



FIRST NIGHT ROCKS!

2013 First Night Alexandria Annual Report



“Every event I went to was rocking –from Anthony “Swamp Dog” Clark at Indus Imports to Ruthie and the Wranglers at Pompanoosuc Mills. At Imagine, Ray Owens entertained families with his wry humor and zany songs. Every restaurant I passed by was full.”

Carol Supplee, Imagine Artwear

“As the Mayor of 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. We hope you will join us on December 31st for an Old Town New Year’s Eve party!”

William D. Euille Mayor, City of Alexandria

WHERE WERE YOU ROCKING ON NEW YEAR'S EVE?

If you weren't in Old Town Alexandria on December 31, 2013, you missed another terrific Old Town New Year's Eve party through the performing arts with a great finale including dancing in the street and fireworks over the Potomac River at midnight!

Professor Art Safari's fifth annual Fun Hunt was just one of 20 activities throughout Old Town on the afternoon of the 31st from art activities at the Torpedo Factory Art Center sponsored by **Dominion**, to children's stories at Hooray for Books! and Ten Thousand Villages and cookie decorating at Sugar Cube, there was something all afternoon for all ages.

The Battle of the Bands and all day activities brought all the local 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!**

More than 200 teams participated in the fifth annual First Night Alexandria Fun Hunt. The Fun Hunt combines navigation, geography, history and FUN during the afternoon. At 6:00 pm prizes were awarded

preceding an evening of entertainment in 22 different indoor venues. This year's Fun Hunt was sponsored by **Dominion**.

First Night Alexandria was presented in four "spotlight" areas, featuring venues within an easy walk of each other. Once you were in Alexandria, traffic and driving were kept to a minimum. 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 people.

Lower King Street, with its collection of fine dining restaurants shared center stage with an encore performance by the College of William and Mary's Stairwells who warmed up the crowd for dancin' in the street to the tunes of Ray Casiano. Ray's enthusiasm and down-right fun music kept the crowd swinging and celebrating until Alexandria's own favorite son, Mayor Bill Euille and his colleagues Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg and Councilwoman Del Pepper welcomed the crowd and started the countdown to midnight's spectacular fireworks display on the Potomac River! It was a great ending to a great day.





OUR SUPPORTERS ROCK!

Do you know that First Night is NOT a program of the City of Alexandria? First Night is a public/private partnership which is why we need YOUR continued support!

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 approximately 29% of the \$200,000 budget to produce the event; the generosity of businesses and individuals provides 26%. The final 44% 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 – more than 100 performances for just \$20! 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!

Since 2010 First Night Alexandria has partnered with the Alexandria Convention & Visitors Association in marketing Alexandria 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 the incredible staff of ACVA 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 took advantage of this offer and many brought their families. It's our way to say thank you for all they do around the world for us.

OUR VOLUNTEERS ROCK!

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 Safeway and a souvenir apron – all of which were made possible because of the sponsorship of the Alexandria Hotel Association and LCOR.

OUR SPONSORS ROCK!

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 2013 Sponsors

Premiere Sponsors

City of Alexandria
Alexandria Commission
for the Arts
Alexandria Marketing Fund

Badge Sponsor

Virginia Paving

Web Site Sponsor

New Target Internet Design

Fun Hunt Sponsor

Dominion

Volunteer Sponsors

Alexandria Hotel Association
LCOR Alexandria

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Alexandria Toyota

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AlexandriaNews.org
Mount Vernon Gazette
Mount Vernon Voice
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Alexandria Convention &
Visitors Association (ACVA)
Armed Forces Benefit
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Bittersweet
Burke & Herbert Bank
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Focus Data Solutions
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Masonic Memorial
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SBG Technology Solutions
Victory Center/Jones Lang
LaSalle
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Waterfront Market

Small Business Sponsors

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Speck-Caudron Investment
Group of Wells
Fargo Advisors
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Unwined
Virginia Commerce Bank
Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley,
Emrich & Walsh

Friends of First Night Alexandria

Ellen Andrus
Mike Anderson
Denny Auld & Lynn Hampton
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Kerry & Eva Donley
Ann & Rick Dorman
Bill Eisnagle
Jim & Kary Ewalt
Fitness Together
Jeff Greenwald
Hard Times Café
Matt Hurlburt
Imagine Artwear
Virginia Kinneman
Deborah Thompkins Johnson
King Street Blues
Land, Carroll
Lorien Hotel & Day Spa
Gary & Lynette Matz

Scott Mitchell
Kaitlyn Mittan
Ken Moore
Morrison House
Potomac Riverboat Company
Lori Arrasmith Quill
Eileen Cassidy Rivera
George & Martha Sawyer
Sweet Fire Donna's
Jeanne Theismann
Donna Udvari

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.

First Night Alexandria is a fantastic way to celebrate New Year's. From the clever and family-friendly scavenger hunt during the afternoon, to eating in Old Town, and then seeing many talented musical bands in venues throughout Old Town in the evening, First Night Alexandria was magnificent again this year. I especially loved dancing to the great swing music. The capstone was definitely the stunning fireworks over the Potomac at the foot of King Street. Many thanks to the First Night team and the countless volunteers who make the annual event possible."

Allison Silberberg, Vice Mayor

OUR VENUES ROCK!



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's Union Station
Alfred Street Baptist Church
American Legion Post 24
The Athenaeum
Bittersweet
Christ Church
Downtown Baptist Church
Durant Arts Center
George Washington
Masonic Memorial
Hilton Alexandria Old Town
Hooray for Books!
Imagine Artwear
Indus Imports
Jefferson-Houston School
Little Theatre
Lyceum
Pomponoosuc Mills
Principle Gallery
Old Presbyterian
Meeting House
St. Paul's Church
Torpedo Factory Art Center

OUR FACTS ROCK!

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

60% of respondents came from outside Alexandria. Many of them from Arlington and Fairfax Counties, Maryland and Washington, DC.

HOTELS in Alexandria love First Night. Many of them offer special packages including admission badges and the **Alexandria Hotel Association** is a sponsor! 21 % of those who answered our survey stayed in a hotel and 45% said they stayed two or more nights.

87% of respondents rated their experience at First Night as extraordinary, fun or entertaining.

ATTENDEES responding to our survey spent an average of \$30 in addition to the price of admission, not including hotels.

DURING 2013 59% of all expenses paid for First Night Alexandria were paid directly to the City of Alexandria or Alexandria businesses and individuals.

ONLINE badge sales have gone from 12% in 2010 to over 60% in 2013.

MANY restaurants in Old Town were specifically mentioned as destinations for dinner on New Year's Eve. Survey respondents ate at 70 different establishments in Alexandria as well as at the popular food trucks.

SINCE 2001 First Night Alexandria and those who attend have returned more than \$5 million to the City of Alexandria and its businesses for goods, services and fees.

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

THE sale of admission badges covers only 44% of the operating costs of First Night Alexandria.

83% of survey respondents said they would not have come to or gone out in Alexandria on New Year's Eve if there were not a First Night!

HOW did people hear about First Night? Ten years ago 3% said it was returning attendees, and only 8% said the web. In 2013 51% were returning attendees and 29% heard about First Night through the web and social media.

OUR FINANCIALS ROCK!

Income
\$228,550

Ticket sales
\$101,635

City Grants
\$66,105

Corporate sponsors
\$49,550

Individual contributions
\$9,555

Miscellaneous
\$1,705

Expenses
\$211,649

Entertainment
\$92,702*

Marketing
\$40,200

**Management and
administration**
\$47,000

City services
\$13,295

**Fees, insurance,
postage, supplies**
\$15,452

*To share our success, performers were given a small "bonus" in addition to their fee and \$3,000 was donated to the music programs at ACPS.

OUR BOARD ROCKS!

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

Honorary Chair
Mayor William D. Euille

**2013 Board of Directors
Officers**

President
Eileen Cassidy Rivera
Cassidy Rivera
Communications

President-Elect
Deborah Tompkins Johnson
Dominion

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New Leaders

Elizabeth Chisman Moon
Focus Data Solutions

Lori Arrasmith Quill

Carol Supplee
Imagine Artwear

Jeanne Theismann
Alexandria Gazette Packet

Staff
Ann Dorman
Richard Dorman
Joseph Shumard
Susan Townsend

The number of attendees coupled 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 20th anniversary 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 what we need to hire all the performers for First Night Alexandria on December 31, 2014.

Go to **Firstnightalexandria.org/donate** and make your contributions ... thank you for your support!!!!

"First Night has become an Alexandria tradition. My family and I haven't missed in years and always find it to be the best way to celebrate the New Year and experience Alexandria."

Kerry Donley, John Marshall Bank

Design: Brecher Design Group
Printing: Fannon Fine Printing
Photographs: J. Clifford for ACVA, Jeanne Theismann, John Bordne



FIRST NIGHT ROCKS!

I love that First Night Alexandria is such a fun family-friendly event. Oh my, and bringing back the fireworks in 2012, expanding them for 2013, has been spectacular. Having the afternoon activities at various locations for families, the evening entertainment venues and then finishing with fireworks, this is the best event in the region for New Year's Eve."

Deborah Tomkins Johnson, Dominion

Nothing even comes close to the entertainment value of First Night Alexandria. The reason people come from far and wide is obvious – this event, which is hosted in the safe and friendly city of Alexandria, showcases great performances in a variety of cool venues that the whole family can enjoy at very low cost."

Bill Eisnaugle, BookKeeping Express

**First
Night**
ALEXANDRIA
221 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314