


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 18, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CITY COUNCIL RECEIPT OF FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA'S
2008 ANNUAL REPORT

ISSUE: City Council receipt of First Night Alexandria's 2008 Annual Report (attachment).

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council receive the Annual Report from First Night Alexandria and thank the Board of Directors for its efforts on behalf of the City.

DISCUSSION: In 1994, the City of Alexandria began holding the First Night Alexandria program. Every year thereafter, with the exception of the year 2000, this annual celebration of the new year has been held. The event transforms retail stores, office lobbies, museums and public facilities into performance venues that showcase local, regional and national talent, and has become one of the regions premier New Year's Eve celebrations. First Night Alexandria has increased in popularity each year and drew over 8,000 to 10,000 participants to the December 31, 2008 celebration. Last year's program included 178 individual performances at 30 venues within Old Town Alexandria. The City provided First Night Alexandria annually with \$50,000 in City funding and with logistical and staff support in FY 2009. First Night raised \$79,000 in badge sales, \$62,800 in grants (\$50,000 City of Alexandria), \$46,000 from corporate sponsors and \$5,757 in individual contributions.

ATTACHMENT: First Night Alexandria's 2008 Annual Report.

STAFF:
Rich Baier, Interim Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
William Chesley, Deputy Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Leslie Clark, Division Chief, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

FIRSTNIGHT
ALEXANDRIA
2008
 **ANNUAL**
REPORT

As the **MAYOR** OF ALEXANDRIA

and a sponsor of

First Night Alexandria,

I am proud to be associated with this **fun and**

affordable New Year's Eve

celebration. It is the perfect

ending for all of the holiday festivities that take place in this

GREAT **CITY**

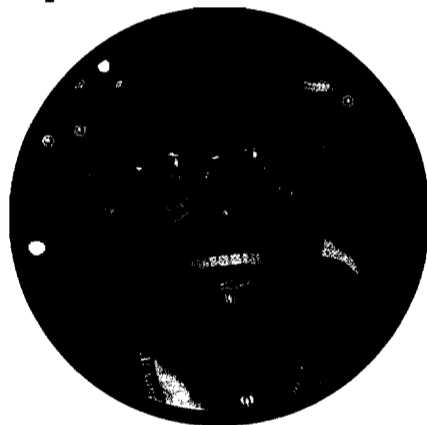
from the holiday tree lighting the evening after Thanksgiving to all

The Campagna Center events the first weekend in December right

through to December 31st. **We hope you will join us on**

December 31st

when the city of
ALEXANDRIA
becomes a stage.



Honorable **William D. Euille** Mayor, City of Alexandria

2008 Year in Review

New Year's Eve really howled through Alexandria! December 31, 2008 (we hope) will go down in history as the coldest and most wind-swept New Year's Eve in recent memory. We're looking forward to milder weather on December 31, 2009!

WOW...



In spite of the wind we had nearly 300 runners for the Second Ever King Street Mile, presented by First Night Alexandria and **Pacers Running Store**. Those hearty souls ran right into the wind at 5:00 pm from Market Square to Union Station to kick off the activities. They welcomed the warmth of the train station at the end of that race! Runners included three members of City Council – **Rob Krupicka**, **Paul Smedberg**, and **Justin Wilson**. Deputy City Manager **Mark Jinks** also ran. Special thanks to our Mayor **Bill Euille**, and Deputy Mayor **Del Pepper** for participating in the awards ceremony; and to **Virginia Paving** and **Fitness Together** for sponsoring.

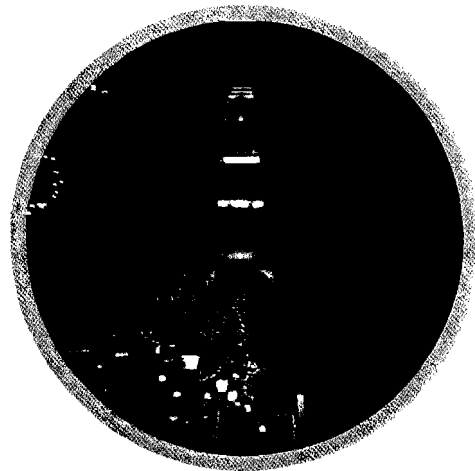
In spite of the cold the streets, sidewalks and venues were filled with revelers. Attendees tell us they want more and bigger venues. They

want more entertainment. 64% of the people who attended First Night Alexandria came for the first time. Historic Alexandria presents challenges because we just don't have that many large buildings with good acoustics to accommodate large audiences. We are so grateful to the churches and businesses that allow us to use their buildings on New Year's Eve.

This year we had 30 venues with 38 stages accommodating 66 acts and more than 178 performances – the highest numbers in the 14 year history of First Night Alexandria.

Colonial Parking offered free parking at several locations including the Patent and Trademark complex on Eisenhower Avenue, **Embassy Suites Hotel** and the Hilton Hotel after 5:00 pm.

Unfortunately the finale and fireworks this year had to be cancelled because of the high winds. As a matter of fact, we learned many fireworks displays along the eastern part of the country were cancelled on New Year's Eve because of the weather.



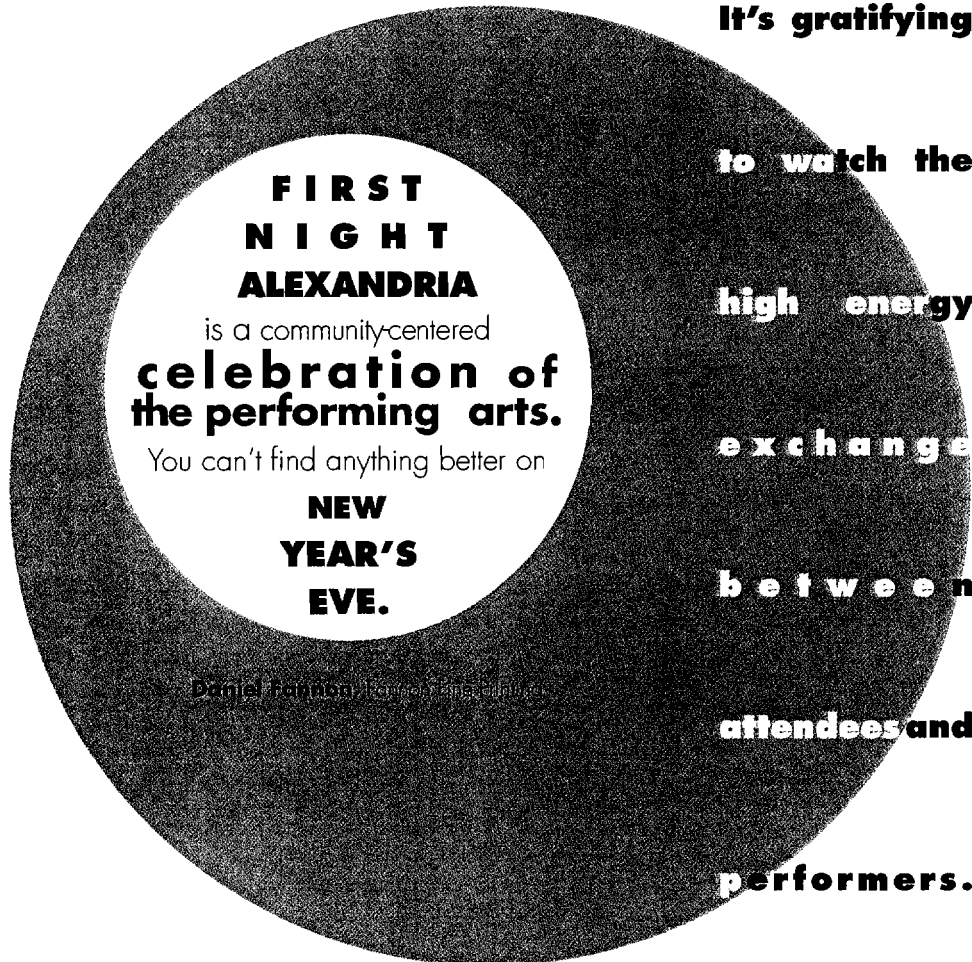
was it
COLD!

Vorys

was thrilled to associate with First Night Alexandria as a major sponsor. **First Night Alexandria** successfully assembles the civic, business and performing arts constituencies as a single Alexandria community, ringing in the New Year in a safe, entertaining, family-oriented environment.

As a corporate sponsor of this event, we found the **First Night Alexandria team** to be **extremely accommodating and effective in promoting its sponsors through various forms of print and electronic media**. Our law firm was pleased to kick-off our 100th anniversary year by welcoming 2009 as part of the First Night Alexandria celebration.

Andrew Palmieri, Vorys Legal Counsel



**FIRST
NIGHT
ALEXANDRIA**

is a community-centered

**celebration of
the performing arts.**

You can't find anything better on

**NEW
YEAR'S
EVE.**

Daniel Robbins, Founder, First Night Alexandria

It's gratifying

to watch the

high energy

exchange

between

attendees and

performers.

Mike Geissinger, Alexandria Guide Magazine



Fred Parker, Hard Times Café

2008 Year in Review

The success of First Night Alexandria, in fact the event itself, would not be possible without the support of more than 125 volunteers on December 31st. These volunteers make it possible to sell admission badges at all venues and to provide information to attendees, half of whom came from outside Alexandria. For their efforts, they receive free admission, a box dinner and a souvenir apron – all of which was made possible because of the sponsorship of the **Alexandria Hotel Association, McLaughlin Ryder Investments,** and **Virginia American Water.** We can never adequately thank the army of supporters First Night Alexandria enjoys.



First Night Alexandria is a private, non-profit organization that has an independent Board of Directors. The City of Alexandria, through various grants, provides nearly one-third of the approximate \$200,000 budget to produce the event; the generosity of businesses and individuals provides the second third. The final third of the budget comes from the sale of admission badges, the price of which is purposely kept low to make it an affordable way for all to spend New Year's Eve together! Imagine - 178 performances for just \$20! Children 12 and under have been and continue to be free when accompanied by a paying adult. For the past several years, we have also offered free admission to active military personnel.



What motivates me is the wonderful live performances on New Year's Eve - seeing old and young all swinging to the music - and being able to **stroll from show to show!**

Chris Wolz, Forum One Communications

**We
loved
the
event**

First Night Attendee

2008 First Night Alexandria Sponsors

These are the individuals and businesses that have supported First Night each and every year since 2001, ensuring that Alexandria becomes a stage on New Year's Eve. Without their consistent support, First Night would not be possible.

THANK YOU!

The Honorable Bill Euille,
Mayor, Alexandria
Alexandria Chamber
of Commerce
Alexandria Commission
for the Arts
Alexandria Convention
and Visitors Association
Alexandria Gazette
Brecher Design Group
City of Alexandria
Colonial Parking
DASH (Alexandria Transit)
Embassy Suites Hotel
David and Martha Martin
Meetings & Events
of Distinction
Old Town Business and
Professional Association

Race Sponsors

Pacers Running Store
Virginia Paving
Fitness Together
Nike

Badge Sponsor

Vorys Law Firm

Teen Venue Sponsor

The Honorable Bill Euille,
Mayor, Alexandria

Volunteer Sponsors

Alexandria Hotel Association
McLaughlin Ryder Investments
Virginia American
Water Company

Web Site Sponsor

New Target Internet Design

Accounting Sponsor

Halt, Buzas and Powell

Transportation Sponsor

Jack Taylor's
Alexandria Toyota

Print Media Sponsor

Alexandria Gazette Packet

Loyal Supporters

Alexandria Guide Magazine
Armed Forces
Benefit Association
Club Managers
Association of America
Deer Park Water
DeVry University
Extra Space Storage
Fannon Fine Printing
Gratitude Enterprises
LCOR
Mt. Vernon Gazette
Old Dominion Boat Club
ThinkFun

Friends of First Night

BB&T
Burke & Herbert Bank
Clarke & Sampson
Comcast
Dominion
Forum One Communications
IDI Companies
Rotary Club of Alexandria

All of these sponsors are acknowledged at www.FirstNightAlexandria.org which continues to receive thousands of visitors. More than 71,000 visits were recorded to the First Night Alexandria home page in 2008. An average of 4.79 pages were viewed during each visit and visitors spent more than four minutes per session! **New Target Internet Design** (www.newtarget.com) built and hosts the First Night Alexandria web site.

Along with these community-minded organizations, the following Alexandria businesses, non-profit organizations, and churches opened their doors for this successful community celebration. We thank them and hope you will be back to visit them throughout the year.

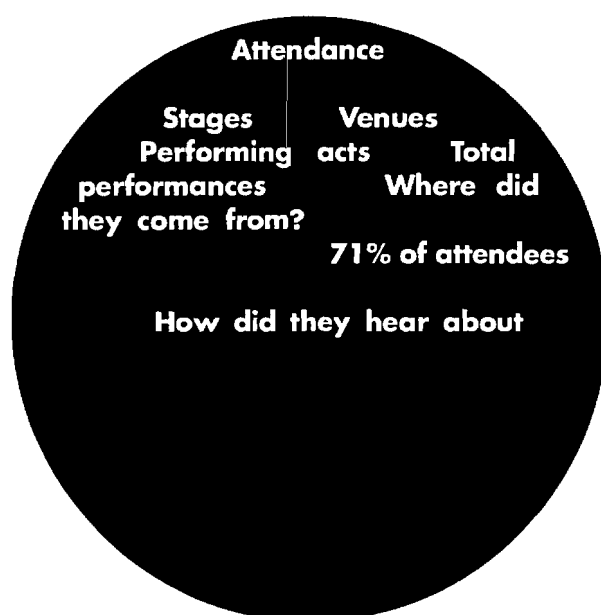
Alexandria City Hall	Hotel Monaco
Alexandria Red Cross	Imagine Artwear
Alexandria's Union Station	Jefferson-Houston School
Alleyne AME Zion Church	Little Theatre
American Academy of Otolaryngology	Lyceum
The Athenaeum	Meade Memorial Episcopal Church
The Atrium Building	Nickells & Sheffler
Bizim Collection	Old Presbyterian Meeting House
The Campagna Center	St. Paul's Episcopal Church
The Cash Grocer Building	Society for Human Resource Management
Christ Church	Torpedo Factory
Durant Memorial Center	United States Patent and Trademark Atrium
Embassy Suites	Uptowner Café
George Washington Masonic Memorial	Washington Street United Methodist Church
Hooray for Books	Westin Hotel

**Please take note of our sponsors
listed in this report; we couldn't do
this without them!**

2008 First Night Alexandria Fun Facts



2008 First Night Alexandria by the Numbers



Income:

Badge Sales • \$79,000
Grants • \$62,800
Corporate Sponsors • \$46,000
Individual Contributions • \$5,757

Expenses:

Entertainment • \$64,000
Marketing • \$45,000
Management & Administration • \$45,000
City Services • \$26,000
Fees, Insurance, Supplies • \$14,000



**I
LOVED**

your **First Night!!** We brought friends from out of the area and we all had a wonderful time. All the venues and performers were great and the various door-helpers, etc. made it all seem super well-organized and user-friendly. Congrats to all who organized and worked on this - we will definitely come again!

First Night Attendee

What a wonderful **family activity**
to spend New Year's Eve!

EXCELLENT
festivities!

We went to the
magic show, the Church, Tango quartet,
Barbershop quartet, joke telling/downs/boat
making at the school, and several other events!
Thoroughly enjoyed them **ALL!**

First Night Attendee

We realize weather will always be a challenge and today's economic climate will also force us to examine our expenses. The board remains committed to First Night Alexandria and its mission to provide an affordable, enjoyable New Year's Eve celebration which makes the City alive.

We are indebted to each member of the board for their time and energy.

Honorary Chair

Mayor William D. Euille

2008 Board of Directors

Officers

Michael Geissinger
President
Alexandria Guide Magazine

Mary Anne Martins
Secretary/Treasurer
Virginia Commerce Bank

Charlotte Hall
President-elect
Potomac Riverboat Company

Directors

Mike Anderson
Mango Mike's
Monica Bell
Gratitude Enterprises
Kerry Donley
Virginia Commerce Bank
Daniel Fannon
Fannon Fine Printing
John Irvine
Virginia Paving
Laura Machanic
New Target Internet Design
Sean McEearney
McEearney Associates Realtors
Page Moon
Focus Data Solutions
Fred Parker
Hard Times Café
Carol Supplee
Imagine Artwear
Chris Wolz
Farum One Communications

Staff

Ann M. Dorman, CMP
Executive Director

Richard F. Dorman, CAE
Executive Vice President

Katrina Lucas
Media and PR
sofiEvents

Ginny Kelly
Volunteers

Louren Smith
Do More With LES

Design:
Brecher Design Group

Photographs:
**Michael Geissinger &
Barbara Brecher**

Printing:
Fannon Fine Printing

I'll never miss it!

Monica Bell, Gratitude Enterprises

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