



Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria



The Mental Health Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign, the Community Services Board, and Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center hosted "Stand UP for Mental Health" with stand-up comic and author David Granirer in May. The event drew a crowd of over 500 people. Special thanks to sponsors Comcast and Sheehy Honda.



After the event, Granirer (center) jokes with the local comics who shared the stage, left to right: Craig Pearson, Susan Johnson, Dana Pavne and Clarence Johnson.

Highlights

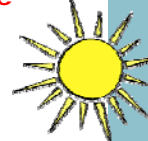
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Vision for a Healthier Alexandria complete!

As the first stage in its **MAPP** (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) process, the *Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria* has been crafting a Vision for a Healthier Alexandria. Over the past six months, we have sought widespread citizen input into this vision through community surveys, community meetings, and group discussions. We have heard from over 300 people and more than 35 organizations and commissions!

Thanks to everyone for being a part of this process. We're excited to be moving forward to the next stage in MAPP and hope to you'll consider staying engaged. **Check out the vision at the end of this newsletter!**

What's next? We're creating a community indicator system to track how well we're accomplishing our vision. In February and March 2010, we'll be hosting community forums to help guide this effort.



Health-based Faith Network Launched

In partnership with the Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy, the Medical Reserve Corps, and SAPCA, the *Partnership* has recently launched the **FAITH-BASED HEALTH NETWORK** – a group of churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of faith dedicated to raising awareness of health issues. This network recognizes that spiritual health is intricately linked with physical, social, and mental health. By building partnerships with other faith-based and health organizations

in Alexandria, we are working together to holistically address the health of individuals, congregations, and the entire Alexandria community. Thanks to Mayor Euille, Bishop Tony Addinall and Reverend Andrea Lomboy who helped us launch the network.

Ask your faith leader if your congregation has joined the faith network! Check out our flyer:

<http://www.alexhealth.org/partnership/FaithBasedHealthFlier.pdf>

Our Mission

To promote a safe and healthy Alexandria through coalition building, collaborative planning and community action.

Our Work Groups

- Environmental Health Work Group
- Healthy Lifestyles Work Group
- Mental Health Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign
- Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA)

<http://www.alexhealth.org/partnership>

Let's Get Healthy, Alexandria!



Photo: Regan Kireillis/AlexandriaNews.org



On Saturday, September 12th, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and Mayor Euille, hosted **Alexandria's Family Health and Fitness Day** at the Charles Houston Recreation Center. The fun, filled morning involved a walk to the City Market, yoga, belly dancing, weight-lifting, other fitness activities, and information booths.

Mayor Euille and Congressman Moran – in a “biggest loser” contest – weighed in to see who had lost the most weight. While Congressman Moran won the first round, they quickly challenged each other to another 3 month competition. Other department heads from the City also joined in the “Biggest Loser Challenge”.

Special thanks to the Leadership Team & sponsors: Aileen Orino, Janet Bezner, MECKids.Com, AlexandriaNews.org, Alexandria City Public Schools, Congregational Health Resource, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Whole Health and Food, K Consulting Online, Bike & Roll, Celebrate Productions, YMCA, INOVA Hospital, Breath by Breath Yoga, YMCA, and State Farm.

Pledge to be smoke-free at home!

As the next phase of its “Smoke Free Alexandria” program, the Environmental Health Work Group is collaborating with Community Service Board staff, Ann Fierstos and Jennifer Landis, in Cora Kelly and Patrick Henry Elementary Schools to launch the “Greatest Gift Campaign”. Elementary school students will be participating in art contests where they're asked to draw pictures around the theme: “Ways to escape 2nd hand smoke”. We're planning to post these pictures in smoke-free areas around the community and ask parents to pledge to make their homes and cars smoke-free. According to the Surgeon General, there is no “safe” amount of second hand smoke so creating smoke-free home zones is an important way to keep kids safe. **Let us know if you know of a restaurant or business that might like to display these drawings.**



ACHIEVE Planning Team Completes Community Action Plan to Prevent Early Childhood Obesity!

The ACHIEVE Planning Team of the Healthy Lifestyles Work Group has been working diligently over the summer to create a community action plan (CAP) aimed at reducing early childhood obesity. This two-year CAP was informed by focus groups with toddler parents and service providers, surveys of WIC parents, surveys of early childcare directors, a GIS mapping project of nutrition and recreation spaces, and a policy and environment evaluation created by the CDC. Using a \$25,000 grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the team will begin putting plans into action.

[Click here to see the action plan.](#)

The ACHIEVE Planning Team plans to host a **partner breakfast in the coming months to inform and engage more community partners in its efforts.** If you're interested in attending, please contact Carrie.

Special thanks to planning team members: Carmen Alvarado, Lisa Baker, Libby Baney, Ivy Beringer, Karen Hughes, September Jones, Reverend Andrea Lomboy, Judy Martens, Karl Moritz, Uzma Quraishi, Tricia Rodgers, and Sissy Walker.



Photo: Regan Kireillis/AlexandriaNews.org



Smoke Free Workplaces & Restaurants Update

Over the last six months, the Environmental Health Work Group has amped up its “Smoke Free Alexandria” program by asking restaurants and work places to voluntarily go smoke-free. So far, approximately 98% of restaurants are smoke free and nearly 100% of the workplaces with over 50 employees are now smoke-free. We've found that a number of hotels in Alexandria have yet to go smoke-free and plan to work on targeting them over the next few months.



Photo: Austin Danforth/Alexandria Times



United's Quaranta Discusses Recovery

In recognition of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, SAPCA and the Mental Health Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign partnered with the Alexandria Community Services Board and Friends of the Alexandria Mental Health Center to host a Recovery Month Community Event featuring Santino Quaranta of DC United on Monday, September 28th. Quaranta delivered an engaging and motivational interview. A big thanks to Julie Carey from NBC 4 for volunteering her time and bringing so much depth to the interview. There was an audience of 150 - 175, including Mayor Euille and Council Member Frank Fannon.



Sticker Shock Campaign

On Saturday, October 10, teams of youth from the City of Alexandria joined forces with other youth from Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William Counties to launch a Sticker Shock Campaign. This is a youth-lead initiative designed to raise awareness about underage drinking and the consequences to adults when they purchase alcohol for minors. This campaign is organized by SAPCA, the [Arlington Partnership for Children, Youth, and Families](#), and [Northern Virginia MADD](#) with support from [Virginia ABC](#) and local law enforcement.

What's coming next?

- **Interested in Community Gardens?** In partnership with Mayor Euille and Council Member Krupicka, the ACHIEVE Planning Team is launching its initiative to bring more community gardens to low-income residents. If you're interested in getting involved, let us know.
- **Complete Streets!** The Environmental Health Work Group is interested in exploring a Complete Streets Resolution that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists when planning for street repairs and renovations. Want to partner?

SAPCA's New Work Groups Are Mobilizing

SAPCA has four work groups ready to combat the problem of youth drinking at house parties. The **Providing Information** group is planning campaigns to disseminate information throughout the City including: [Parents Who Host](#) campaign, targeting major events such as Prom, Beach Week, and New Year's, sending letters through schools, developing a Comcast ad campaign, and other media outreach. The **Providing Support** group supports parents to have non-alcoholic parties by providing ideas for alternative activities. The **Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers** group is combating the easy availability of alcohol to underage youth by: planning a "Lock Your Liquor" campaign to encourage parents to lock up alcohol, and participating in vendor compliance checks in collaboration with the police department and Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC). The **Changing Physical Design** group sponsored a region-wide [Sticker Shock](#) campaign where youth and adults work together to stop alcohol sales to minor.

If you're interested in joining these efforts, please contact Noraine Buttar, SAPCA Coordinator at noraine.buttar@alexandriava.gov.

Strategic Planning "Mini-Retreat" for Anti-Stigma Work Group

The Mental Health Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign is planning a "mini-retreat" on **Wednesday, October 28, 6 – 8 p.m.**, to discuss the work group's direction over the next year and into the future. Over the past three years, they've been active in raising community-wide awareness about mental illness through community service announcements, community-wide events, and youth outreach. In May, the group hosted a rousing "Stand UP for Mental Health" event attended by over 500 people with comedian *David Granirer* who taught stand-up comedy to local mental health clients who wrote their own act and participated in the event.

The event will be facilitated by Janet Bezner, Deputy Executive Director of the American Physical Therapy Association. If you're interested in participating in the strategic planning session, please contact work group chair, Mary Riley at maryriley@comcast.net.

Interested in getting involved?

Interested in the initiatives that we've highlighted? Willing to lend your time and expertise to any of these efforts? **JOIN US!**

Contact Carrie Fesperman, Health Planner, at carrie.fesperman@vdh.Virginia.gov to learn more about how to get involved.





The City of Alexandria embraces the belief that health is more than merely the absence of disease. A healthy community provides all of its members with the opportunities and support for achieving and maintaining physical, mental and spiritual wellness. We believe that a healthy Alexandria is:

An **Alexandria where** building a sense of community and helping one another -- especially in meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and affordable housing -- is a priority for each individual.

An **Alexandria that** celebrates racial, ethnic, and gender diversity and supports people of all ages and abilities.

An **Alexandria where** all residents, regardless of their ability to pay, can access quality health care that focuses on prevention, treatment, and wellness.

A walkable **Alexandria where** everyone has access to transportation options, trails, parks, open space, and recreation opportunities.

An **Alexandria where** people are safe in their homes and walking in their neighborhoods, unafraid of crime, violence, and domestic abuse.

An **Alexandria where** safeguarding emotional and mental health is a priority and there is adequate provision of mental health services.

An **Alexandria where** its residents support and are engaged in efforts to prevent the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and where treatment for substance use problems is readily available.

An **Alexandria where** all residents can access safe and healthy foods and are able to practice healthy eating habits.

An **Alexandria where** our houses, streets, neighborhoods, and parks are clean and well-kept, free of garbage, environmental hazards, and pests so that everyone can fully enjoy our beautiful city.

An **Alexandria where** meaningful employment opportunities are available for all, since health is linked to financial stability.

