

OPINION

Arts and Culture: \$111.8 Million Contributor to City's Economy

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every year and play a significant role in attracting new residents, companies and employees.

It's not just during the holidays that the arts are important to Alexandrians. Year-round, the arts enrich our lives, fill us with joy, and contribute to a high quality of life.

While we recognize these intrinsic values, arts and culture are also big business. Alexandria's nonprofit arts and culture sector is a \$111.8 million industry supporting more than 2,600 full-time jobs, generating over \$56 million in household income to local residents and contributing \$7.5 million in state and local revenue. These economic impact stats are from the



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at the arts in a bold new way — as essential to our most pressing challenges, from educating our children during school and non-school hours to activating public spaces within retail corridors and the new waterfront to strengthening our community by celebrating our diversity and inclusiveness.

Building on what we know about the power of arts and culture to make us more competitive, distinctive and stronger as a city, we encourage our City Council to increase investment in the arts and creativity as a partner to education, youth development, tourism, and economic development.

Americans for the Arts' Arts & Economic Prosperity 5 study and the latest results were recently touted by the city's Office of the Arts. Alexandria's stats show that arts and culture are more than a "nice to have" frill, they are a significant economic contributor.

With the city's budget season also upon us, now is an opportunity to look

With the holiday season upon us, it is evident that arts and culture are at the center of the Alexandria experience. Whether it's attending a festive concert or theatre performance, "shopping small" at one of the many markets, galleries and maker spaces, or sharing in a major holiday event such as the Scottish Christmas Walk Parade or First Night, arts, culture and creativity are at the core of who we are. They draw millions of visitors to our city

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erate leaders, some important facts have not been considered through ignorance or agenda. First, at Appomattox, General Grant greeted General Lee with civility and courtesy. He permitted the Confederate officers to retain their side arms and the enlisted men their personal horses and mules. Both were allowed to keep their personal possessions. General Grant also provided General Lee's soldiers, who had few rations remaining, with 25,000 rations. No sign of

vengeance or vindictiveness was in evidence.

Second, President Lincoln's Reconstruction Plan, while not condoning their actions, called for amnesty, with few exceptions, to all Confederates, military and civilian, who would take a prescribed loyalty oath to the United States. State governments where 10 percent of the 1860 population had taken the oath and agreed to emancipation would once again be recognized as states of the Union. Lincoln's position from the begin-

ning of secession was that the Union was indissoluble. The U.S. Supreme Court confirmed Lincoln's position in 1869.

Upon Lincoln's assassination, President Andrew Johnson, in spite of much opposition in Congress, implemented Lincoln's plan for amnesty and reuniting the Union. Virtually all of the military and civilian Confederate leadership were pardoned by President Johnson. Fortunately today's climate did not exist, for the nation might still not be united. Among those exemplifying the

current efforts to "purify" the past is a U. S. senator who has long been in politics and served as a governor. I do not recall him calling for the removal of statues, portraits, plaques, place names, etc. until recently. Also, I am sure that past generations of Christ Church congregations are applauding its recent actions, not realizing how much their worship was being so distracted and that future members will find their service greatly enhanced.

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Special thanks to:
Alexandria Gazette Packet

King Street Trolley Welcomes Santa

Take a FREE picture with Santa on the King Street Trolley!

**Saturday, December 16
9 A.M. - 12 P.M.
City Hall Market Square**

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