



A publication of the Alexandria Police Department | Fall 2014

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STREET SIGNS :: How often to you pay attention to where you are while driving in Northern Virginia? The general "rule" regarding jurisdictional borders is that the street signs in Alexandria are GREEN, in Arlington they are WHITE, and in Fairfax they are BLUE.



## Police Department Breaks Ground on Memorial

On September 27, after years of hard work, the Alexandria Police Foundation broke ground on a memorial honoring those who have died in the line of duty. Since the early 1800s, eighteen of Alexandria's Police officers have lost their lives in service to the City of Alexandria.

During the ceremony, Mayor William D. Euille, Police Chief Earl L. Cook and Alexandria Police Foundation Chairman Willem Polak gave remarks. Virginia House Representative Jim Moran also attended the groundbreaking ceremony and asked that all pray so that no new names would have to be added to the memorial.



*Survivors from the families of Elijah Chenault, George Crump, Walker Campbell, Elton Hummer, Robert Harris, Eugene Yoakum, Conrad Birney and Charlie Hill broke ground on the Alexandria Police Memorial on September 27.*

The memorial was originally intended to be built with police headquarters in 2011. However, the City did not have the funds to carry out the project. As a result, the Alexandria Police Foundation spearheaded an initiative to create a timeless, publicly accessible memorial. The Foundation worked with two local companies, HDR and Whiting-Turner, to make a memorial that would "properly honor the courage, sacrifice and memory of these officers."

## DULLES PLANE PULL

The 2014 Dulles Day Family Festival & Plane Pull supporting the Special Olympics was held on Saturday, September 20. After the event, Deputy Chief Reyes gave Sergeant Ruggiero and Officer Kramarik a "ride" on the plane.





Virginia "Ginny" Hill-Obranovich's life has been entwined with the Alexandria Police Department for quite some time. Her current involvement and dedication to the Police Department cannot be explained without first describing the extraordinary circumstances that brought her into the Alexandria Police Department family.

In 1976, Ginny and her husband, Charles "Charlie" Hill, moved from Long Island, New York to Alexandria, Virginia. Charlie had been a New York City police officer. When New York City faced financial problems in the 1970s, Charlie was laid off. On August 2, 1976, he became an Alexandria Police officer. He and Ginny settled in to their new life. In 1982, they welcomed a son, Charles, followed by brother, Robert, in 1985.

Charlie worked as a patrol officer. He was assigned specialized positions, as a Field Training Officer and Identification Technician. He joined the Special Operations Team (SOT), a tactical response unit. In 1980, he became the firearms instructor at the police range. In January 1982, he was promoted to corporal.

On the afternoon of March 22, 1989, Charlie was partnered with Officer Andrew M. Chelchowski when the SOT was called to the 300 block of Hopkins Court. Jamie M. Wise, a 34 year-old escapee from a Washington, D.C., halfway house, had taken hostages inside a home to collect a drug debt. At 6:35 p.m., Wise emerged, holding a sawed-off shotgun to the head of a hostage. A police marksman fired and hit Wise. Wise, high on drugs, was able to fire his weapon before being hit. The suspects' shots hit Charlie and Andrew. Charlie was taken to Washington Hospital Center where he was pronounced dead. He was 40 years-old. The police shooting range and a park in Del Ray were later named in his honor.

Ginny's life and the lives of her sons were forever changed that day. Friends from the Police Department continued to support Ginny in any way they could. "I never really considered myself a strong person," says Ginny, "I always leaned on him. But with the help of family and Charlie's friends in the Department I came to see I could be strong and I could get through it." As the years passed, Ginny decided she wanted to give back to the community that had helped and supported her.

In January 2011, Ginny started volunteering as Assistant Volunteer Coordinator with the Police Department. In the summer of 2011, Ginny became Volunteer Coordinator at the request of former Deputy Chief Cleveland Spruill. She set forth in her new volunteer position with the goal of helping make

the jobs of the men and women of the Police Department easier through the use of volunteers. With her guidance, the Volunteer Unit took over public fingerprinting and the SafeAssured ID program. Under her supervision, the number of volunteers increased, giving employees much needed assistance.

In late 2012, Chief Earl Cook asked Ginny if she and her volunteers would be able to restart the Citizens Police Academy (CPA). The academy was offered to citizens semiannually until it was eliminated due to budget restraints. Together, Ginny and her volunteers worked studiously and, in March 2012, the CPA began for the first time in over three years. Currently, the academy is offered twice a year and is fully organized and run by volunteers at no cost to the City. "My volunteers are good, hard-working people. They work tirelessly behind the scenes to support the department and I am extremely grateful for their help and the work they do," said Ginny.

Ginny and the Volunteer Unit also assisted the Alexandria Police Foundation (APF) in updating its website. Ginny began working with the APF to learn more about the organization and what was needed. By the Spring of 2013, the APF had a new website and had named Ginny as its new Executive Director. With Ginny by their side, the APF took over the arduous task of creating and raising funds for an Alexandria Police Memorial to honor the memory of the 18 police officers who lost their lives in service to Alexandria.

With the approval of City Council, the Alexandria Police Foundation began working with HDR Architecture and Whiting-Turner, two local companies, to make the memorial a reality. In nine months, Ginny and the APF raised over 75% of the total cost of the memorial. The APF broke ground on the memorial in September 2014.

Ginny has said that she loves the work she does. It is the Department's family-oriented, caring, and supportive atmosphere that motivates her. It is indeed a family affair, Ginny's son, Robert, currently serves as an Alexandria police officer and her husband, Richard Obranovich, helps Ginny with her duties. "I think the memorial is going to be a great place not only to honor those who have died," says Ginny, "but to honor those who still come to work and put their lives on the line every day."



Ginny and her two sons talk with Chief Earl Cook on the day of the Alexandria Police Memorial Groundbreaking in September 2014.

## SHOPPING SAFETY

On July 11, the Alexandria Police Command Bus made a visit to Potomac Yard. Officers handed out flyers regarding safe shopping tips and answering your safety related questions. This safety initiative was in response to reports of purses being stolen from shopping carts at local stores.

ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

**It only takes seconds for a THIEF to grab your property and get away.**

If you see any suspicious activity, please call the Police Department's non emergency number at 703.746.4444.



**SHOPPING CART THEFTS**

Don't make it easy for thieves. They are on the lookout for items left in shopping carts.

To prevent such theft:

- Stay with your purse or briefcase at all times.
- Keep your purse closed. If easy access to a list is needed, stash the list either in an outside pocket of the handbag or in a pants pocket.

**MINIMIZE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR LOSS**

- Learn to carry only what is actually needed
- Carry only small amounts of cash.
- Take only the credit cards you plan to use.
- Don't carry irreplaceable items, even if they have no cash value.

ALEXANDRIA POLICE DEPARTMENT  
3600 Wheeler Avenue  
Alexandria, VA 22304  
[www.alexandriava.gov/police](http://www.alexandriava.gov/police)

## DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Sergeant Brian Thompson got to spend some time with the First Dogs, Bo and Sonny, when the Alexandria Police Department escorted President Obama on August 7.



## Police Hold Critical Incident Training Exercise

On Wednesday, July 30, the Alexandria Police Department conducted a critical incident training exercise at Landmark Mall, located at 5801 Duke Street. The mock incident took place from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Public safety personnel were in the area from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



*Participants in the critical incident training gather afterwards to discuss logistics.*

The critical incident training exercise was centered around a mock shooting at the mall. The Department's Special Operations Team and Hostage Negotiations Team, as well as the Alexandria Fire Department and Arlington Police Department's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team, SOT and HNT participated in the exercise.

## Alexandria Police Celebrate National Night Out

On Tuesday, August 5, the Alexandria Police celebrated the 31st Annual National Night Out. The special celebration was part of a nationwide crime and drug prevention effort sponsored by the National Association of Town Watch (NATW). Residents in more than 30 Alexandria neighborhoods will turned on their porch lights, hosted neighborhood cook-outs and sponsored block parties. McGruff the Crime Fighting Dog, K-9 Unit, Motor Unit, Bike Patrol, Command Bus, Armored Personnel Carrier and the Crime Scene Mobile Lab toured neighborhoods and offered special demonstrations. Thanks to all who came out for making National Night Out 2014 a success!



## Police Charge Severance in Three Homicide Cases

On Monday, September 8, the Alexandria Police Department announced charges against Charles Severance in the homicides of Ruthanne Lodato, Ron Kirby, and Nancy Dunning. Severance was indicted on the following charges related to the three investigations:

- Nancy Dunning Case: First Degree Murder and Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony
- Ron Kirby Case: Capital Murder, Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony, Possession of a Firearm by a Felon
- Ruthanne Lodato Case: Capital Murder, two counts of Use of a Firearm in the Commission of a Felony, Possession of a Firearm by a Felon, and Malicious Wounding

This has been a complex and time-consuming investigation that has spanned almost 11 years. The Alexandria Police Department would like to thank the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Virginia State Police, and area law enforcement agencies for their assistance.



## Survive the Five 5K

Officers manned an Alexandria Police Department tent at the first Survive the Five 5K at Cameron Run Park on October 4, 2014.

The Survive the Five 5K was hosted by The ART of Driving, an educational awareness program for teen drivers and their parents. Their mission is two-fold: First, to increase awareness among teens and parents of the unique risks faced by young, novice drivers and to impress upon them the need for improved training, increased supervised time behind-the-wheel, and increased parental involvement; Second, to advocate for improvements in driver education for our youth.



## Detectives Honored as Alexandria Kiwanis' Officers of the Year

On October 9, the Alexandria Kiwanis Club honored four of APD's detectives with the Officer of the Year Award.

Sergeant Michael Kochis, Officer William Oakley, Officer Sean Casey and Officer William Cutting received the award for the tireless effort and dedication they put into solving the Dunning, Kirby and Lodato homicides. A huge thank you to Kiwanis for honoring our detectives at such a wonderful event.



*(left to right) Officers Sean Casey and William Oakley, Sergeant Michael Kochis and Officer Cutting at the Kiwanis Awards Luncheon.*

## Police Staff Participate in Employee's Cup

On October 9, members of the Police Department "kicked" off the City of Alexandria Employees' Cup games with kickball. The games are played every Thursday at the Lee Center.



## Deputy Chief Blaine Corle Retires

On October 1, Deputy Chief Blaine Corle retired after 32 years of dedicated service to the Police Department. The men and women of the Alexandria Police Department wish to thank Deputy Chief Corle for his many years of dedicated service and wish him well as he begins a new chapter.



# Crime Information

Major crime and arrests from June 1, 2014 through September 30, 2014

## Police Arrest Man for Attempted Rape

The Alexandria Police Department is investigating a residential burglary and attempted rape that occurred in the 900 block of Franklin Street on Saturday, August 9.

At approximately 1:20 a.m., police were called to a townhouse for a burglary and an assault. The suspect broke into a residence through the front door. He then attempted to sexually assault an adult female who was sleeping inside the house. The victim fought her attacker and suspect fled the area on foot. Officers responded to the scene and after a search apprehended the suspect.

Dennis Wheaton, II, 44, of Falls Church, was charged with Attempted Rape and Burglary. He was held without bond.

## Police Arrest Man for Sexual Battery

The Police Department is investigating a sexual battery that occurred in the 3100 block of Duke Street on Wednesday, July 23.

At approximately 2:30 p.m., police were called to the CVS Pharmacy for a man who assaulted a woman while they were both inside the pharmacy. The suspect reached underneath the skirt of the adult female and attempted to remove her underwear. Officers responded to the scene and immediately apprehended the suspect.

Abayneh Yemer, 25, of Alexandria was charged with Sexual Battery and Attempted Object Sexual Penetration. He was held without bond.

## Police Investigate Pedestrian Struck at Glebe and Commonwealth

Alexandria Police are investigating a traffic collision involving a pedestrian that occurred on Tuesday, June 24, at the intersection of Glebe Road and Commonwealth Avenue.

At 4:50 p.m., police responded to the intersection for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle. Initial investigation shows a black truck and a blue sedan were involved in a collision. As a result of that crash, a pedestrian pushing a stroller was struck on the sidewalk. The victim, a 34-year-old female, was transported to a local hospital with serious injuries. The infant appeared uninjured but was transported to a hospital for observation. Three passengers from the sedan were also transported to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

Members of the Crash Reconstruction Team are investigating the incident. The investigation is ongoing.

## Police Investigate Homicide on Derby Court

The Police Department is investigating a homicide. Police responded to the 5600 block of Derby Court on Friday, July 4, at 11:32 a.m. for an unresponsive female. An adult female was found deceased in her residence. The manner of death could not be determined at the scene. An autopsy ruled the death a homicide.

The victim has been identified as Asabech Abayneh, 43, of Alexandria.

Anyone with information regarding Ms. Abayneh or who has had contact with her in the past six months is asked to contact Detective Loren King at 703.746.6689. This is the third homicide in Alexandria in 2014.

## Police Arrest Suspect in Gas Station Robberies

The Police Department has arrested a man in connection with several robberies of local gas stations. Cleveland Todd, 53, of Alexandria, was arrested on Saturday, June 21, and charged with two counts of Robbery and one count of Attempted Robbery for the following incidents:

- June 7, at 1:27 a.m.: Robbery of Exxon Gas Station, 2320 Jefferson Davis Highway
- June 16, at 9:06 p.m.: Robbery of Sunoco Gas Station, 3500 King Street
- June 16, at 11:26 p.m.: Attempted Robbery of Exxon Gas Station, 2320 Jefferson Davis Highway

He is being held without bond at the Alexandria Detention Center. Detectives are investigating his connection with similar crimes.

## **Police Investigate Sexual Assault**

The Police Department is investigating a sexual assault that occurred in the 5000 block of Dawes Avenue on Monday, June 23.

At approximately 2 p.m., police responded to the area and met with the victim, a 19-year-old female. She was walking to the Northern Virginia Community College campus when a man approached her from behind. He grabbed her groin underneath her skirt and then fled on foot. The suspect is described as a dark skinned male with a beard and mustache, possibly Middle Eastern. He was in his 20's, 5'4", with a thin build. The suspect was wearing a brown shirt, brown shorts, and a black baseball cap.

Anyone with information about this incident or the suspect is asked to contact Detective Adrienne Miller at 703.746.6734.

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## **Alexandria Police Charge Man in 2009 Homicide**

The Alexandria Police Department has charged Willie Smith, 48, a non-city resident, with the 2009 murder of Michael James Horton.

On Thursday, June 18, 2009, at 6:00 p.m., officers responded to the 600 block of N. Payne Street for a report of an aggravated assault. They found a man lying on the ground suffering from several stab wounds to the upper body. He was pronounced dead at the hospital. An autopsy ruled the death a homicide.

Alexandria Police Detectives regularly review unsolved cases to see if new investigative steps are available. Individuals in this case were interviewed again for possible new information. It was determined that the suspect, Willie Smith, killed the victim, Michael James Horton, after an altercation.

Willie Smith is currently incarcerated at the Greensville Correctional Facility for Abduction and Robbery that occurred in Fairfax County in 2009.

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## **Police Charge Three Suspects in Russell Road Homicide**

Alexandria Police have charged three suspects in connection with the homicide of Julio Caesar Urrutia-Erazo that occurred in the 3800 block of Russell Road on June 19, 2014. Jesus Alejandro Chavez was charged with Use of Firearm During a Crime of Violence Causing Death, Murder in Aid of Racketeering, and Felony Possession of a Firearm. Jose Del Cid was charged with Murder in Aid of Racketeering. Genaro Sen Garcia was also charged with Murder in Aid of Racketeering.

These charges were placed through an indictment by the U.S. Attorney's Office. The full indictment charged 13 gang members with crimes in Prince William County, Fairfax County and Alexandria.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call Sergeant Michael Kochis with the Alexandria Police Department at 703.746.6285.

## **Police Warn of "Spoofing" Fraud from Department Phone Number**

The Alexandria Police Department is warning citizens that one or more suspects have been fraudulently "spoofing" the Alexandria Non-Emergency Line phone number to demand money and threaten arrest if payment is not made.

Anyone who has received a phone call or message from the number 703.746.4444, accompanied by a demand for money to pay outstanding court, traffic fines, or to bring their vehicle to Police Headquarters should not respond to that message or hang up. No one from the Police Department is making those calls.

More than 20 citizens called the Police Department reporting that a male representing himself as a police officer, with the 703.746.4444 number showing on Caller ID, called them. The "scammer" either left a message or threatened them over the phone. The man said they owed money for outstanding court fines, traffic offenses, etc., and asked victims for various ID numbers. It is believed that the suspect would eventually tell victim's they must immediately pay to avoid arrest. People receiving the calls have been suspicious and called the non-emergency number back to verify. That is the correct action to take.

The Police Department does not contact people and demand money. It appears someone is "spoofing" the non-emergency phone number in an attempt to pass himself off as being from the Police Department. The 703.746.4444 phone number is still the working non-emergency number. Anyone who calls this number will reach the Department of Emergency Communications; "spoofing" does not work in reverse and when you call 703.746.4444, residents will reach a legitimate City employee.

## At-a-Glance: 2014 Crime Statistics\*

OFFENSE	2013	2014	% CHANGE
Homicide	4	4	0%
Rape	7	8	14.29%
Robbery	68	97	42.65%
Aggravated Assault	92	77	-16.30%
Burglary	186	166	-10.75%
Larceny	1,980	1,929	-2.58%
Auto Theft	213	205	-3.76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,550</b>	<b>2,486</b>	<b>-2.51%</b>

\*Crime statistics are for January 1 through September 30, 2014, and are compared to the same period of the previous year. The numbers in the chart are raw and unverified. They are not the final crime statistic values and may be changed by our review process.

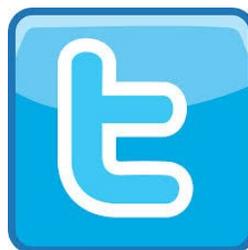
## Have You Seen Us?

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

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



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