

FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA



ANNUAL REPORT





First Night Alexandria turned 21 on December 31, 2015 but we're still alcohol free! We hope you were one of the thousands of people who joined us. It was another terrific Old Town New Year's Eve party that now includes an old fashioned carnival in Del Ray. First Night Alexandria's celebration honors the performing arts, and includes a great finale with dancing in the street and fireworks over the Potomac River at midnight!

FIRST NIGHT



Professor Art Safari's seventh annual Fun Hunt was just one of 14 afternoon activities throughout Old Town. From art activities at the Torpedo Factory Art Center sponsored by **Dominion Virginia Power**, to children's stories and a chocolate fountain, there was something all afternoon for all ages.



The Battle of the Bands and our all day activities brought the media to Alexandria. They arrived in the late morning and stayed right through the fireworks. You couldn't watch television on 12/31 and not see something about First Night Alexandria! If you missed the fun, start planning to join us in 2016. We'll be back with more for everyone of all ages!

More than 200 teams participated in the seventh annual First Night Alexandria Fun Hunt. The Fun Hunt combines geography, history, interesting tidbits about Old Town businesses and FUN during the afternoon. This year's Fun Hunt was sponsored by **Clark Construction**. The clues for the Fun Hunt were written by board members and Old Town business owners. Fun Hunt prizes, including cash, were awarded at the Durant Center at 6 p.m., kicking off an exciting and event filled evening.



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In all, there were 28 venues in Old Town and one in Del Ray offering 163 performances on 42 stages for one price. There's no better bargain on New Year's Eve.

First Night Alexandria is presented in four "spotlight" areas, featuring venues within an easy walk of each other and a wide variety of musical performances. The George Washington Masonic Memorial, with three unique performance spaces and plenty of free parking as well as Downtown Baptist Church with performances on four levels were one stop destinations for many families. The Masonic Memorial is a great viewing spot for the fireworks because of its unique location on the top of Shuter's Hill.

Once you were in Alexandria, traffic and driving were kept to a minimum. Lower King Street drew in crowds with its collection of fine dining restaurants. By 10:00 pm the stage was set for a performance by the College of William and Mary's Stairwells. They got the party going and turned the night over to DJ Ray Casiano, who got the crowd dancin' in the street! Ray's enthusiasm and down-right fun music kept the crowd swinging. Joining in the celebration was Alexandria's own favorite son, Mayor Bill Euille and his colleagues, who led the countdown to midnight's spectacular fireworks display on the Potomac River! It was a great ending to a great day.



First Night Alexandria is a family-friendly event and a wonderful way to celebrate the New Year. The fireworks over the river are fantastic. Highly recommended!

Christopher Reddick, Burke & Herbert Bank



FIRST NIGHT



The success of First Night Alexandria, in fact the event itself, would not be possible without the support of our terrific volunteers on December 31st. These volunteers sell admission badges at all the venues and provide information to attendees, approximately half of whom traditionally come from outside Alexandria. For their efforts, they receive free admission, a box dinner sponsored by **Harris Teeter** and a souvenir apron – all of which were made possible because of the sponsorship of the **Alexandria Hotel Association, Burke & Herbert Bank, Carlyle Plaza** and **LCOR**.



I'm honored to be part of such a well-planned, executed and fabulous event! There is something for everyone - food, fun & fireworks - what a great way to ring in the New Year!

Margaret Gullen, Wells Fargo Bank



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Do you know that First Night is NOT a part of the City of Alexandria? First Night Alexandria is a private, non-profit organization that has an independent Board of Directors. The City has been, and continues to be, a large financial and civic partner and supporter. The City of Alexandria, through various grants, provides approximately 20% of the nearly \$270,000 budget to produce the event; the generosity of businesses and individuals contributes another 27%. The final 53% of the budget comes from the sale of admission badges, the price of which is purposely kept low to make it a budget-friendly way for families, young professionals and couples to spend New Year's Eve together! Imagine – 163 performances for just \$30! Children 12 and under have been and continue to be free when accompanied by a paying adult. Free admission badges are offered to residents of several homeless shelters in Alexandria and to the families of the first responders that are working on New Year's Eve. Please take note of our sponsors listed in this report; First Night Alexandria could not do this without them! And a big thanks and genuine appreciation goes to our army of supporters! Their continued participation is vital to our financial success.



Since 2010 First Night Alexandria has partnered with **Visit Alexandria** in marketing the city as a destination for New Year's Eve and to attend First Night. This partnership has provided regional marketing that a small non-profit such as First Night could not afford. We are indebted to Visit Alexandria's incredible staff for helping to spread the word about how much fun you can have in Alexandria, staying, shopping, dining and attending First Night!

For several years we have offered free admission badges to active members of the military. Several hundred members of the armed forces take advantage of this offer and many bring their families. It's our way to say thank you for their dedication to keeping our freedoms alive.

First Night Alexandria is a magnificent way to ring in the New Year as a celebration of the arts. We have been attending for years and have always found first-rate entertainment in a walkable and friendly environment that is Old Town Alexandria. Whether you are old or young or somewhere in between, you will truly enjoy First Night Alexandria.

Kerry Donley, John Marshal Bank



Because First Night is all about great performances, in 2011 the First Night Alexandria board wanted to do something to foster music programs in the public schools. It is our way of encouraging the next generation of First Night performers. Each year we've made contributions to the music programs at George Washington and Francis Hammond Middle Schools and TC Williams High School. In 2014 we added Jefferson Houston School to the list. The contributions made in the spring of 2016 bring the total contributions to \$23,475!

FIRST NIGHT

These businesses and individuals make it all possible. We are grateful for their generosity and hope you will thank them too when you do business.

First Night Alexandria 2015 Sponsors

Presenting Sponsors

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for the Arts

Badge Sponsor

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Tara Zimnick-Calico

*Public safety personnel from the Alexandria Police,
Sheriff, and Fire departments are partners with
First Night Alexandria. They keep us safe on
December 31st and every other day of the year.
We are truly grateful for their support.*

ALEXANDRIA

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
Alexandria Library
Kate Waller Barrett Branch
Alexandria's Union Station
Alfred Street Baptist Church
American Legion Post 24
American Red Cross
Athenaeum
Bittersweet
Christ Church
Downtown Baptist Church
Duchess M
Durant Arts Center
George Washington
Masonic Memorial
Fraternal Order of Eagles 871
Hooray for Books!
Imagine Artwear
Jefferson-Houston School
Little Theatre
Lloyd House
Long & Foster
Lyceum
Mount Vernon Recreation Center
Pomponoosuc Mills
Principle Gallery
Old Presbyterian Meeting House
Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)
St. Paul's Church
Torpedo Factory Art Center
Washington Street United Methodist Church



FIRST NIGHT

Facts and figures that make a difference to all our wonderful sponsors and supporters.



76.4%

of survey respondents said they would not have come to Alexandria on New Year's Eve if there were not a First Night!



92%

of respondents rated their experience at First Night as fun and/or entertaining.



74%

of online sales (56% of total sales) came from outside Alexandria, 63% from Virginia, including Arlington (7%), Maryland (14%) and Washington, DC. (5%). 23% came from outside the Washington, DC metro area.



15%

of respondents said this was their 1st First Night while 46% have come from 3-10 years and 12% have come for 10 years or more.



37%

of attendees responding to our survey spent \$25-200 per person in addition to the price of admission, not including hotels. And attendance was up again in 2015!



40%

of attendees said they ate out in Old Town. Over 40 different food establishments in Alexandria were mentioned as dinner spots for respondents! That's over 4000 dinners in one day!

ALEXANDRIA



AND...

Since 2001, First Night Alexandria and those who attend have returned more than \$5.75 million to the **City of Alexandria** and its businesses for goods, services and fees.

During 2015, 60.8% of all expenses paid for First Night Alexandria were paid directly to the City of Alexandria or Alexandria businesses and individuals.

First Night Alexandria's largest single expense continues to be great entertainment.

The sale of admission badges covers 53% of the operating costs of First Night Alexandria. The rest comes from our sponsors, supporters, the City of Alexandria and other donations.

Online badge sales have gone from 12% in 2010 to over 56% in 2015.

Hotels in Alexandria love First Night; the **Alexandria Hotel Association** is a sponsor! Many of them offer special packages including admission badges. 16% of those who answered our survey stayed in a hotel and 33% said they stayed two or more nights.

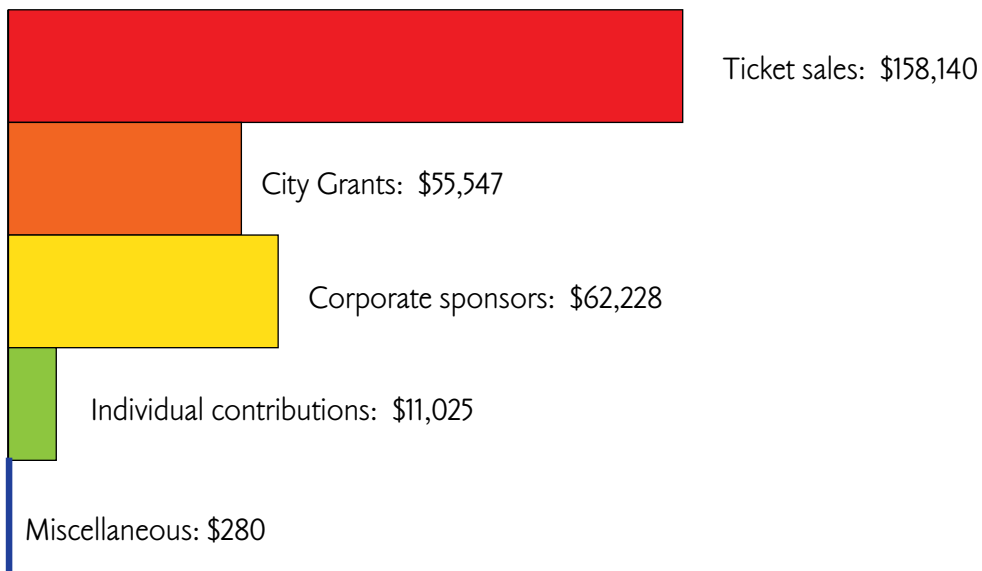
While First Night is and has always been the largest family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration in the region, it is a celebration of choice for everyone. 76% of survey respondents told us they came without children.



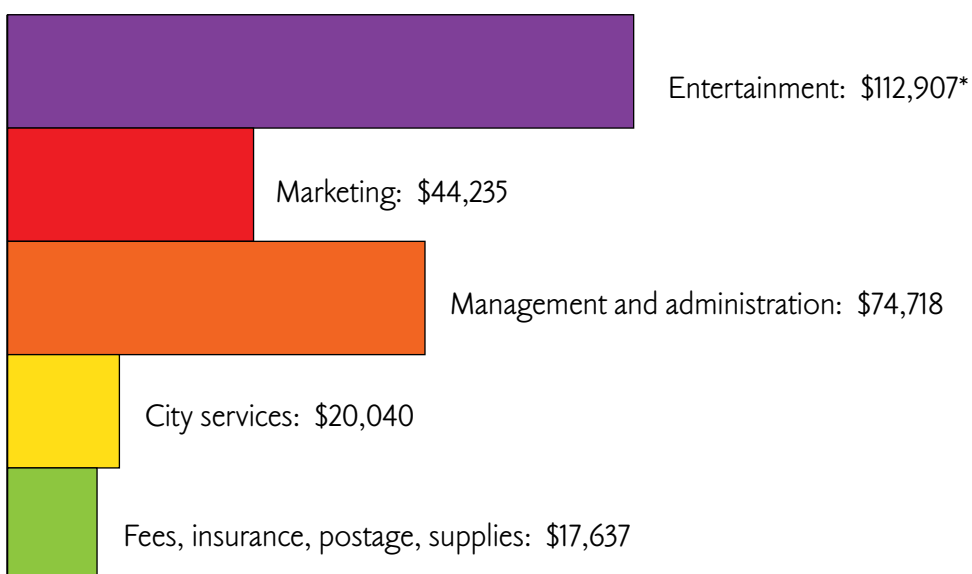
FIRST NIGHT

2015 Financials

Income: \$287,220



Expenses: \$269,537



*Because they are so integral to the success of First Night, performers were given a small “bonus” in addition to their fee.

ALEXANDRIA

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

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Mayor William D. Euille

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The number of attendees along with the growing number of returnees requires First Night Alexandria to continue its evolution. The ongoing success of First Night Alexandria, a public-private partnership, will require the effort of more than a few dedicated volunteers and businesses supported by a dynamic Board of Directors and the best City partnership anywhere! To remain a true community event, support must expand to meet the demand.

Fund raising for the December 31, 2016 celebration of First Night Alexandria has already begun!

Lend your support to keep this family-friendly community celebration of the New Year through the performing arts going. Help us with a tax-deductible contribution today. Your contributions will help provide the means to hire all the performers for First Night Alexandria on December 31, 2016.

Go to firstnightalexandria.org/donate and make your contributions ...

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!!!!

Since serving as President of First Night Alexandria I have moved from the city. 2015 was the first time, in a few years, my family and I have celebrated New Year's Eve in Alexandria. I am thrilled to see the growth of the event and the amazing talent of both the entertainers and the folks who plan, create and execute FNA! Congratulations!

Michael Geissinger, Past President First Night Alexandria





First Night Alexandria
221 King Street
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