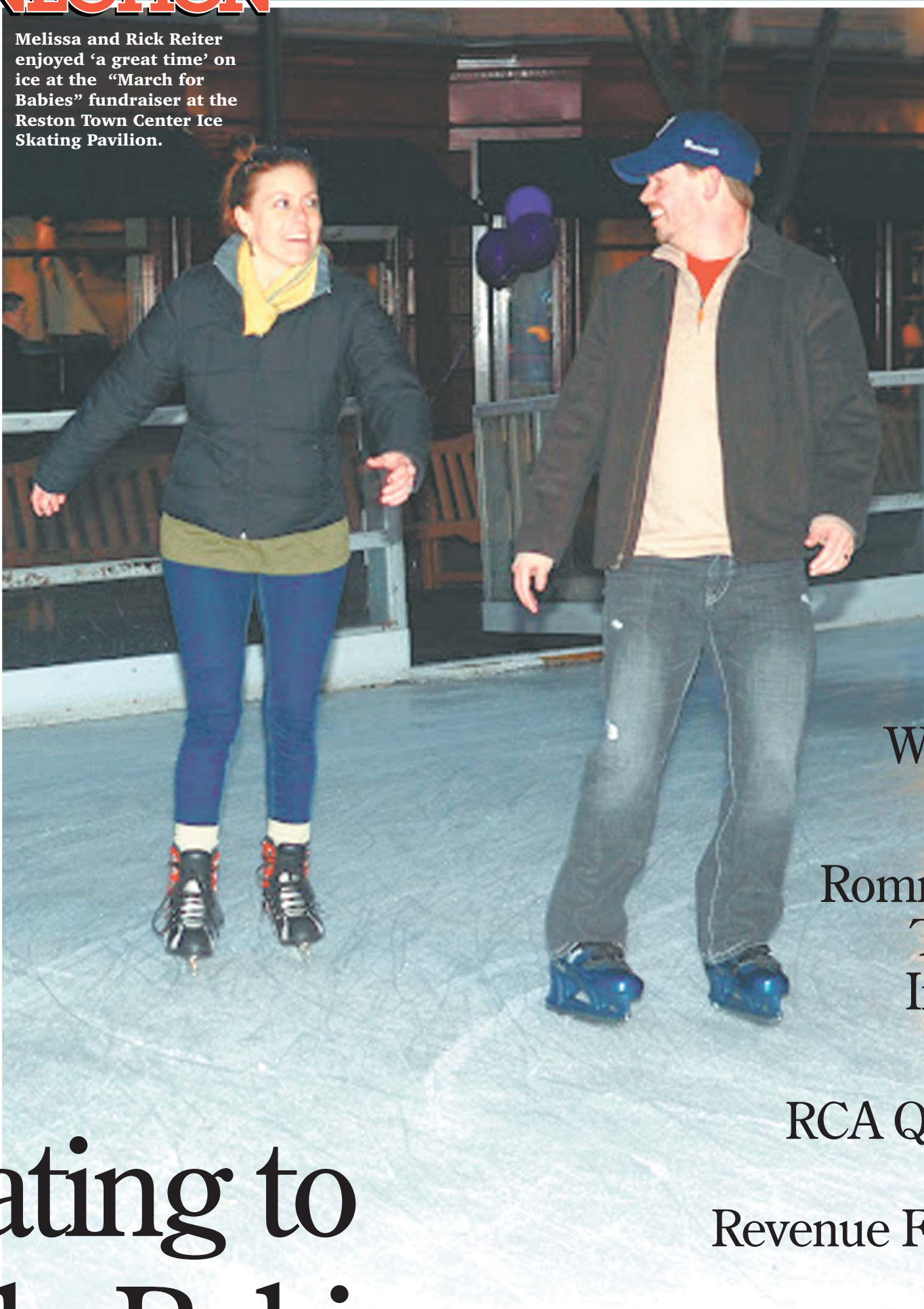


# Reston CONNECTION

Melissa and Rick Reiter enjoyed 'a great time' on ice at the "March for Babies" fundraiser at the Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion.



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Pavilion Ice Rink DJ Peggy Castle discusses music with skater Melissa Reiter during the "March for Babies" Fundraiser.

## Skating to Help Babies

A four-day fundraiser for babies took place at the Reston Town Center Ice Skating Pavilion from Monday, Feb. 27 through Thursday evening, March 1. The rink offered a special discounted admission fee, and then gave half of the proceeds to the project. Also, a free DJ was provided, prizes were awarded and, with an additional donation, contributors had a chance to have their photo taken up on the Zamboni, the rink's

ice making machine.

All of this work was to support the March of Dimes project "Walk for Babies." Their motto this year is "Walking Together for Stronger, Healthier Babies." But in Reston they added the opportunity of skating also. The money raised for the Babies Project helps to fund research and programs that help babies begin healthy lives.

— MICHAEL MCKEE



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCKEE/THE CONNECTION

Richar Warrick, a self described 'Old Hockey Player,' had no trouble at all on the ice.



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PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION



**Fairfax County's 16 newly-trained court-appointed special advocate (CASA) volunteers raise their hands to take the CASA oath during a swearing-in ceremony at the Jennings Judicial Center in Fairfax on Feb. 21. From left, Diane Brody, Rebecca Burke, Susan Chibnall, Susan Evans, Lynn Foster, Anne Havlovick, Lauren Janik, Sheila Kinderman, Patricia Larsen, Peggy McGannon, Denise Hall, Alicia Richie, Kitchy Sawets, Ann Sherwood, Joanne Shumpert and Nicki Watts.**

## A Voice for Children

**“Promise-keepers” advocate for Fairfax County’s abused, neglected children.**

BY VICTORIA ROSS  
THE CONNECTION

Each child who comes before Judge Thomas Mann’s Fairfax courtroom is loveable and vulnerable. There is the precocious three-year-old whose parents are drug-addicted. A seven-year-old boy whose mentally-ill mother left him home alone to care for his infant sibling. A 12-year-old girl whose stepfather sexually abused her.

Last year in Fairfax County, there were 500 similar stories of abuse and neglect so severe they ended up in court. And while each child’s story is different, the one thing they all share is: the adults in their lives broke a sacred promise to take care of them.

“When the Court gets involved when there is abuse, not only have the promises been broken; they’ve been shattered,” said Mann, Chief Judge of Fairfax County’s Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. “Broken promises are like glass, and [these children] are surrounded by it, 360 degrees of broken glass, and their feet are bare.”

Mann gave his remarks during the Feb. 21 swearing-in ceremony at the Jennings Judicial Center for a group of 16 newly-trained volunteers he calls the “promise keepers:” Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) volunteers who make recommendations to the court on the best interest of the child. Volunteers submit a fact-based report to the judge based on an objective investigation involving social workers, county attorneys, teachers, etc.

**CASA VOLUNTEERS** are often the only adults who keep their promises, Mann said, and their objective reports are vital in helping him gain insight into the child’s circumstances.

“Imagine going to bed and you wake up on Mars, multiply that times a zillion and add it to infinity, and that’s the quantum of despair. CASA’s make that Mars landing possible for these children,” Mann said.

Lisa Banks, executive director of Fairfax CASA, said

### How to Become a CASA Volunteer

“Volunteers listen first, then they act,” said Elisa Kosarin, associate director of recruitment and training. She said volunteers get to know the child by talking with everyone in that child’s life: parents, relatives, foster parents, teachers, medical professionals, attorneys, social workers and others. They use the information they gather to inform judges what the child needs and what will be the best permanent home for that child.

“You don’t have to be a lawyer or social worker to volunteer,” Kosarin said. “We welcome people from all walks of life. We are simply looking for people who care about children and have common sense.”

To get started, Kosarin said prospective volunteers should attend one of CASA’s information sessions. The next information session is Saturday, March 17, 11 a.m. to noon, at Burke Centre Library. For more information about volunteer opportunities, or general information about CASA, go to Fairfax CASA’s website at [www.casafairfax.org](http://www.casafairfax.org).

volunteers are the constant and focused voice for abused and neglected children in court, and the only adult working exclusively as the child’s advocate. She said volunteers work to ensure that each child is safe from further abuse and help obtain a safe and permanent home where that child can thrive.

“Every 38 hours, an abused or neglected child in Fairfax County is placed under court protection,” Banks said. “These children need advocates to protect their fundamental rights. We are truly grateful to those who choose to give their time to these children.”

Fairfax CASA, which was named “One of the Best” area nonprofits by Catalogue for Philanthropy 2011-2012, has a reputation for being a critical component of Fairfax County’s abuse and neglect cases.

“They have well-deserved reputation for being rigorous and objective,” said Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37), who served as Superintendent of Fairfax County’s Juvenile Detention Center and Chief Deputy of the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. “CASAs are technically volunteers, but these are highly-trained, highly-qualified volunteers who are passionate about what they do.”

According to Banks, many volunteers are well-educated empty-nesters searching for a way to help children.

SEE FAIRFAX CASA, PAGE 13

Wilbur Smith Associates	Year Opened	Revenue Forecast Error					Average Error
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Harris County Toll Road Authority (Texas)/Hardy (6)	1988	242%	251%	320%	339%	348%	302%
Harris County Toll Road Authority (Texas)/Sam Houston (6)	1988	140%	25%	23%	20%	20%	30%
Orlando-Orange Expressway Authority/Central Florida Greenway North Segment	1989	8%	17%	23%	44%	32%	23%
Orlando-Orange Expressway Authority/Central Florida Greenway South	1990	25%	14%	14%	22%	14%	18%
Oklahoma Turnpike Authority/ John Kilpatrick (3)	1991	426%	279%	241%	218%	100%	276%
Oklahoma Turnpike Authority/ Creek (3)	1992	154%	87%	79%	80%	14%	77%
Transportation Corridor Agencies (California)/Foothill North (3)	1995	10%	8%	3%			8%
Transportation Corridor Agencies (California)/San Joaquin Hills (3)	1996	216%	111%	84%	80%	85%	119%
North Texas Tollway Authority/ George Bush Expressway (3)	1998	134%	9%				-13%
Transportation Corridor Agencies (California)/Foothill Eastern (3)	1999	116%	27%	26%			12%
Connector 2000 Association (South Carolina)/Greenville Connector (3)	2001	238%					238%
Pocahontas Parkway Association (Virginia)/Pocahontas Parkway (44,45)	2002	140%	140%	87%			128%
Average Error		134%	104%	108%	126%	122%	118%

Non-WSA Forecasts	Year Opened	Revenue Forecast Error					Average Error
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise/Sawgrass Expressway (6)	1986	462%	327%	213%	170%	160%	268%
North Texas Tollway Authority/Dallas North Tollway (6)	1986	35%	10%	0%	1%	1%	30%
Mid-Bay Bridge Authority (Florida)/ Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge (38,39)	1993	25%	3%	9%	12%	14%	-1%
Orlando-Orange Expressway Authority/Central Florida Greenway Southern Connector	1993	264%	173%				218%
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise/ Veteran's Expressway (3)	1994	100%	89%	60%	54%	70%	79%
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise/ Seminole Expressway (3)	1994	119%	72%	41%	28%	43%	61%
Osceola County (Florida)/Osceola County Parkway (3)	1995	609%	97%	160%	148%		268%
Toll Road Investment Partnership (Virginia)/Dulles Greenway (3)	1995	996%	302%	324%	288%	182%	299%
I-470 Public Highway Authority (Colorado)/I-470 (3)	1999	42%	60%		89%		72%
Florida's Turnpike Enterprise/Pala (3)	1999	23%	40%				36%
Santa Rosa Bay Bridge Authority (Florida)/Garcen Point Bridge (42,43)	1999	207%	82%	96%	112%	100%	121%
Northwest Parkway Public Highway Authority (Colorado)/Northwest Parkway	2004	65%	79%				72%
Average Error		202%	112%	112%	98%	79%	127%

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Part of the Reston Citizens Association’s response to a forecast of traffic and revenue for the Dulles Toll Road by Wilbur Smith and Associated.**

## RCA Questions Toll And Revenue Forecasts

**Study worries about ‘optimum bias’ in projections.**

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

The Reston Citizens Association released a report last month calling into question the toll and revenue forecasts done by CDMSmith, then known as Wilbur Smith and Associates. The forecasts were done to estimate costs and other planning measures for Phase Two of Dulles Metrorail.

The RCA feels their study of the forecasts shows that “many large errors” have been made in their forecasts, which in turn is harmful to investors, bondholders, governments and toll road users who are relying on those numbers.

The report cites what researchers have called “optimism bias,” which it says has been documented in a number of recent toll and revenue forecasts.

The bias shows a propensity to forecast more traffic and higher revenues than previous experience demonstrates.

A National Highway Cooperative Research study conducted in 2006 studied forecasts and results in the first five years of 26 different toll roads around the country. The study found that the forecasts for these revenues were overestimated by an average of 109 percent per year.

The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority’s latest projections indicate that more than \$3 billion in debt will be issued to finance the Silver Line costs.

“Nobody has ever tried to put

\$3 billion of additional debt on a toll road and succeeded,” said Terry Maynard of the RCA. “Historically, these forecasts have led to serious defaults and bankruptcies.”

As a result of their report, the RCA says they would like a second, independent forecast by another group prior to any decision to move forward with Phase Two construction, and they recommend VDOT undertake that task.

They also call upon MWAA, Fairfax and Loudoun Counties to defer any decision until that analysis has been completed.

Fairfax County Chairman Sharon Bulova said she shared the RCA’s report with Board of Supervisors Auditor Michael Longhi, who agreed that the projections “are not without fault.”

Bulova said Longhi forwarded his recommendations to CDMSmith.

“The traffic and revenue analysis for the Dulles Toll Road is a key factor in our decision to continue supporting Phase Two of the Silver Line,” she said in a letter to the RCA. “I agree that the projections must be accurate and comprehensive. However, halting progress on the Silver Line in order to conduct a separate analysis at this time would be costly, time consuming and may not produce more accurate predictions.”

Meanwhile, Fairfax County is hosting a series of public meetings March 12 through 19 as a lead up to the Board of Supervisors’ public hearing on Phase Two on March 20 at 5 p.m.



## NEWS

### 'Stars Over Dulles' Gala Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce Hosts annual awards event.

**L**aughter and style were out in full force as more than 300 guests attended the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual awards gala and benefit Saturday at the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport Hotel in Herndon.

In addition to recognizing local businesses, non-profits and citizens for their support of both the chamber and community, this year's "Stars Over Dulles" gala also benefited the Metropolitan Washington branch of the United Service Organizations [USO].

During a 15-minute paddle auction led by Del. Ken Plum (D-36), those present raised nearly \$20,000 to support the USO—quadrupling last year's fundraising efforts of \$5,000.

The money will support the USO's Emergency Food Assistance Program, which has seen a 45 percent increase in food pantry use over the last three years by struggling military families.

In keeping with the evening's

theme, the Dulles Regional Chamber honored more than 24 American heroes from various military branches at the gala, many of whom attended as the chamber's guests.

The chamber also recognized its award winners, including: Small Business of the Year, AdvCoach, represented by Angela Inzerillo and James Lawson; Mid-size Business of the Year, Graceful Care, represented by Pat Williams; and Large Business of the Year, CACI, represented by Dan Allen, president of North America operations.

Among area non-profit organizations, Devotion to Children, represented by Rosemary Lauer, received the Small Non-profit of the Year award, while Reston Interfaith, represented by Kerrie Wilson, was recognized as the Large Non-profit of the Year.

Bill Lauer of TETRA Partners received the Citizen of the Year award.

Each of the six non-profit nominees received a spontaneous \$500 donation from award announcer Justin Exner.



**Gala Committee Chair Jenet Ahn, of Annalee's Prom, Bridal, Special Occasions and Tuxedo, left, poses with NBC Washington's Angie Goff, right, during a reception at the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce's annual awards gala and benefit. Goff served as emcee for the gala.**



**Kerri Wilson of Reston Interfaith raises her number during a paddle auction to benefit the USO. Attendees raised nearly \$20,000 for the non-profit at the event.**

**Dulles Regional Chamber President Eileen Curtis, left, and Chamber Board of Directors Chairman Kirk Forman, right, present the proceeds of the paddle auction to USO Metropolitan Washington representative Pam Horton, center.**





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## COMMENTARY

# General Assembly Session Stalled

BY KENNETH R. "KEN" PLUM  
STATE DELEGATE (D-36)

**T**he beautiful red and pink camellias on Capitol Square in Richmond have been blooming for a couple of weeks. In a normal year that would be a sign that it is time for the General Assembly to quit and go home. In the early period of its history, Virginia established a schedule for the legislature to meet in the winter to allow its farmer members to go home in the spring and plant their crops. There are few farmers in the legislature these days, but the legislative schedule established in the Constitution is still followed. Things do not change very quickly in Richmond.

This session of the General Assembly has been anything but normal. In even-numbered years The Assembly meets for 60 days in order to deal with regular legislative business and to pass a budget for the next biennium. This year's adjournment date of March 10 is not likely to be met. The hang-up is the budget. The equally divided State Senate of 20 Democrats and 20 Republicans cannot agree on a spending plan because they cannot agree on a power-sharing plan. The Republican Lieutenant Governor who presides over the Senate and who has been breaking tie votes all session is prohibited from voting on the budget. After winning an equal share of the members in last November's election, the Republicans took over all the committee chairmanships and dictated the committee membership because the lieutenant governor was available to break any ties. With the budget some accommodation or compromise must be reached. And in an all-too-familiar context, the



budget must be approved by June 1 in order to keep the government running.

In the meantime, the General Assembly is likely to recess while the negotiations around the organization of the Senate and the biennial budget continue. That will give our farmer members time to plant their crops and others to return to their businesses and families.

If you are keeping score on the hot button issues, the Governor signed the bill to repeal the law that limited hand gun purchases to one a month. I voted against the repeal as it is likely to cause more problems than it solves for the persons who want to buy more than a dozen pistols a year. A modified requirement for an ultrasound before an abortion passed and will be signed by the Governor. I voted against it. The public outcry over the original requirement for a transvaginal ultrasound led to the change to be an abdominal procedure that apparently provides little or no information but will be legally required whether or not the doctor sees the need for it. New requirements for registration and voting passed to solve no identified problem but could poise Virginia in the presidential election to be the Florida of 2002 in 2012.

We will pass a budget in due course. Too bad we passed some really bad bills. Watch for an announcement of the schedule of my community meetings to discuss other bills considered and passed this session.

## 'Frustrated' With General Assembly

Dear General Assembly Member:

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Chamber Partnership, comprising the Dulles Regional, Greater Reston and Loudoun County chambers of commerce, we would like to convey our collective frustration with the conduct of the 2012 Virginia General Assembly and remind you of the priority we shared at the start of the 2012 session – to support policies that promote a strong, pro-business environment that enhances Virginia's economic competitiveness, cultivates growth in all segments of our economy, and ensures adequate access to critical business infrastructure and resources. At this point in the session, on behalf of our 2,800 business members and their more than 100,000 employees, we urge you, once again, to focus on this top priority. To accomplish this goal, we believe you must, first and foremost, adopt a budget.

Over the past several decades, under the leadership of many General Assemblies and Gubernatorial Administrations from both sides of the political aisle, Virginia has built and maintained a well-earned reputation as our nation's finest state to start and grow a

### To Governor, General Assembly

This letter was sent on behalf of the Northern Virginia Chamber Partnership - comprising the Dulles Regional, Greater Reston and Loudoun County chambers of commerce - to Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell and all members of the General Assembly.

business, raise a family and to build a career.

Generations of Virginia legislators, businesses and citizens have contributed countless amounts of time, energy and resources to achieve these well-deserved distinctions. This is the legacy that the current General Assembly and Administration has inherited, and as your business community, is quite frankly, why we have chosen Virginia as our home. While over the past several weeks, we have heard much about a wide range of partisan issues from both sides of the political spectrum and otherwise, as business leaders, we remain steadfast in our position that your ultimate focus should be on maintaining Virginia's reputation as a well-governed, fiscally

disciplined state where businesses and families alike feel safe to invest in their future.

With all of the respect and courtesy that your office deserves, we expect every member of the Governor's Administration and Virginia General Assembly to put aside partisan differences and act in the best interest of the Commonwealth by focusing on the jobs that the voters hired you to do, first and foremost, earnestly negotiating and adopting a budget. The negative consequences of not doing so are far reaching, and serve no Virginian's interest, political or otherwise.

We thank you for your commitment to serve the Commonwealth of Virginia and pledge the resources at our collective disposal to help you and your colleagues serve the economic and quality of life needs of every citizen and business in Virginia.

**Mark S. Ingrao**, President & CEO, Greater Reston Chamber of Commerce

**Eileen Curtis**, President & CEO, Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

**Tony Howard**, President & CEO, Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

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# Reenacting a Dark History?

## Turning back the clock in Richmond.

Who could have anticipated that our elected officials would take African-American History month and Women's History month so seriously that they would literally try to turn back the clock?

First in February, African-American History Month, the assembly voted to make it harder to vote, knowing that the bill would make it less likely that some African-Americans in Virginia would vote.

The bill, which "eliminates the provision that allows a voter to sign a sworn statement that he is the named registered voter he claims to be in lieu of showing identification." There is no evidence that this longstanding provision has been abused.

In an action that reminds many of the poll tax, the General Assembly voted to require specific forms of identification at the polls in order to vote, knowing that this will disproportionately affect minority voters, poor voters and older voters, knowing that 15 percent or more of minority voters and older voters do not have such ID.

In the House of Delegates, the measure passed 69-30, with Northern Virginia delegates Dave Albo, Barbara Comstock, Tim Hugo, Jim LeMunyon and Tom Rust voting in favor; voting against were Robert Brink, David Bulova, David Englin, Eileen Filler-Corn, Mark Herring, Patrick Hope, Mark Keam, Kay Kory, Alfonso Lopez, Ken Plum, Mark Sickles, Scott Surovell and Vivian Watts.

All Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria senators voted against the bill that forces voters to provide one of a short list of identification in order to vote, but the bill passed 20-to-20. Senators George Barker, Adam Ebbin, Barbara Favola, Mark Herring, Janet Howell, Dave Marsden, Chap Petersen, Toddy Puller and Dick Saslaw voted against.

Now on to Women's History.

Northern Virginia holds a special place in women's struggle for the right to vote.

From the Workhouse Museum in Lorton:

"In 1917, women began demonstrating in front of the White House for the right to vote. They decided they would rather be imprisoned than be quiet. In response to their outspoken protests during World War I, they were sentenced to fines or imprisonment. They chose imprisonment. Some of those arrested were sentenced to the Women's Workhouse at Lorton. The protestors were held under deplorable conditions. As news of the sentences spread, sympathy for the suffragists was aroused. ... Finally the 19th amendment to the Constitution was ratified in 1919 and for the first time women were allowed to vote in the November 1920 national election."

Women's right to self-determination and equality has not come easily, and the transformation to full equality is not complete.

The Virginia General Assembly nevertheless became the butt of jokes and a source of outrage as it pursued a variety of bills that seek to deny women the right to have control over their own bodies.

We don't need to revisit the many references to "transvaginal ultrasound." The literal invasive parts of this bill were deleted, but still the assembly passed legislation that will require

women to have an ultrasound view of their fetus before having an abortion.

A bill that would provide "that unborn children at every stage of development enjoy all the rights, privileges, and immunities available to other persons, citizens, and residents of the Commonwealth," passed the House of Delegates 66-32. Local delegates Dave Albo, Barbara Comstock, Tim Hugo, Jim LeMunyon voted in favor; and voting against, Robert Brink, David Bulova, David Englin, Eileen Filler-Corn, Mark Herring, Patrick Hope, Mark Keam, Kay Kory, Alfonso Lopez, Ken Plum, Tom Rust, Jim Scott, Mark Sickles, Scott Surovell, and Vivian Watts.

This bill died in the Senate at least for this year. Northern Virginia senators voting to kill this bill were George Barker, Adam Ebbin, Barbara Favola, Mark Herring, Janet Howell, David Marsden, Chap Petersen, Toddy Puller and Dick Saslaw. No senator from Fairfax, Arlington or Alexandria voted to keep the bill alive.

Outrage over these bills, assaults on women's rights, sparked demonstrations over the weekend.

Apparently the protest that ensued, with hundreds descending on Richmond, was darn scary; scary enough to turn out the riot squad and to prompt police to arrest protesters for sitting on the Capitol steps.

"Our state Capitol is becoming an armed garrison," said state Sen. Janet Howell. "Not since the massive resistance days in the '60s have I seen such a disgraceful display of excessive police presence in my state."

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## COMMENTARY

# A Raw Deal for Northern Virginia

BY STEWART SCHWARTZ  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
COALITION FOR SMARTER GROWTH

Northern Virginia is getting a raw deal from Governor McDonnell. While we need transportation investment to support this economic engine of the state, at least \$1.5 billion in transportation funds are being diverted to wasteful and unnecessary projects in rural areas. Meanwhile, the state refuses to adequately fund Dulles Rail, leaving Northern Virginia taxpayers and toll payers to foot the lion's share of the bill. And, when it comes to making decisions about Northern Virginia's most critical transportation needs, the Governor and Secretary of Transportation Connaughton want to shut-out our elected officials.

First, Dulles Rail. Northern Virginians and the federal government are paying about 90 percent of Phase 1. For Phase 2, the Gov-

ernor belatedly proposed contributing \$150 million but has held up the funds to stop a Project Labor Agreement and to gain other leverage. Even with the \$150 million, Northern Virginia tax payers and toll payers would have to pick up about 95 percent of the cost of Phase 2, with tolls set at ever-higher rates because of the state's failure to invest in this critical project. In contrast, the state routinely pays 100 percent of highway project costs using a combination of federal and state funds.

Last year, the Governor won approval for a record infusion of funds into transportation. Where is he spending it? The Governor has promised \$750 million in grants and about \$500 million in low-interest loans to the private toll-road proposal for Route 460 between Suffolk and Petersburg. Even Hampton Roads officials don't see that project as a priority. Secretary Connaughton personally spearheaded the diversion of \$200

million to the controversial and poorly conceived Charlottesville/ Albemarle Bypass, a project which VDOT's own engineers say could cost up to \$400 million. Millions more are going to the remote Coalfields Expressway, which could ultimately cost \$1.8 billion.

Unrecognized during the 2011 session, the Governor's proposals ensured that much of the \$3 billion in borrowed money and other funds was routed outside the state's longstanding formulas. A particularly bad deal for Northern Virginia, this meant that transit didn't receive its usual 14.7 percent, while also diminishing the pool of funding for primary, secondary and urban roads. Northern Virginia typically receives about 70 percent of the state's transit funds and greatly depends on primary, secondary and urban road funding.

The Governor's 2012 transportation initiative (HB1248) has generated new concerns among Northern Virginia officials. By si-

phoning a portion of the state sales tax and general fund surpluses to transportation, his plan takes funding from education and public safety. At the same time, while Northern Virginia generates 34 percent of state sales tax revenues, the Governor's plan would only allocate about 6.8 percent of the additional transportation funding to Northern Virginia, according to Del. Vivian Watts.

Meanwhile, the Governor and Secretary seem bent on pushing out our elected officials from key transportation decisions. In both 2011 and 2012 (HB601 and HB1291), the Governor has sought to control the Virginia seats on the Metro Board, even though Northern Virginians provide about 70 percent of Virginia's share of Metro costs. The Governor's push (HB1291) to combine two Northern Virginia transportation agencies would particularly disenfran-

SEE A RAW DEAL, PAGE 7

## BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

### WEDNESDAY/MARCH 7

**Raise Sexually Healthy Children.** 7 p.m. Flint Hill School, 3320 Jermantown Road, Oakton. With Debbie Roffman, author of "Sex & Sensibility: The Thinking Parent's Guide to Talking About Sex." 703-584-2354.

### FRIDAY/MARCH 9

#### Friday Forum Business

**Networking.** 7:30 a.m. Sheraton Reston Hotel Syrah Restaurant, 11810 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Business professionals focused on generating business for members through qualified referrals. New group being formed. Meeting free and open to all, breakfast available for purchase. Meetings every Friday. 703-802-0334.

### SUNDAY/MARCH 11

#### Update on America's Nuclear

**Future.** 12:45 p.m. Fairfax Unitarian Church, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. The President's Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future nears completion of a comprehensive review of policies for managing the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle and will recommend a new plan.

## A Raw Deal

FROM PAGE 6

chise Fairfax and voters and would enable the state to dominate the voting in the new agency. A separate bill (HB599) pushed by a highway lobbying group, would take power from Northern Virginia elected officials to select transportation priorities and hand it to the appointed and unaccountable Commonwealth Transportation Board on which we have only three seats out of 17.

To make things worse, the Governor's 2012 transportation bill (HB1248) would make VDOT a superagency with the power to deny a local land use plan or project. A separate provision would grant VDOT the power to force a highway project onto a community no matter the legitimate objections and concerns of local citizens.

Before this session ends, we need Northern Virginia's state legislators, both Republican and Democrat, to unite. They should fight to protect our role in transportation decision-making and stop the centralization of power in VDOT. They should challenge the undermining of state transportation formulas and the diversion of funds from our critical needs including Dulles Rail.

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## WELLBEING

# Cleaning Up One's Plate

### Local nutrition experts encourage healthy eating during National Nutrition Month and always.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

When it comes to healthy eating, Alexandria wellness educator Cheryl Mirabella encourages her clients to load up during meals, but she offers a caveat. "Crowd out your plate with good stuff," said Mirabella who has offices in Alexandria and Warrenton. "If you're eating nutrient and fiber rich foods, you're naturally going to be more full and more satisfied and therefore you might not be reaching for the junk food as often."

In observance of National Nutrition Month, Mirabella is offering suggestions for making wise food choices. She and other health experts say that that while trading in salt-laden potato chips for potas-

sium-packed baked spuds might be challenging, making positive dietary changes is easier than one might think, and is worth the effort. "I believe that food is medicine and we can use it as a way to prevent diseases and heal our body," said Mirabella "If we eat foods that are full of nutrients we're going to give our body everything it needs to do what it does naturally. Food can be a very powerful medicine in terms of disease prevention and reversal."

Begin by simplifying food choices. "The first step is focusing on what isn't food and then finding cleaner options," said Nina Elliot, an Arlington-based personal trainer. "All the additives ... that are in many of our favorite foods can contribute to obesity and health challenges."Replacing processed foods with whole foods may take

a bit more work in the kitchen and a little more grocery money, but the health benefits are tremendous." Add fresh fruits and vegetables to each meal. "Vegetables are high in antioxidants," said Mirabella. "Frozen fruits and vegetables are an excellent choice too. They are affordable and they're nutrient rich because they've been picked at the peak of their freshness. They went from the field to the freezer, so the nutrients are locked-in."

Watch for hidden sodium. "Deli meat for example, is highly processed and high in sodium," said Paulette Helman, a registered dietitian in Potomac, Md. "You're better off baking a chicken breast with a little lemon juice."

Choose whole grains. "Whole grains are healthier than plain, white processed grains," said Jean Glossa, M.D., medical director, Fairfax Community Health Care Network and Molina Healthcare. "The closer the food is to the way that it came out of the ground and the less processed it is the healthier it is. But that doesn't mean than by switching to whole grains you

can eat an unlimited amount of it. Portion size is still important." When it comes to protein, keep it lean. "Ideally with every meal and snack, you want to have protein," said Mirabella. "For example, you might have eggs for breakfast and toss in spinach or broccoli and a little feta cheese. If you have an apple for a snack you might dip it in a little bit of peanut butter so that you get protein and healthy fat along with carbohydrates from the apple. Lean cuts of meat are good, but you want to stay away from saturated fat."

Nutritionists say gradual adjustments work best. "Making small changes is more manageable than overhauling one's diet all at once," said Elliot. "[They are] more likely to lead to the next positive change ... which means people are [more] likely to want to continue improving ... their diet."

Plan ahead. "Try to eat three meals and two healthy snacks each day," said Mirabella. "That is a great way to keep your blood sugar in balance so you can make healthier food choices all day long."



Alexandria-based wellness educator Cheryl Mirabella grows vibrantly colored, vitamin-packed vegetables in her garden. She believes that nutrient-rich food is medicine for the body.

## Health Services Coalition Receives \$10,000 Grant

### Funding will help provide specialty health care to low income residents.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

Northern Virginia Health Services Coalition's (NOVAHSC) Specialty Access program received a \$10,000 grant to help provide low-income, uninsured patients with access to specialty medical care through a regional network of providers.

"Increased access to specialty care continues to be a challenge for safety-net health care providers in Northern Virginia as the need in our community steadily grows," said Meagan Ulrich, program manager of NOVAHSC's Specialty Access program. "This [grant will] help NOVA Specialty Access to expand our abilities to place more patients from free clinics with the specialty care they need when they need it."

NOVAHSC is a group of clinics that provides medical services for financially vulnerable people in Northern Virginia. The coalition represents clinics and health care providers in Alexandria City, Fairfax County, Arlington County, Prince William County, Loudoun County, Fairfax City, Falls Church

City, Manassas City and Manassas Park. The clinics provide specialty care services such as audiology, podiatry and physical therapy. NOVA Specialty Access takes referrals from participating safety-net clinics and links them with volunteer specialists in the community. Each clinic works with individual specialty care doctors who are willing to see patients in their offices.

The grant was awarded by Molina Healthcare, Inc., which helps state agencies in their administration of the Medicaid program.

The company currently manages Fairfax County's Community Health Care Network. "Molina Healthcare was involved in this important initiative from the start through its management of the Community Health Care Network, which has three clinics participating as part of the specialty network," said Jean Glossa, MD, MBA, MPH, medical director of Molina Healthcare of Virginia and the Community Health Care Network in Fairfax County. "As the medical director of these local clinics,

I see firsthand the overwhelming need for access to specialty care. It only made sense for us to take it one step farther and demonstrate our strong commitment to help address the unmet needs of such a vulnerable population."

The NOVA Specialty Access program, which was launched last fall, has recruited 97 specialty medical care providers. Program officials say they plan to recruit 200 providers within the next year.







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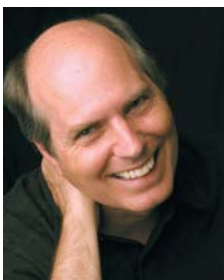
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## NEWS



PHOTO BY AMIEE FREEMAN/THE CONNECTION

**Members of Prof. Rosemarie Pelletier's American National Politics class who presented Democrat and Republican party platforms and candidates in a mock convention. Back row, from left: Prof. Pelletier, Greysi Vasquez, Rosa Alfaro, Helder Barberena, Sarah Wright, Dan Cook, Robert Kuehn, Zach Miller; middle row: Brandon Cheltenham and Will Harrison; front row: Ariel Lang, Leah Beyers, and Errik Hopkins.**

## Romney, Paul Team Up in Reston

### NVCC politics students stage mock GOP convention.

BY AMIEE FREEMAN  
THE CONNECTION

Republican Presidential candidate Mitt Romney triumphantly entered the convention area. He was preceded by his running mate, Ron Paul. This convention was not in Tampa, but rather in a Northern Virginia Community College classroom in Reston. The students in Professor Rosemarie Pelletier's American National Politics class participated in a mock national convention on Tuesday, Feb. 28 to predict the Republican candidate and running mate and to present the Democratic platform.

**AT THE BEGINNING** of the semester, the students were divided into "Democrats" and "Republicans." In the weeks preceding the convention, they researched party platforms and key elected officials. This mock convention was their mid-term assessment to demonstrate what they learned about party policies, particularly differences between the parties.

"I hope that through this exercise, the students will better understand party politics and understand where the two parties stand on the issues," said Pelletier. "It's a greater learning opportunity for them to do the research on their own than to have me lecture."

In addition to predicting the Republican candidate and running mate, the students also presented party issues and platforms. The Republican side had a strong pro-life, pro-trade, anti-regulation platform. The students choose South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, played by Ariel Lang, Sen. Marco Rubio (Fla.), played by Robert Kuehn, and Republican National Committee Chair, Reince Priebus, played by Zach Miller, to present the Republican platform. Dan Cook played the role of Paul and Sarah Wright played Romney.

"We choose Romney for the Republican candidate after the South Carolina primary. At that time, it looked like he was going to sweep the primaries. It seemed like a logical choice," said Cook. Fellow "Re-

publican" Kuehn interjected that it still is the logical choice, despite primary wins by Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum in recent weeks.

Cook continued with a justification of the choice of Paul as running mate, explaining that Paul and Romney's "thinking are so different." He and his fellow "Republicans" felt that Paul best complimented Romney and brought together the disparate factions of the Republican Party.

On the Democrat side, there were less surprises. Incumbent Barack Obama, played by Helder Barberena, entered the convention area with much applause and glad-handing. The "Democrat" students presented a platform based on continued economic growth, a commitment to healthcare coverage, a strong foreign policy, increased equal rights and increased access to higher education. Students Greysi Vasquez, Rose Alfaro, Will Harrison, Errik Hopkins, and Leah Beyers presented the Democratic platform.

Barbarena, playing Obama, sounded very much like the incumbent President, continuing to work toward change: "Nothing will get done this year. Washington is broken. We need a smarter, more effective government where hard work pays off and responsibility is rewarded. We must keep our goal in sight.."

**TO PREPARE** for the mock convention, the students were instructed to watch previous conventions and try to mimic the style and content of the convention. Also, students researched major party issues to determine the platforms for each party.

"I was surprised by Ron Paul being named as the Republican running mate. I was also surprised that Joe Biden did not speak," said Pelletier following the presentation. "I'm sure if you ask some of them, they would have had no idea prior to this activity the different platforms of the two parties. This is most likely the first Presidential election many of them will be taking part in. Hopefully, this activity makes them more informed about the two parties and their candidates."



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# ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit [www.connectionnewspapers.com](http://www.connectionnewspapers.com).

## WEDNESDAY/MARCH 7

**Bat White-nose Syndrome: There is a New Fungus Among Us.** 7 p.m. USGS Headquarters, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston. Dr. David Blehert will discuss the profound impacts white-nose syndrome may have in the 21st century. Since first discovered in 2007 in New York, white-nose syndrome has spread to 16 states and four Canadian provinces. The disease is estimated to have killed over five million hibernating bats. Federal facility, photo Id required. Free and open to the public. Follow this event live @USGSLive. 703-648-7770.

**Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter Fundraiser.** 6-8:30 p.m. Whole Foods Market, 143 Maple Ave., Vienna. 5% of all sales from the Café Bar will be donated to FFCAS. [www.facebook.com/events/27398201933851/?context=create](http://www.facebook.com/events/27398201933851/?context=create).

**Wonderful Ones.** 11 a.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Songs, stories and rhymes. 12-23 months with adult. 703-437-8855.

## THURSDAY/MARCH 8

**Karl Scully.** 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Classical and Irish music. \$25. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Book Discussion Group.** 7:30 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Call for title. Adults. 703-689-2700.

**One-on-One Computer Tutoring.** 2 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn the basics of the Internet, Word and Excel. Call for an appointment. Adults. 703-242-4020.

**One-on-One English Practice.** 2 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Call for appointment with an ESL volunteer. Adults. 703-242-4020.

**eBook/eReader Instruction.** 7:30 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. Learn about library eBooks and how to access them with your compatible device. Call for appointment. Adults. 703-242-4020.

## FRIDAY/MARCH 9

**The Amazing Kreskin.** 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Illusions and comedy with audience participation. \$25. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**"I Love You Because."** 8 p.m. Reston Community Players, 266 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Tickets \$15-\$21. 703-476-4500 or [restonplayers.org](http://restonplayers.org).

## SATURDAY/MARCH 10

**"I Love You Because."** 8 p.m. Reston Community Players, 266 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Tickets \$15-\$21. 703-476-4500 or [restonplayers.org](http://restonplayers.org).

**Amphibian Idol.** 11 a.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. All ages. Learn about which amphibians are making which sounds, and make noise as part of a frog chorus. \$4-\$6. [naturecenter@reston.org](mailto:naturecenter@reston.org) or 703-476-9689.

**Singer Paula Cole.** 7:30 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. \$25. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Reston Contra Dance.** Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. Beginners' workshop 7:15 p.m., dance 8-10:45 p.m. Michael Barraclough calls to the music of the June Apple Band.



From left: Tim Adams and Evie Korovesis in the Reston Community Players' production of "I Love You Because" [See March 8-10 listings].

Partner not necessary, admission \$9. [anote20@gmail.com](mailto:anote20@gmail.com).

## SUNDAY/MARCH 11

**"I Love You Because."** 2:30 p.m. Reston Community Players, 266 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Tickets \$15-\$21. 703-476-4500 or [restonplayers.org](http://restonplayers.org).

**Vienna Boys Choir.** 4 p.m. George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The program will include "O Fortuna" from Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana"; Brahms' 13th Psalm; Strauss' "Tausend und eine Nacht" (Arabian Nights); Ennio Morricone's "Nella Fantasia" (In My Fantasy); and a medley of songs from the 1992 film "Sister Act." Italian conductor Manolo Cagnin will serve as choirmaster for this performance. Tickets \$23-\$46, youth through grade 12 half price, available at 888-945-2468 or [cfa.gmu.edu](mailto:cfa.gmu.edu).

## MONDAY/MARCH 12

**Reston Lions Club Mixer.** 6:30-8:30 p.m. Finnegan's Sports Bar and Grill, 2310 Woodland Crossing, Herndon. The Reston Lions Club, sponsor of the new Lions club that is forming in Herndon, will host a mixer for residents of the Herndon area to learn about the opportunities to serve their communities through Lion's Club projects and activities. Free, light refreshments available. 703-507-8679.

**Spring Peepers.** 10 a.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Age 18-35 months. Listen to the call of Spring Peepers and discover where they live. Feel some slime and make a frog craft. \$5-\$8. [naturecenter@reston.org](mailto:naturecenter@reston.org) or 703-476-9689.

**Ladysmith Black Mambazo.** 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Lapsit Storytime.** 10:30 a.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Stories, songs, and rhymes. 0-11 months with adult. 703-437-8855.

**Small Wonders.** 11:30 a.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Stories, songs, and rhymes. 12-23 months with adult. 703-437-8855.

## Frying Pan Farm at Reston

**Regional Library.** 3 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Meet chickens. Build a kite. Age 6-11. 703-689-2700.

**English Conversation.** 10:30 a.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. English practice for non-native speakers. Adults. 703-242-4020.

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# Reston Association Board of Directors Election

**Voting Begins March 5, 2012**

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## Important Dates

March 14, 2012 7 p.m. Candidates' Forum, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive

March 30, 2012, 5 p.m. Deadline to return ballots to counting agent

## Three seats open:

One South Lakes District Director

Two At-Large Directors

*Residential property owners and renters are eligible to vote in the election. Results will be announced at the Annual Members' Meeting, Tuesday, April 10, 2012*

## Details or Questions:

Cate Fulkerson [cate@reston.org](mailto:cate@reston.org) or 703-435-6512.





# Forrest's Quest for State Crown Falls Just Short

South Lakes senior wrestler finished second in Virginia despite battling illness over the postseason.

BY RICH SANDERS  
THE CONNECTION

Following a third place finish in his respective 145-division weight class at last winter's 2011 Virginia State AAA high school wrestling championships, South Lakes' Ryan Forrest was determined to come back and capture this year's ultimate prize - a state crown.

While third best in the state was a wonderful accomplishment for his junior year, Forrest knew he could do even better in his senior year and worked hard over the ensuing off-season in pursuit of doing so.

"That had been what I had been trying for 365 days after last year's state finals," said Forrest. "I had trained all summer and fall."

Following an outstanding regular season, Forrest was as ready as could be by the time the postseason got underway in early February.

**"I had trained hard to be a state champion, so [not winning the title] was a bit of a bummer."**

— Ryan Forrest

crown but was not able to win a second straight region championship, finishing second place instead after losing his finals match to South County's Brett Stein.

At states, the postseason tournament he had been looking so forward to over the prior calendar year, Forrest, with great grit and focus, won his first three matches to reach the finals and was so close to realizing his dream. But in the championship match, his state title hopes, much like his physical strength which had been all but sapped, were dashed in a 14-2 loss to Hopewell High's Cody Allala.

Forrest's quest to complete his high



**Ryan Forrest (bottom), South Lakes' outstanding wrestler, got into trouble early on in his state finals match against Hopewell's Cody Allala (top) when he was turned onto his back. But Forrest, who battled adversity throughout the entire postseason, prevented the pin and went the distance in the title match loss.**

school career with a state championship victory had fallen just short.

"I thought it went pretty well," said Forrest, of his gutsy showing at the state tournament, held locally at Robinson Secondary. "I had trained hard to be a state champion, so [not winning the title] was a bit of a bummer."

**FORREST CAME TO LEARN** he has an illness known as creatine kinase, which occurs when blood levels of certain brain and muscle enzymes are raised. These raised enzyme levels can indicate several problems in skeletal muscle, heart muscle, and the brain. Overall fatigue is a result of creatine kinase as well.

Forrest is under doctors' care and recovering. He plans to play baseball for the Seahawks this spring but must take it easy over the next month or so and not exert himself physically.

"I didn't know what was happening," said Forrest, who said he noticed a lack of energy and muscles not working properly during postseason matches. "I was really tired in districts and regionals and felt I needed to train harder to get into better shape. But the harder I trained the weaker I got. I felt extremely tired throughout the state tournament. In three matches I really struggled very much, but made it through [to the finals]."

Forrest, at states, defeated Connor Smith of Cosby High (Midlothian) by second period pin in his first round match, than bested Orange County's Sean Raftery, 7-4, in the quarterfinals. In a semifinals match, Forrest edged Robinson's Jonathan Simmons, 5-4.

Forrest had also wrestled and defeated

Simmons, 6-2, in the region semifinals. (Regionals, like states, took place at Robinson). In that regional tournament win over Simmons, Forrest said he utilized a cradle move for 20 seconds or so in the second period that zapped his strength. The strenuous move, he said, resulted in his forearms weakening. He struggled over the remainder of the match but managed to win.

But, being far from 100 percent, he could not get past South County's Stein in the region finals, losing 5-3.

"I had a tough match in the semifinals," said Forrest. "Then against Brett, I felt weak going out there. In the third period, I was kind of dead."

At states, despite the continuing physical struggles, Forrest reached the finals match versus Hopewell's Allala, a senior ranked 15th nationally and aiming for his fourth state crown.

"On the car ride over [to Robinson prior to the championship match] my arms and legs were tired," said Forrest. "I thought maybe I was going to be all right [and wrestle well]. But I was wrong."

Allala turned Forrest onto his back in the first period and was looking for a pin. But Forrest said he was not about to let that happen.

"I'd never been pinned and I was not going to be pinned in my last [high school] match," said Forrest, who prevented the pin and went on to go the distance in the loss.

**OVER THE SEASON**, Forrest was 44-6 overall. Four of his losses came earlier in the season at nationally renowned events - Beast of the East in New York and Eastern

States. His other two setbacks came in the region and state finals.

Last year as a junior, Forrest had gone 41-1 but said his senior year schedule was more difficult, accounting for the handful of losses.

For his high school career, Forrest won 114 matches, the most in school history.

Forrest, whose younger brother, Josh, was the 170-pound district champion this winter, said he has enjoyed wrestling under Seahawks' head coach Bruce Hall.

"He's very energetic," said Forrest, who said Hall, throughout the season, would serve his wrestlers peanut butter and jelly sandwiches with Gatorade on match days. "He's moved the program along and definitely cares about the team. He'll do anything for these kids. He is the leader of our wrestling family."

Forrest, who grew up in Reston, said he is still weighing his college options. He has interests in business and well as the medical field. He carries a 4.0 grade point average in the International Baccalaureate program at South Lakes.

"He will be a great wrestler wherever he ends up," said Hall.

A four-year varsity letter earner, Forrest will wind up his high school athletic career as a fourth year varsity member of the South Lakes baseball team this spring. He played right field and saw some infield action last year. This season, he is expected to see action at several positions, including work on the mound.

Along with his busy academic and athletic life at school, Forrest is also an Eagle Scout with Troop 20.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



## NEWS

# Fairfax CASA Helps Abused, Neglected Children

FROM PAGE 3

Pam Jones, a longtime CASA volunteer from Fairfax, who has recruited others into the program, fits the CASA volunteer profile.

"I was a highly involved elementary school parent, and began looking for alternative volunteer opportunities when my son, an only child, moved to middle school," Jones said.

Jones said while volunteering in her son's school, she was often taken aback by children whose parents showed little support of their children's learning beyond getting them to school.

"Many kids had no one reading to them or making a fuss when they brought home good grades. These things are superficial but I realized that children need champions in all aspects of their lives," Jones said.

Jones said CASA volunteers have to be tenacious, and a thick skin is helpful.

"To be blunt, CASA work brings very little obvious reward. There are many hours spent seeking information from often uncooperative or even hostile people...who don't always appreciate why I'm being so nosy," Jones said.

Jones said her most rewarding case was that of a toddler girl whose parents were very loving but emotionally and developmentally incapable of caring for her.

"Finding an appropriate family member to care for her was a challenge, but she eventually joined the loving home of family members in Pennsylvania; and she gained a big sister in the process," Jones said.

Pat Casciato, who worked as a CASA volunteer in Pittsburgh before moving to Reston, said she had always been interested in social work, but ended up as an executive in the business sector.

She said the most rewarding aspect of being a CASA volunteer is realizing how important the CASA report is to a judge facing competing interests.

"Judges rely on our reports for case detail that helps them make decisions that affect the children's wellbeing...I feel that CASA's involvement in this process is key," Casciato said.

She said all of the cases are challenging, but one case was especially rewarding.

"(It involved) the severe physical abuse of a nine-year-old.

**AFTER THREE YEARS**, several foster homes, and several social workers, the child was adopted into a loving home. The child became successful in school, even making the honor roll many times," she said.

Susan Chibnall of Fairfax, a clinical psychologist and new Fairfax CASA volunteer, said she thought CASA was a worthwhile way to give back.

"I don't have children of my own, and I have a little time to give. I think this will be a good fit."

Ann Sherwood of Great Falls, who recently retired as a pediatric nurse of 45 years, said she wanted



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

**Denise Hall (center, standing) of Reston celebrates being a newly-appointed CASA volunteer with her husband, Glassford Hall (right), son-in-law, Michael Jackson (left); daughter Ebony, sitting with Hall's grandson Dylan. "I'm a little nervous, but I feel like this is my calling," Hall said.**



**From left, Pam Jones of Fairfax and Pat Casciato of Reston are longtime CASA volunteers and often recruit friends to volunteer. Both agree tenacity and a thick skin are essential for successful volunteers.**

## Run for the Children

On April 28, Fairfax CASA will host its second annual Run for the Children. Sponsored by Verizon, the combination 10K race and 3K run/walk offers serious runners as well as families the opportunity to enjoy the charm of the historic City of Fairfax. All funds raised will support Fairfax CASA and the work of CASA volunteers, who advocate for the best interests of over 500 abused and neglected children each year.

"This is our most important awareness-raising event and it brings in much needed funds to support the work of our volunteers," said Lisa Banks, executive director of Fairfax CASA.

Race day start is 8:30 a.m. for 10K runners and 9 a.m. for 3K run/walk participants. Runners and walkers can register before the race at [www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com](http://www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com)

To learn more, visit the race website [www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com/sponsors](http://www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com/sponsors), or contact Lisa Banks at (703) 273-3526 or [lbanks@casafairfax.org](mailto:lbanks@casafairfax.org).

something to do that would allow her to work with children. "I like the fact that I can make a difference, but I know it's going to be difficult working with abused and neglected children."

"I am so proud of her," said daughter, Kathy Brown of Vienna, who brought her family to the swearing-in ceremony. "I didn't realize the level of commitment it takes to be a volunteer, but my mom has what it takes to help these children."

Mann and Banks both stressed that CASA volunteers become their own family unit.

"I don't want to scare you, but you will change," Mann said to the 16 volunteers at the Feb. 21 ceremony who were about to take an oath pledging their allegiance to the "best interest of the child."

"It's going to be hard for you; be prepared," Mann said. "Your CASA family understands. All of these people are here for you," Mann said. "When the tears really start coming and the pain gets hard, you know this is not just work; it can be life and death."

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## Look What She Saw—Sort Of



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Well there's five seconds that fellow super-market-shopper won't have back anytime soon. The question, the curiosity is: will she have nightmares and/or live to regret staring at me so intently that I think I may have seen the whites of her eyes – and it wasn't even remotely dark? Two chemotherapy infusions in (with four more to go), the toll has begun to be taken: hollow eyes, smooth beard, thinning and wispy hair, ashen gray and hospital-like pallor; granted, I'm not a pretty sight, but please madam, control yourself.

And not that I'm the least bit self-conscious, but I am sensitive and aware of some of the inadvertent and awkward, embarrassed-to-be-caught, staring-type glances cast in my direction. Though I wear a hat whenever I'm out in public (almost always in private too), I am determined to live as normal a life as I can despite the wear and tear of chemotherapy. Unfortunately, it's not Halloween, so my ready-made costume can serve no greater good. However, if it were the end of October, my services as a haunted house-type prop would be most valuable.

So far, my energy level (drawn from one's red blood cells) is still reasonably normal, enabling me to actually get off the couch and shop if necessary. Eventually though, the chemotherapy will destroy enough of these cells (along with the white blood cells) so that getting off the couch will become more difficult. Not painful. More like challenged. I equate it with not having any gas in the tank. The car will not drive/move without it. It's nothing personal. It's nothing professional. It's not indicative of a bigger problem. It's simply not able to function.

As concerns those white blood cells, they too are also being targeted by the chemotherapy in an attempt to eradicate any remaining cancer cells hiding in their midst. Once the white blood-cell count has been lowered by the treatment, my immune system will be seriously compromised. As such, I will become more susceptible to germs, infections, sickness, etc. Purell, the hand sanitizer, will become my constant companion. Bottles of it will be everywhere in my house – and cars – as I attempt to remain vigilant in my attempts to fend off the sickness that my weakened immune system must inevitably endure.

Unfortunately, killing the cancer cells – however temporary, has the related effect of looking like it's killing the patient, too. Apparently, that's what this female shopper was reacting to: my rather sickly appearance, and so close to Valentine's Day, too. In fact, we were both in the card aisle. Presumably she was looking for a little color, not the absence of color – as in the color missing from my face, and it startled her almost; and to tell you the truth, she really didn't deal with it too well – at least in my presence, anyway. And her inability to not stare at me surprised me at first: what's she staring at? (You have a problem, ma'am?) Then I realized what – and why, she was staring at me. I don't look so good. In fact, I may be starting to look bad. And though I don't feel as bad as I might already be looking, to the casual observer however, it may be thought that as bad as I look, I probably feel worse. Which I don't – and haven't. Nevertheless, it's a peculiar sort of mixed presumptions. And there's nothing I can or care to do about it. Still, as I noticed this woman "eyeballing" me, I thought, oddly enough; something must be wrong with her. Imagine that? Something wrong with her? And she looked normal. How's that for mind over matter. I don't mind if it matters to someone else. I'm going to live my life. I have to.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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