


## City of Alexandria, Virginia

15  
2-26-08

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2008

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RECEIPT OF THE ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS ANNUAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007 (JULY 1, 2006 - JUNE 30, 2007)

---

**ISSUE:** Receipt of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2007 (July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007) (Attachment).

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** That City Council receive the Annual Report from the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and thank the Commission for its efforts on behalf of the City.

**DISCUSSION:** The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is a fifteen-member advisory board created by City Council in 1984 to lead and advocate for cultural development within the City and surrounding region. The ACA fulfills this mission by redistributing a substantial portion of its annual appropriation from the City Council and funds from the Virginia Commission for the Arts to Alexandria-based arts organizations through a grant program which awarded \$214,937 to arts organizations. The Commission facilitates communications between arts organizations and the public. The Commission also provides networking opportunities for ACA Commissioners and Alexandria arts groups.

The Commission sponsors programs and provides services to make the arts accessible for all. The City of Alexandria is home to more than 200 commercial galleries, antique shops and nonprofit arts organizations which offer a wide range of artistic offerings. ACA's Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report lists the Commission's accomplishments such as the Alex Awards, the annual Festival of the Arts, the Poet Laureate, City government art galleries and the Lord Cultural Resources Report.

Future challenges for the Commission include developing a funding mechanism for public art and implementing the recommendations in the Lord Cultural Resources Report.

**ATTACHMENT:** Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report for the Alexandria Commission for the Arts

**STAFF:**

Kirk Kincannon, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Cheryl Anne Colton, Cultural Arts Administrator, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

# City of Alexandria



ALEXANDRIA  
COMMISSION  
FOR THE ARTS

## Alexandria Commission for the Arts

FY 2007 Annual Report  
July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007



# **ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

**July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is an advisory board created by City Council in 1984. Its mission is to lead and advocate for cultural development in the City of Alexandria. The Commission fulfills this mission by supporting the development and expansion of the arts in Alexandria; serving as an advisory body for the arts in Alexandria; serving as the single funding source for the arts; allocating funds to particular arts activities; and seeking national, state, and private support for the arts in Alexandria.

The Commission meets on the third Tuesday of every month from September to June at the Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center, 1605 Cameron Street.

### **II. LIST OF MEMBERS:**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts is composed of 15 members. Five members are appointed to represent Arts Consumers, five are appointed for their expertise in each of the five arts disciplines (Dance, Literature, Music, Theater, and Visual Arts) and five are appointed for their expertise in arts education, business, cultural tourism or marketing.

#### **MEMBERS SERVING DURING FISCAL YEAR 2007:**

Patricia Miller, Chair - Expertise - Arts Education and Business

Betsy Anderson - Expertise - Arts Discipline

Jim Allison - Expertise - Arts Discipline

Barb Boehm - Member at Large

Mary H. Chaffe Brooks - Expertise - Arts Education and Business

Abigail Dillingham - Student Member

Donna Fowler- Member at Large

Ann Greer - Expertise - Arts Education and Business

Morgan Hilton - Expertise - Arts Education and Business

Matthew Harwood - Expertise - Arts Discipline

Marla Howell - Member at Large

Eileen O'Brien - Member at Large

Lynn O'Connell - Expertise Arts Discipline

Sylvia Saborio - Expertise - Arts Education and Business  
Susan Sanders - Expertise - Arts Discipline  
Margaret Wohler - Member at Large

**CITY STAFF:**

Kirk W. Kincannon, Director - Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities  
Janet Barnett, Deputy Director - Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities  
Cheryl Anne Colton, Cultural Arts Administrator-Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities  
Patti North-Rudin, Public Art/International Festival Coordinator- Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

**ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS  
PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

**Alex Awards:**

The annual Alex Awards promotes interest and involvement in the arts by recognizing excellence in four categories: Artistic- Excellence in an Artistic Discipline; Community - Excellence in Service to the Arts; Education - Outstanding Contributions to Arts Education; and Business - Innovative Partnerships between Businesses and the Arts. Two hundred people attended the Alexandria Commission for the Arts' 2006 Alex Awards on Friday evening, October 20, at the Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center.

Chip Brienza, WGMS on-air personality, was the master of ceremonies. The winners were recognized by Mayor William D. Euille and Pat Miller, chair of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts. The 2006 Alex Award winners include: Special Recognition Alex Award–Suzanne S. Brock; Excellence in an Artistic Discipline–Eclipse Chamber Orchestra; Excellence in Service to the Arts–Gwen Harrison Lockhart; and Outstanding Contributions in Arts Education–Laura Wollman.

Major producing and presenting sponsors of the event were: The Honorable William D. Euille, Mayor, City of Alexandria; Mr. & Mrs. Gant Redmon; Jack Taylor's Alexandria Toyota; A Show of Hands; Del Ray Artisans; First Night Alexandria; The Honorable Ludwig P. Gaines, Councilman, City of Alexandria; Jennifer Walker, McEneaney Associates; and Wilson Grand Communications. Two of the four recipients of this year's Alex Awards received a uniquely framed piece of artwork by artist Matthew Harwood. Two recipients received a unique ceramic sculpture created Jennifer Hatfield. In addition, each recipient of the 2006 Alex Awards received a brass star draped on a blue ribbon created by David M. Martin, GoldWorks, Inc.

The presentation of the awards was intermingled with musical, dance, poetry and presentations by Commission grantees. Audiences enjoyed performances by the Washington Balalaika Orchestra; The Alexandria Choral Society Children's Chorus; Jane Franklin Dance Company; Siobhan Quinn; and the Choreographers Collaboration Project; and the T. C. Williams Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Terrell LeVaughn Ambrose; a poem "Music" by Taylor Dohmen, Alexandria City Public Schools' Youth Poet Laureate presented by Emily Breeding, Student, George Washington Middle School; and a tribute to Alexandria' Past Poet Laureate Jean Elliot, presented by Mrs. Dona Deleon.

### **Alexandria Old Town Festival of the Arts:**

For the third year, the Alexandria Commission for the Arts led the planning efforts for the 2006 Old Town Festival of the Arts held on September 9 and 10, 2006. Over 60,000 people attended the 2006 Festival of the Arts. The Festival included over 200 visual artists from around the country, and a local "Alexandria" component consisting of visual and performing arts artists from Alexandria and Northern Virginia.

Twenty-two artists participated in the Local Color's Northern Virginia Regional Exhibition. The artists' media varied from oil painting to photography and included clay and wood works. This exhibition allowed local artists not only to display their works, but also sell them. Four pieces of art were sold during this exhibition. The exhibition was also on display after the Festival and ran from September 11 through October 2 in the Vola Lawson Lobby located in City Hall.

### **Alexandria Poet Laureate:**

In the Fall of 2006, the Commission for the Arts assisted in developing a call for nominations for a Poet Laureate whose role was to promote an appreciation of poetry as an art form, encourage the creative writing and reading of literature, and promote literacy through poetry. A member of the Alexandria Commission for the Arts served on the panel of judges for the selection of a Poet Laureate for the City of Alexandria. The panel of judges reviewed eighteen nominations and selected five finalists. From the finalist interviews the panel of judges unanimously selected Mary McElveen as the best candidate. The range of her poetry was both simple and complex, and her presentation and reading style was engaging. The Commission for the Arts endorsed the panel of judges' recommendation for naming Mary McElveen as the new Poet Laureate. In turn, City Council unanimously accepted the panel of judges recommendation to have Mary McElveen proclaimed as the City's Poet Laureate at its April 12, 2007 meeting. Ms. McElveen wrote a poem, "City of Songs" for the occasion of her proclamation. She also wrote a poem "Wind from the River" for the Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Park's rededication ceremony held on May 12, 2007.

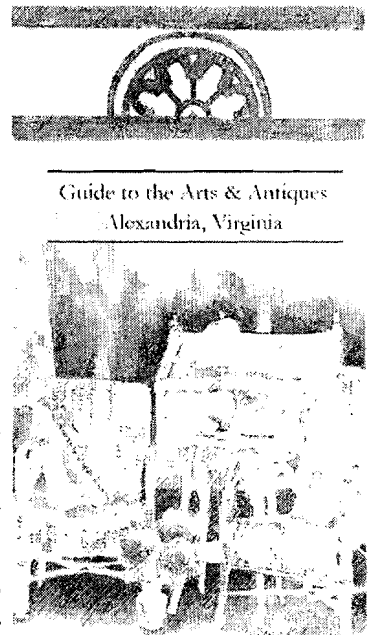


**artCHAT Program:**

Sixty people attended the annual artCHAT picnic on Thursday, July 20, 2006 at Fort Ward Park. The Alexandria Harmonizers performed immediately following the picnic in the Fort Ward Park’s Ampitheater. Over fifty people attended the December 14, holiday potluck artCHAT that was held at the Lloyd House. And 30 people participated in the April 26, 2007 artCHAT which was a “Hard Hat Tour of the new T.C. Williams High School Facility. The artCHAT programs are conducted in partnership with the Alexandria Commission for the Arts and the Alexandria Arts Forum.

**Arts and Antiques Guide:**

The Virginia Park and Recreation Society recognized the *Guide to the Arts and Antiques in the City of Alexandria* as the 2006 Outstanding Promotional brochure in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The recognition occurred at the Virginia Park and Recreation Society’s annual conference held November 5-7, 2006 in Virginia Beach, VA. The *Guide* project was a collaboration among the Alexandria Commission for the Arts, who had oversight over the project; antique shop and commercial gallery owners who guided the project and solicited other owners to participate; Alexandria artists who provided art pieces to be included in the design; the Office of Historic Alexandria who provided the historic listings; and a graphic design student intern who provided in-kind layout expertise. Fifty-one antique shop and commercial gallery owners contributed to make the project 100% self-supporting. Fifty thousand *Guides* were distributed to: the galleries and antique shop owner, the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association, the Alexandria City Public Libraries, the neighborhood Recreation Centers, to the tourist sites such as the Torpedo Factory Art Center, historic museums and properties, to City Hall, along with a number of hotels and retail stores in the Greater Washington, D.C. region.



**Arts and Economic Prosperity III Study:**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts continued its participation in the Arts and the Economic Prosperity III study, sponsored by the Americans for the Arts, a national arts service organization. The Arts and Economic Prosperity III study documents the impact of the cultural industry in 156 communities across the country. Regionally, the study is facilitated by the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, a local arts service organization based in Washington, DC. The results of study, announced in June 2007, stated that the arts and cultural industry in Alexandria contributes over \$80 million dollars to the local economy. This substantial figure is comprised of \$13.64 million in expenditures by nonprofit arts and cultural organizations



and an additional \$66.37 million in event-related spending by their audiences. The arts and cultural organizations support 1,803 full-time equivalent jobs, generates \$30.19 million in household income to local residents, and delivers \$5.71 million in local and state government revenue. Attendees to local arts and cultural events spend an average of \$39.65 per person, excluding the cost of event admission. This spending helps to provide vital revenue into local restaurants, hotels, retail stores, parking garages, and other businesses in Alexandria. The study demonstrates that investing in the arts and cultural activities yields economic benefits, and lays to rest a common misconception: that communities support the arts and culture at the expense of local economic development. It demonstrates further that investing in the arts support jobs, generates government revenue, and is a cornerstone of tourism. This report shows conclusively, that the arts mean business in the City of Alexandria.

### **Arts Receptions:**

The Commission for the Arts and the Del Ray Artisans sponsored a special arts reception to welcome James K. Hartmann as the new City Manager for the City of Alexandria. Over 100 artists, arts representatives and arts patrons attended the reception held at the Colasanto Center, 2704 Mt. Vernon Avenue on November 16.

The Commission for the Arts was one of the sponsors for a Northern Virginia arts reception for the Virginia Commission for the Arts held on March 28, 2007 at the Signature Theatre in Arlington, VA. This reception coincided with the Virginia Commission for the Arts' Winter 2007 meeting in Alexandria.

### **City Galleries:**

#### *Art in City Hall*

A second juried exhibition for "Art in City Hall" program was held September 20, 2006 through March 23, 2007 at City Hall, 301 King St., second floor. Mayor William D. Euille began this initiative to promote the arts citywide. The second was a collaboration between the Art League, the Del Ray Artisans, the Torpedo Factory Artists Association, Springwater Fiber Workshop, the Commission for the Arts and the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities.

Stephen Phillips, curator of The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC was juror for the exhibition. The opening reception was held October 10 and top awards were awarded to: best in show: Guy Rando, "Cypress Forest," Acrylic; second place: Robert Keating, "Almost Done," Photograph/computer work; and, third place: Marge Holtz, "Zig-Zag," Fiber Art-Quilt.

On March 15, Mayor William D. Euille was host to 20 Visual Arts students from T.C. Williams High School. The conversation between the youth and the Mayor was focused on the City of Alexandria's encouragement of art activities in the City.

The Spring 2007 show ran from April 18 through September 14, 2007 and included the addition of the third floor of City Hall. Norman Parish, Owner of Parish gallery of Georgetown, Washington, D.C. served as juror for the third exhibition. Award winners were announced at the opening reception on April 24. The top awards were awarded to: best of show: Tatyana Schremko, "Lady of Chaillot;" second place" Carol Lopatin "St. Croix Great State Pond;" third place: Carol Hershey, "Plum Island Moon;" and 19 honorable mentions.

#### *Durant Center Gallery*

The elegant Dr. Oswald Durant Memorial Center's gallery located at 1605 Cameron Street, was host for the Del Ray Artisans' artist Paul Zapatka exhibited his paintings from March 2007 through April 2007. And to end Fiscal Year 2006-2007, the Guild of American Papercutters' exhibit ran from May through July, 2007.

#### *Mayor's, City Council and City Manager Galleries*

Three new galleries were opened this year. The Mayor's Gallery, located in his conference room, was opened in the Fall of 2006 with Bryan's Leister's paintings, followed by Becky Heavner's Fabric Art. Randall H. Cherry's photography was on view from May through July 2007. The City Manager's Gallery, located in his conference room, showcased Carol Dupree's paintings which were exhibited from April through June 2007. In the City Council conference room gallery, Wynn Cressey exhibited her paintings in February through March, 2007 and Mark Blackden's photography was shown in the City Council conference room gallery from April through July, 2007.

#### **European "Poetry in Motion©:"**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts was one of the regional partners with the European Union's 2007 Poetry in Motion Project © which celebrated the works of Poets from the European Union. This project presented poetry on temporary display during the month of May in Metro Stations throughout the National Capital region. The project was a partnership with Member States of the European Union, the Delegation of the European Commission in Washington, the Poetry Society of America, Local Arts Councils/Commissions of Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Art in Transit Program.

With the partnership, the Commission's logo was included 600 interior and exterior poetry displays on Metro buses serving the Capital region; dioramas in five Metro Stations (Metro Center, Gallery Place, Union Station, Dupont Circle, L'Enfant Plaza); on the website: [www.europeanpoetryinmotion.eu](http://www.europeanpoetryinmotion.eu); and printed media advisories and bookmarks. Members of the Commission for the Arts and Mary McElveen, Alexandria's Poet Laureate attended a launch event for the European Union's 2007 Poetry in Motion Project © on May 3, 2007 at the Embassy of Germany.





**Lord Cultural Resources, Planning and Management, Inc.:**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts, in partnership with the Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, worked with Lord Cultural Resources--Planning and Management, Inc. to guide the Commission in exploring a new organizational model that will allow it to better fulfill its mission; and to work with the Commission, community leaders and citizens in preparing a community-wide vision for the arts in Alexandria. In the Fall of 2006, Lord Cultural Resources submitted an Interim Report. A Vision and Strategy Workshop was held on January 6, 2007 with members of the Commission and a Lord Cultural Resources consultant to discuss the findings in the report, create a vision for the arts and to develop strategies for implementation. The Lord Final Report was received in the Spring of 2007 and placed on-line for feedback by the participants and public as a whole. The report offers fifteen recommendations. These recommendations focus on a vision for the arts; a new mission, strategic plan, and organizational structure for the Commission; and ways to increase funding resources for the arts. The next step for implementation will be a future community dialogue about the Lord report to solicit additional insights from the community will be scheduled at a later date.

**Public Art:**

*Charles Houston Public Art Project*

At the June 12 meeting, City Council endorsed the concept of incorporating public art honoring Charles Houston into the renovated Charles Houston Recreation Center. The proposed public art will honor, commemorate and memorialize Charles Houston and his contributions to the struggle for civil rights and equality in public education in the City of Alexandria. It is anticipated the memorial will be sited in the open space-pedestrian plaza at the main entrance of the new facility. Council requested that the Commission along with the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Department coordinate discussions with the Charles Houston Parent Advisory Board and staff at the Alexandria Black History Museum, as well as schedule public meetings to garner insights, input and community support, and prepare a report to City Council in early 2008 on its findings from the public meetings and to provide Council with a scope of work for the art project, anticipated costs, and fundraising plans for the project.

### *Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Park*

The Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial Park project plans to honor the heroic efforts of African Americans and to commemorate their sacrifice as they found freedom. Freedmen's Cemetery is located in the 1000 block of South Washington Street and the 700 block of Church Street. From 1864 until 1869, the cemetery was the burial ground for as many as 1,800 freedmen-black men, women and children who escaped slavery and sought refuge in Alexandria during the Civil War. More than 100 African American soldiers were also buried in this cemetery, but were moved in 1865 to Alexandria National Cemetery. On June 12, City Council approved a design competition process for the design of the Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial Park and created a Project Design Steering Committee to assist with implementing a design completion for the Freedmen Cemetery and recommending to three designs. A slot for a member of the Commission for the Arts to serve on this Steering Committee was part of this recommendation. This member of the Commission will consult in the development of the design process and provide input from the Commission's perspective for the project.

### **Youth Participation on the Commission:**

The Commission for the Arts approved investigating the creation of a Commissioner position for a student representative. At the May 12 meeting, the City Council approved the recommendation to expand the Commission's membership 15 to 16 with the additional member to include a student who resides in the City and attends a high school located in the City of Alexandria. At the June 12 meeting, City Council appointed Abigail Dillingham, T.C. Williams High School senior to serve on the Commission.

### **Grant Program:**

During Fiscal Year 2007, as a way to increase the importance of an applicant's impact on the City of Alexandria, both in the resource panels' review and the Commission's awarding of funds, an approved series of weighted evaluation criteria for reviewing grant requests was approved by the Commission. The Commission also approved requesting that all grantees submit specific goals for advancement or improvement for the funded grant year. This weighted evaluation criteria, the requests of goals and an online pilot grant program, assisted by the Americans for the Arts, were applied to Fiscal Year 2008 applicants.

### **Recognition of Fiscal Year 2007 Grantees**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts (ACA) acts as the official funding mechanism of the Alexandria City Council in awarding grants to artists and arts organizations. During Fiscal Year 2007, the ACA made \$214,937 in awards, of which \$209,937 was from City appropriated funds and \$5,000 was from Virginia Commission for the Arts funds provided through the Local Government Challenge grant program.

## Fiscal Year 2007 Grant Awards by Grant Program

### OPERATING SUPPORT:

Alexandria Choral Society	\$10,800.00
Alexandria Harmonizers	\$10,800.00
Alexandria Performing Arts Association	\$9,000.00
Alexandria Singers	\$10,800.00
Alexandria Symphony Orchestra	\$10,800.00
Art League	\$10,800.00
Del Ray Artisans	\$8,982.00
Ecovoce	\$2,200.00
First Night Alexandria	\$10,800.00
Kathy Harty Gray Dance Theatre	\$9,000.00
MetroStage	\$10,800.00
Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association	\$10,800.00
Port City Playhouse	\$4,200.00
Springwater Fiber Workshop	\$10,800.00
Tapestry Theatre	\$5,760.00
Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic	<u>\$10,800.00</u>
	\$147,142.00

### PROJECT GRANT SUPPORT:

Choreographers Collaboration Project	\$2,045.00
Eclipse Chamber Orchestra	\$10,800.00
Empowered Women International	\$8,100.00
Fairfax Choral Society	\$1,000.00
Jane Franklin Dance Company	\$5,700.00
Oye Palaver Hut Incorporated	\$5,400.00
Retired Senior Volunteer Program	\$600.00
Tenants' and Workers' Support Committee	\$5,400.00
Washington Bach Consort	\$9,000.00
Washington Balalaika Society	\$2,250.00
Virginia Opera	<u>\$9,000.00</u>
	\$59,295.00

### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE:

Alexandria Harmonizers	\$500.00
Art League	\$909.00
Choreographers Collaboration Project	\$220.00
Del Ray Artisans	\$871.00
Ecovoce	\$500.00
First Night Alexandria	\$575.00
Kathy Harty Gray Dance Theatre	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
	\$4,575.00

INDIVIDUAL ARTIST GRANT:

Siobhan Quinn, Artist	\$3,925.00
	\$214,937.00

Total Amount Awarded: \$214,937.00

**FUTURE EFFORTS:**

The Alexandria Commission for the Arts in furthering its mission to lead and advocate for Cultural development in the City and will also continue to:

- work with the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities to develop proposal for City Council and seek the adoption of a funding mechanism for public art;
- coordinate planning activities for conducting a series of discussions with the Charles Houston Parent Advisory Board and staff at the Alexandria Black History Museum, as well as schedule public meetings to garner insights, input and support for the project; and develop a report for City Council on its findings from the public meetings and to provide Council with a scope of work for the art project, anticipated costs, and fundraising plans for public art;
- assist with the implementing of the design competition and recommending three designs for the Freedmen's Cemetery Memorial Park;
- support the Old Town Festival of the Arts, and other cultural programs through its local component arts committee;
- organize and launch Alexandria's first International Film Festival to be held in late September 2007.
- collaborate with the Art League, the Del Ray Artisans, Torpedo Factory Artists Association and Springwater Fiber Workshop and other visual arts organizations to provide a series of Art in City Hall and other City Galleries;
- offer the 2007 Alex Awards to salute Alexandrians who have made a significant contribution to the cultural fabric of the community;
- facilitate the release of Alexandria's findings from the Arts and Economic Prosperity III study sponsored by the Americans for the Arts;
- participate with supporting the efforts of the Alexandria Poet Laureate;
- implement Lord Report's recommendations; and,
- facilitate the administration of the Commission's grant program

In addition, the Commission will work with the Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities to conduct facilitate completion of the final report with Lord Cultural Resources.

The Commission will continue to welcome citizens to its meetings, which are held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the Dr. Oswald Durant Center, 1605 Cameron Street.