new home. I am very sweet and would love to find someone to love me like my mom loved me. I love to play with toys snuggle next to you.

Marcie is a sweet and smart puppy who is thought to be a hound-terrier mix. She is crate-trained, leash-trained, and housebroken. She learns quickly what she is allowed to play with and what is off limits.

Four pups were born to a pure-bred Lab mom and a Pyrenees dad. Snowy (female), Sneakers (female), Stormy (male) and Shadow (male) are very sweet, playful pups. They are smart and gentle.
land section, today, called the Clara Barton Parkway, did survive. Congress rejected suggestions that this road be called the Martha Washington Parkway and chose Clara Barton, to honor the founder of the Red Cross because her former home adjoins the parkway at Glen Echo.

In Harmony with Nature

Parkway designers sought to integrate the road’s design with the undulating terrain following natural contours and winding in gentle curves, featuring natural areas and scenic vistas of the Potomac River. Forested areas contrast with grassy areas. Over 250,000 trees, shrubs, and vines have been planted over the years.

Sections between the 14th and Memorial Bridges were left open for sweeping views of the city across the river. Signs and lights are minimized; billboards are banned.

Most of the bridges consist of reinforced concrete faced with hand-laid, rough-cut stone for a natural look.

Today, the parkway’s natural areas are especially rich in biodiversity for an urban park. Identified so far are 245 species of birds, 25 mammals, 21 reptiles, 16 amphibians, 76 butterflies, 722 moths, 38 arachnids, 91 bees, 37 dragonflies and damselflies, 28 caddisflies, 466 beetles, 61 fish, 43 mollusks and 11 crustaceans.

The natural areas of the parkway are home to 81 species of plants and animals listed in Virginia or Maryland as rare, threatened or endangered. In 1995, Strychnos sp. 15, a species of crassulacean new to science was found in a freshwater seep. Another may have been found in Fort Hunt Park more recently. Turkey Run Park is the only known Virginia site for the Spectacled Nettle Moth (Abrostol urseta).

A 2011 plant survey by Brent Steury, National Park Service Natural Resources Program Manager of GWMP, documented 298 new vascular plants in Virginia, Maryland and Washington, D.C., bringing the known plants of the parkway to 1,313 species. Seventeen may be the most ecologically significant natural areas. Nearby lie the remains of the former town of Matildaville.

The Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, a rare, 480-acre, freshwater, tidal, narrow-leaved cattail wetland, where marsh wrens that weaver globular nests are barely hanging on.

The ruins of the J.W. Kruettner mansion near the Morningide Road turnoff. Kruettner was president of the American Portland Cement Association and the house may have been the first concrete house in Virginia. Over 90 species of birds visit. The ruins were a fortress known as Cig. Dodson whom NPS evicted.

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Turkey Run Park, which puts on a spring wildflower show when Eastern Bluebells (Mertensia virginica) carpet acres.

The 17-acre Tyro L. Johnson grove with hundreds of white pines and dogwood trees, azaleas and rhododendrons and a 43-ton granite monolith quarried 35 miles from former President Johnson’s Texas ranch.

Jones Point, one of the few east coast lighthouses surviving today on the spot George Washington chose as the southern tip of the new 10-mile square U.S. capital district.

Tributes to war heroes, like the Iwo Jima Memorial, the Robert E. Lee Arlington House, Arlington Cemetery and the “Waves and Guilds” memorial, a tribute to the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps unique in the area because it is made of cast aluminum instead of stone.

A forest as natural as one could be in the metropolitan area at Theodore Roosevelt Island, formerly Anacostian Island. Planners intended it to be “similar in character to the natural primeval forests which once covered this and others of the Potomac islands.” In the center is a memorial to Roosevelt.

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