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TREE FORTS ADD  
ZIP TO YARDS  
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Alexandria ▶▶▶

# ECHO PRESS

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Jared Rubado / Echo Press

Rally leaders hold a 526-second moment of silence for the death of George Floyd where they threw a rose on top of a mural for each second that passed. The Inclusion Network held a Time for Change event on Thursday night near Alexandria Technical and Community College on Thursday, June 11.

## Silence speaks volumes

### Time for Change addresses racism in Alexandria

By Jared Rubado  
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For 526 seconds, more than 300 people in the Alexandria area took a vow of silence for the death of George Floyd on Thursday night at Alexandria Technical and Community College.

Event leaders matched the silence with a beat on a drum and the drop of a rose on top of a Floyd mural. The moment wasn't only powerful, but was also meant to be a step toward equality in Douglas County.

The Inclusion Network hosted a "Time for Change" event in the open field next to the college. Hundreds showed up with lawn chairs and masks to listen to several equality leaders speak about the steps Alexandria's community can take in the fight against racism. For people that couldn't make it to the event, there is a

“My challenge for you is, are you here for the Facebook photo, or are you here to last?”

— KEVIN TAYLOR

stream on the Inclusion Network's Facebook page. All eight speakers' time on stage is available in its entirety.

"I thought the turnout was incredible," speaker Josette Ciceron said. "It made me feel empowered to see so many people in the community show up for something outside of themselves for something truly greater than themselves. It made me feel at home."

The moment of silence took place in the middle of the event. Speakers and event

organizers took part in dropping the roses on the painted picture of Floyd, who died while under police custody on May 25 for allegedly using a counterfeit bill. It was a difficult moment for West Central Area Youth for Christ director Kevin Taylor.

"It was hard for me. You think you process something, but I hadn't processed that moment and how each second was how long George Floyd's neck was being knelt on," Taylor said. "It was hard to hold it together. It was such an emotional thing when you think about the amount of time that knee was on his neck. It's a long time."

After the moment of silence, two young activists took the stage to share their thoughts about what it's like to play a role in this movement.

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## Andria's future in doubt

### Community theater facing \$163,000 loss

By Celeste Edenloff  
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What was supposed to be the year for a half-century celebration for the Andria Theatre has been turned upside down because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Instead of commemorating 50 years of existence, the staff is concerned whether the downtown Alexandria theater will be able to stay afloat after the cancellation of three productions and the theater's biggest fundraising event, Art in the Park.

David Christman, Andria Theatre's artistic director, said with the postponed dates for "Frozen," the cancellation of "Dirty Rotten Scoundrels," and the Student Theatre Project productions of "Grease," and "Aladdin," along with canceling Art in the Park, the theater is looking at a more than \$163,000 loss.

"This is a very bleak time for the Andria," said Christman. "We are not confident that she will survive. And that is the honest truth."

Virus makes an impact

Ann Hermes, the theater's executive director, agreed, saying that COVID-19 has been devastating to the theater.

"We have no idea when we'll be able to open up for a season of productions," said Hermes. "If the fall and holiday productions need to be canceled, that will mean further big hits to the theater's income. The theater enjoyed its three past seasons that positioned the theater in a very positive financial light. But COVID-19 knocked it out in one fell swoop."

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### DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD

## County adds weapon against aquatic invaders

By Celeste Edenloff  
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Boaters and anglers at three Douglas County lake accesses will have more tools to use to help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Douglas County commissioners approved a resolution accepting a grant from the Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$4,530 that will be used to purchase Aqua Weed Stick stations for accesses on lakes Miliona and Geneva.

Land and Resource Management will use other AIS funds to purchase a third stick for

Lake Mary, according to Justin Swart, the county's aquatic invasive species prevention coordinator.

The commissioners approved the grant at their regular board meeting, which was held Monday, June 15.

The stations, said Swart, will include bait disposal boxes for anglers to dispose of their bait properly. The permanent stations are fairly new, he added, noting that it is a pilot program for Minnesota and that two other counties, besides Douglas, will be installing them.

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## One hour on June 17, 2010

### Residents of Almora recall a deadly tornado

By Karen Tolkkinen  
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Ten years ago, as the skies blackened above tiny Almora in Otter Tail County, Brian Schulke called his grandparents, Margie and Norman Schulke, who lived in a mobile home just down the road.

"I told them they could come to my house if they wanted," he said. "They said they were going to be fine."

Schulke had a basement; his grandparents did not. After he got off the phone, he went downstairs. Then the tornado hit, an EF-4 monster, among the most devastating torna-

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Tornadoes terrorized Wadena,  
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does recorded. Amid the roar of the storm, the windows in his house blew out. When the noise subsided, he emerged from the basement, went outside, and looked toward his grandparents' home.

It was gone.

'They didn't have a clue'

Almora is a fistful of homes on a grid of about six streets, 29 miles north of Alexandria and 22 miles southwest of Wadena. It's surrounded by farm fields and hemmed on the west by a railroad track. There's no gas station here; and no post office or school.

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Karen Tolkkinen / Echo Press

A home health aide offers Norman Schulke a walker. A survivor of the June 17, 2020 tornado that killed his wife, he still suffers the effects of his many broken bones.

"I am sure he heard me  
**JUMP FOR JOY**  
when I received the  
news of the loan."

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