



# FIRST NIGHT ALEXANDRIA

2017 Annual Report

PRESENTING  
SPONSORS



**Dominion  
Energy®**

“Every New Year's Eve, Alexandria is transformed by the magic of First Night! The city electrifies with beaming faces, warm hearts and excited expressions as families, couples and friends join hands together in a safe and happy place to watch musicians and performers nestled into historic venues across the city. The evening ends with a magnificent fireworks display that lights up our eyes - there's truly nothing like it!”

Eileen Cassidy Rivera





**First Night** has become an institution in Alexandria. Started in 1994, this regional community celebration of the New Year through the performing arts most often attracts 10,000

people annually to Old Town on December 31st.

An all-day event - with activities in the afternoon for families, starting with the brain teasing Fun

Hunt - the evening kicks off at 7:00 pm with award-winning performances in 25 indoor venues. There's truly something for everyone at **First Night Alexandria!** Unfortunately, this past year the metropolitan area experienced the coldest temperatures in 50 years, keeping many people home for the holiday.

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** and **LCOR**.

“The frosty temperatures did not chill the enthusiasm and buoyant spirits of all attendees and performers. Warm venues, hot music and explosive fireworks at midnight. What fun! Truly, a night to remember in Alexandria.”

Chris Reddick

Do you know that **First Night Alexandria** 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 contributor, civic partner and supporter. Through various grants, the City provides nearly 25% of the approximately \$220K budget to produce the event; the generosity of businesses and individuals contributes another 37%. Admission badge sales are 37% of the income. The price of admission is purposely kept low to make it a budget-friendly way for couples, young professionals and families to spend New Year's Eve together!



Imagine, 147 performances for just \$30! Children 12 and younger are free when accompanied by a paying adult. Free admission badges are offered to residents of several homeless shelters in Alexandria, to the families of first responders working on New Year's Eve and active military. You're not going to find that anywhere else in the mid-Atlantic region!

Unfortunately, this past December 31st was the coldest in the DC Metro region in 50 years. Attendance, and therefore ticket sale income, was down nearly 40%. **First Night Alexandria** is fortunate to have a strategic Board of Directors and staff who together had the foresight to plan ahead for a 'bad weather year'. Because of this planning, we will survive this bad weather year and hope for better conditions on December 31st, 2018.

**W**e need your financial commitment to help now. On December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019, **First Night Alexandria** will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Please consider making a two-year commitment to be part of this celebration of the New Year through the performing arts.



Please take note of our sponsors listed in this report; **First Night Alexandria** could not do this without them! 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!

**T**hese 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 2017 Sponsors

### ★ Presenting Sponsors

City of Alexandria  
Dominion Energy

### ★ Fireworks Sponsor

MGM National Harbor

### ★ Premier Sponsor

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for the Arts

### ★ Badge Sponsor

Virginia Paving

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### ★ Fun Hunt Sponsor

Clark Construction Group LLC

### ★ Volunteer Sponsors

Alexandria Hotel Association  
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Jack Taylor's Alexandria Toyota

### ★ Accounting Sponsor

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Alexandria Times  
Mount Vernon Gazette  
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Visit Alexandria

### ★ Small Business Sponsors

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### ★ Restaurant Sponsors

A la Lucia  
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Lena's Wood-fired Pizza & Tap  
The Majestic  
Virtue Feed & Grain  
Vola's Dockside Grill

### ★ Friends of First Night Alexandria

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Roger Parks  
Chris Reddick  
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Ann Vanvoorhis

*List complete as of printing.*

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.

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  
Christ Church  
Durant Arts Center  
George Washington  
Masonic Memorial  
Fraternal Order of Eagles 871  
Hooray for Books!  
Imagine Artwear  
Little Theatre of Alexandria  
Lloyd House  
Long & Foster  
The Lyceum  
Mount Vernon  
Recreation Center  
Principle Gallery  
Old Presbyterian  
Meeting House  
St. Paul's Church  
Torpedo Factory Art Center  
Washington Street United  
Methodist Church

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

**75%** online sales came from outside Alexandria.

**29%** came from Arlington, Fairfax Counties, Maryland and Washington, DC.

**45%** came from outside the Washington, DC metro area.

Hotels in Alexandria love **First Night**; the **Alexandria Hotel Association** is a sponsor! Many of these hotels offer special packages including admission badges.

**30%** of those who answered our survey stayed in a hotel.

**39%** said they stayed two or more nights.

**53%** respondents said this was their 1<sup>st</sup> **First Night**.

**41%** have come 3-10 years.

**14%** have come for 10 years or more.

**31%** of attendees responding to our survey spent a range of \$50-\$200 in addition to the price of admission, not including hotels.

**56%** of all expenses paid for **First Night Alexandria**, in 2017, were paid directly to the City of Alexandria or Alexandria businesses and individuals.

**54%** of the survey respondents said they ate out in Alexandria on New Year's Eve. Many restaurants in Old Town were specifically mentioned as destinations for dinner on New Year's Eve. Over 50 different food establishments in Alexandria were mentioned as places attendees stopped for food!

**81%** of respondents rated their experience at **First Night** as fun or entertaining.

### 2017 Financials

<b>Income:</b>	<b>\$220,205</b>
Ticket sales:	\$79,952
City grants:	\$54,379
Corporate sponsors:	\$67,600
Individual contributions:	\$14,675
Miscellaneous:	\$3,599

<b>Expenses:</b>	<b>\$238,678</b>
Entertainment:	\$85,126
Marketing:	\$49,351
Management and administration:	\$64,686
City services:	\$22,900
Fees, insurance, postage, supplies:	\$16,615



The number of attendees along with the growing number of returnees requires **First Night Alexandria** to continue its evolution. Attendance is always impacted by the weather and that is certainly reflected by the ticket sale income and number of attendees this past New Year's Eve. 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.

Fundraising for the December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018 celebration of **First Night Alexandria** is already underway! We hope we can count on your support again this year.

Lend your support to keep this budget-friendly, 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<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

Go to [firstnightalexandria.org/donate](http://firstnightalexandria.org/donate) and make your contribution...



“First Night Alexandria is the best family-friendly New Year's celebration in the DC region, combining top flight entertainment with the charm and history of Old Town Alexandria. Come see all that First Night and Alexandria have to offer...and don't forget the fireworks!”

Kerry Donley

We are indebted to each member of the Board of Directors for their time and energy throughout the year!

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**Mayor Allison Silberberg**

2017 Board of Directors  
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THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT!!

Design: Brecher Design Group  
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“My husband, Reuben, and I love the First Night Alexandria event and appreciate the value it brings to the City, its businesses and citizens. And of course, the fireworks over the Potomac are the best in the region!”

Johnso

Deborah Johnson

**FIRST  
NIGHT**  
ALEXANDRIA

First Night Alexandria  
221 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314