

Cluster IV Director Debbie Tyler addresses the audience at the anniversary celebration.



Walt Whitman Celebrates 50th Anniversary

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE

Walt Whitman Middle School opened in 1961, the school facility has moved three times and is now located near the intersection of Parkers Lane and Sherwood Hall Lane in Mount Vernon.

On Thursday evening, March 22, students filled the hallways with displays of projects. Students, families and alumni filled the auditorium for speeches by Principal Jean Bell, Cluster IV Director Debbie Tyler and Mt. Vernon District School Board Representative Dan Storck, former Principal Otha Davis, former First Lady of Virginia Susan Allen and state Del. Scott Surovell.



Rakey Marciniak, Christopher Tait, Anya Weber, Aubrey Trabue and Oliver McKellips at the Rubik's Cube display in the hallway at Walt Whitman Middle School.



Former Walt Whitman School Principal Otha Davis (1994-2010) talks about his days with the students at the school.



Mount Vernon Army JROTC Color Guard members Michael Parker and Ryan Conley leave the auditorium after the flag presentation.

Drop in the Bucket?

Increased stormwater fee could raise \$35 million for projects throughout the county.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE GAZETTE

When it rains, it pours. That's why Fairfax County taxpayers may have to fork over more money this year for stormwater management. County Executive Tony Griffin has proposed an increase of one penny on the real-estate tax for a total of 2.5 cents for every \$100 of assessed value. The average homeowner would see a \$45 increase over the course of a year. The new rate would generate about \$35 million, which would be used to meet the flood of new federal and state requirements on storm sewer system.

"Everything on that list is necessary for us to do," said Mount Vernon District Supervisor Gerry Hyland. "And it's, if you'll pardon

the play on words, a drop in the bucket."

Griffin's proposed budget also has 22 new positions to handle stormwater management. Of this total, seven positions will support stream and water quality improvements, four positions will support dam safety and facility rehabilitation, four positions will support regulatory compliance and two positions will support rehabilitation of underground pipes. Sully District Supervisor Michael Frey took issue with Griffin's suggestion that the increase on property taxes could be considered a stormwater fee.

"It's not a fee," said Sully District Supervisor Michael Frey. "It's a part of the property tax."

When Frey suggested the county executive prepare a formal budget

SEE STORMWATER, PAGE 6

'Land of Eternal Spring' Blesses Volunteers

International charity workers visit Aldersgate.

BY ED SIMMONS, JR.
THE GAZETTE

"The Land of Eternal Spring" is what Guatemalans call their country, and Aldersgate United Methodists doing mission work there return home to the States feeling renewed and blessed.

That is how Aldersgate congregation members Mark Gunggoll, Patty Kern and Carol Ricciardello described their experience when they sat down after Saturday evening's 5:30 worship service with Ben and Lupe Blevins, founders of the Highland Support Project, which combats poverty among Christian Mayans living in the Guatemala mountains. Visiting from Richmond where they make their home half the year, they also have a home in Quetzaltenango, Guatemala.

SEE VOLUNTEERS, PAGE 3

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Stratford Landing Raises More Than \$24,000

PHOTOS COURTESY OF DIANA GIAMMARCO PHOTOGRAPHY

Families from the Stratford Landing Elementary community enjoyed an evening of fun while raising more than \$24,000 at the school's annual Spring Fling/Silent Auction and Ice Cream Social Friday night, March 23.

"The Spring Fling/Silent Auction is a highly anticipated and well attended event each year at Stratford Landing. There is always excitement in the air during the school day, especially as every student has a chance to win a raffle basket," said Maura Caulfield, principal at the school.

"As every child makes their raffle basket selection, I see eyes filled with hope that their special ticket will make a dream become a reality. They know that all it takes is one ticket to be a winner. This excitement builds to the raffle basket drawing which culminates the evening events," she added.

Friends and neighbors socialized and ate ice cream served up by Stratford Landing teachers and staff. Parents were able to browse and bid on the many auction items donated by local families and businesses, while the children danced to the tunes of DJ Jules Julio in the school's gym. Some of the most popular auction items were Principal for a Day at \$310, Nationals Club Level tickets at \$285, landscaping services at \$450, Disney Park Hopper tickets at \$390, and an original piece of art by a local artist at \$170. Other favorites included the special treats packages offered by teachers and staff at the school.

As the auction bidding came to a close, the drawing began for the raffle baskets donated by Stratford families and assembled by the teachers and students. Themes for this year's raffle baskets in-



Maura Caulfield, principal, and Larry Caines, assistant principal, draw names and announce the raffle basket winners.

cluded everything from American Girl and I Pad Mania to Legos, Books, and Game Night. There were squeals of excitement as names were called and the winners collected their prizes. Every Stratford Landing student received a free raffle ticket in order to participate in this much anticipated part of the evening.

"As usual, the Stratford Landing community came out in full force to support our Spring Fling and silent auction this year, and I want to personally thank each and every parent, teacher, and student who volunteered to make the event a huge success," said Frances Sankey, this year's Spring Fling chairperson.

Sankey also offered special thanks and appreciation to all the local businesses, families, and Stratford Landing teachers and staff who generously donated the items

available for auction.

For 10 plus years, the Silent Auction has raised thousands of dollars for programs benefiting students, teachers and families at the school and throughout the community, including funding for field trips and performing arts programs, updated technology, new library books, and establishment of a Discovery Garden used by students and teachers.

In addition, Stratford Landing's PTA has also provided fundraising profits this year to further staff development and to help all teachers offset expenses they privately incur to set up their classrooms for a new school year. The PTA has also sponsored community outreach programs, including literacy nights held in the Gum Springs Community center to help students and families focus on reading strategies.



Raffle basket winner, Ashley Firesheets was all smiles as she posed with her brother Nick.



Stratford Landing teachers Elizabeth Phillips and Michelle Dittman scoop up ice cream at the Stratford Landing Spring Fling.

'The Land of Eternal Spring' Blesses Volunteers

FROM PAGE 1

Guadalupe Ramirez Blevins, nicknamed Lupe, said Guatemala is called "The Land of Eternal Spring" because "if it's cold it's maybe 45, if it's hot it's maybe 65." Not only the weather benefits the Aldersgate Methodists but also the culture they encounter.

"A primary reason for organizing mission trips is the transformation of the donors who suffer spiritually in an over-materialistic society," said Ben Blevins, who met and married Lupe when he was a human rights observer in Guatemala in 1993. Interacting with the Mayans with their strong sense of loyalty and support to extended family and generous hospitality to strangers despite their poverty shows "there's meaning and joy outside of materialism," he said.

Mission volunteers from Aldersgate have so far built about 475 stoves in poor Mayan homes and are returning this July to build a kitchen onto a school and in December to build a clinic and community center. They aim to empower the Mayans to overcome their poverty. Meanwhile, the Methodists benefit as well.

For Ricciardello, working in Guatemala in December gives her a break from the consumer madness of the Christmas season. "The reason I go in December is because it takes you out of the craziness of what's going on," she said.

Kern noted how impoverished Mayan children

improvise their own happiness. She recalled being delayed with her mission partner and being caught up in an improvised game of soccer with two little boys for two hours. "I didn't understand a word they were saying. We were just laughing and having fun. It just touched my heart."

The boys called her and her friend "tio" and "tia," meaning uncle and aunt.

"In Guatemala," said Ben Blevins, "you have a real sense of family and community. When you come here [the U.S.] you can't help but sense the isolation, the alienation. When you're in Lupe's village with all her cousins and the extended family, no one's alone ever."

For Gunggoll, who heads up the mission work and handles all the travel details and organizing, it's a break from "driving the Beltway and sitting in an office." The mission work also builds up Aldersgate, involving the youth, he said, "who are the future of the church." He spoke of "building a nuclei of people who understand the importance of mission."

Said Ricciardello, "It affirmed for me that there are some really cool college kids out there."

"As the Mayans we say that everybody has to be together," said Lupe Blevins. "In the homes there's always a grandma and mother."

"That sense of community has come back with me," said Kern.

"Aldersgate is my family," said Lupe Blevins, beaming.



Mission work in Guatemala strives to transform village economics. From left, Mark Gunggoll, Lupe Blevins, Ben Blevins, Patty Kern and Carol Ricciardello.

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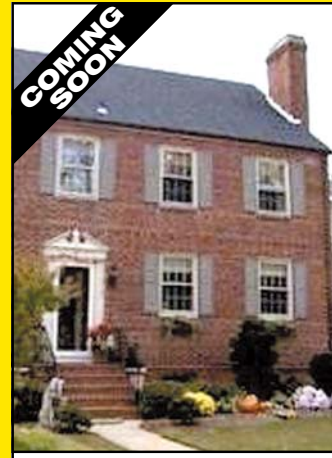
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OBITUARIES

Cynthia Nan Hull

Cynthia Nan Hull, executive director of United Community Ministries in Alexandria, died March 16, 2012 from complications of non-smoker's lung cancer at Mount Desert Island Hospital, Bar Harbor, Maine.

Cynthia was born Oct. 11, 1949 in Alliance, Ohio, and raised there before moving to Miami, Fla., as a child. She spent the majority of her professional life in Northern Virginia. She was a dedicated daughter, sister, mother, and, for the past two years, a delighted grandmother.

Cynthia had a long and distinguished career in the social and human services fields. Before joining United Community Ministries (UCM) in 2007 as executive director, Cynthia served for 14 years as both president and executive director of Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) of Arlington. Prior to that, she served as both deputy director and volunteer coordinator for 10 years at Offender Aid and Restoration of Fairfax County. While at OAR, she developed a nationally duplicated volunteer training program.

Cynthia's work extended into service on several boards of directors, working groups and committees to promote the well being of disadvantaged populations. She served as president and member of the board of directors of the International Association of Justice Volunteerism and was a member of the board of directors of Offender Aid and Restoration, USA. She also served as a member of the Arlington County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Virginia Commonwealth Secretary of Public Safe Committee on Coordination of Post-Release Service to Offenders, Youthbuild's educational and vocational program of Vanguard Services for at-risk youth and the Virginia Department of Corrections Task Force on Volunteerism.



Cynthia's intelligence, wisdom and genuine concern for others made her a champion of justice and an agent of change on such social challenges as poverty, homelessness, mental illness, and child abuse and neglect. Among other things, she will be remembered for her tireless dedication to improving lives. During the course of her life and career, Cynthia brought help and hope and to tens of thousands of people, each of whom she saw as an individual with promise.

Cynthia's approach was always one of partnership and inclusion.

Whether at the individual, organizational or community levels, Cynthia sought to share resources and knowledge for the ultimate greater good. She believed passionately that all people as a society share a common humanity and, with that, an obligation to help those who are struggling. Throughout her work, Cynthia consistently put the welfare of others before her own.

Cynthia played an active role in several local community organizations and workgroups in southeastern Fairfax County, including Ventures in Community, which she co-chaired for two years; the South County Leadership Coalition; the Healthy Families Fairfax executive committee and advisory council; Non-profit NOVA, and the Route 1 Task Force for Human Services. She also served as a member of the Fairfax County 10-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness steering committee and the Breakthrough Series Collaborative on Timely Reunification. She was also an organizing member of Fairfax CARES.

For her dedication, Cynthia earned many awards and accolades. She was named a Person of Vision,

SEE HULL, PAGE 10

Adelia H. Baldwin

Adelia H. Baldwin, 81, long-time resident of Stratford Landing and Stratford Woman's Club member, died on March 21, 2012 in Annapolis, Md. Delia was born on May 27, 1930 to Leonard E. and Mattalee Hoefgen in San Antonio, Texas. She attended Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Va. and received a bachelor of arts in elementary education from The University of Texas at Austin. On Feb. 14, 1950, Delia met her husband-to-be, Jess Baldwin, on a blind date, and they married two years later on June 9, 1952. A consummate military wife, Delia packed, moved, and resettled her family in 18 locations, which included a tour in Nuremberg, Germany, during Jess' 29-year U.S. Army career.

Delia was an avid birder, naturalist, and conservationist. She loved animals, and her home always included a pet, or two. She was a talented pianist, dancer, and poet, and shared her passion for the arts with her children and grandchildren. A lover of word puzzles and books, Delia was a walking encyclopedia of useful facts, always ready to learn and to teach. She loved watching all sports, especially tennis, golf, and football, rooting for the Longhorns, Navy, and the Redskins. An accomplished needle worker, seamstress, and crafter, Delia sewed costumes for school plays and annually made crafts to support the INOVA Mount Vernon Bazaar. She led scout troops and supported various booster groups through the years, volunteering countless hours in her community, church, and schools. Her family and friends celebrated Delia's 80th birthday with a surprise party and book of memories. Her youngest grandchild called her, "My special advisor," and she was to all her family and friends.



Mrs. Baldwin is survived by her three children — Kathye Geary (John), Lane Baldwin, and Meghan Lau (Jim) — her five grandchildren — Rob and Meredith Geary, Dominique Baldwin, and Rachel and Hannah Lau — and her niece, Nancy Kern. She is predeceased by her husband, Jess Baldwin, and her brother, Leonard E. Hoefgen, Jr. Interment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a date to be determined.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to: Audubon Naturalist Society, ATTN: Development Department, 8940 Jones Mill Road, Chevy Chase, MD 20815-4799.



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Sue Bernstein helped coordinate the event at River Farm.



Mount Vernon District School Board Representative Dan Storck with state Del. Scott Surovell and Erinn Madden.



Hollin Meadows principal Jon Gates and his wife Debbie.



Chair of the Hollin Meadows Partnership for Math and Science Education Diane Moery welcomes and thanks all for coming to the second annual fundraiser at River Farm.

Gala Supports School's Math, Garden Programs

Parents, friends and neighbors of the Hollin Meadows Science and Technology Elementary School community spent Saturday evening, March 24 enjoying beer and wine and a selection of local tastings under the tent at River Farm. The second annual event was held to raise funds for the school's math matters and learning garden. The funds for the county school program were cut from the 2011 budget and the parents started their own fundraising to support the ongoing educational project. This is the second year that the parents have joined to keep the

programs alive at the school.

Sponsors of the event include: Cox Charities, The American Horticulture Society, American Tukong, The Bernstein Family, Jack & Jill Christensen, Dale Digital Printing, Moery/LAI, National Beer Wholesalers Association, Signs by Tomorrow-Scott & Cameron Curtis, Burke & Herbert Bank & Trust Company, Luhman/Blackburn Family, Hazen & Laura Marshall, Merkli Landscaping, Close2Home, Day Family Chamber Players, Frost Lighting, Michael & Jill Johnson, Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, Neighborhood Restaurant Group, Rent-All Center and David Rippeto Photography.

PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/THE GAZETTE



Gary Newman, Michael Johnson and Christian Petretoch.

Judy and Rick Joyce and Joanne Sawczuk.

Increased Stormwater Fee Could Raise \$35 Million

FROM PAGE 1

document outlining the statutory authority, Chairwoman Sharon Bulova interjected.

"It was also," Bulova noted, "a unanimous vote at the time when we adopted it."

"At the time it seemed like a good idea," added Mason District Supervisor Peggy Gross. "It was a good idea."

THE STORMWATER TAX was created in 2009, when supervisors approved a new service district to support a stormwater management program. Before that, supervisors had already been dedicating a penny of the tax rate to stormwater projects for four years. The new tax district essentially formalized an existing dedicated source of revenue, which several supervisors say is a responsible way to handle the problems.

"One thing we've done very well over the years in Fairfax County is educate our con-

stituents about water issues," said Gross. "And people are more inclined to call about water issues these days."

Large parts of Fairfax County developed from the 1950s through the 1970s, long before stormwater controls were established. The county has more than 1,500 miles of underground pipes, including about 250 miles that are more than 40 years old. Until the dedicated penny was established in 2005, the county had done little to invest or maintain the stormwater system. County officials warn that many of these pipes are reaching the end of their useful service life. Some are in failure.

"These are things we are going to have to do because of federal requirements and state requirements on water issues," said Griffin. "We are using the real-estate tax to assess and collect money for the stormwater program. But it is a separate and distinct program."

Proposed Stormwater Projects

❖ **\$11 million for Stream and Water Quality Improvements:** New requirements limiting total maximum load of nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment loads entering the Chesapeake Bay will require the county to undertake construction of new stormwater facilities, retrofit existing facilities and increase maintenance.

❖ **\$6.5 million for Conveyance System Rehabilitation:** Fairfax County has about 80 miles of underground stormwater pipe in complete failure and 240 miles in need of repair. This funding would be used to review digital imaging of pipe interiors, develop corrective solutions and provide oversight costs.

❖ **\$6.2 million for Dam Safety:** Potential large projects include dredging of Lake Huntsman and Royal Lake in addition to the next phase of the Kingstowne Park Dam, which failed in October 2010. New revenue would also help Fairfax County retrofit existing stormwater management facilities constructed before to current standards were created.

❖ **\$5.9 million for Flood Control:** This

new program is aimed at addressing frequent flooding problems experienced throughout Fairfax County. If approved, stormwater staff will meet with Fairfax County Department of Transportation and Office of Emergency Management staff to identify areas subject to frequent flooding that threaten public safety.

❖ **\$5 million to Meet New EPA Guidelines:** Fairfax County's permit to discharge stormwater into state and federal waters expired back in 2007, and county officials have not been able to get a new one because new guidelines from the Environmental Protection Agency. The county is currently operating on an administrative extension while it tries to create an aggressive program to inspect private properties and require contaminants to be removed.

❖ **\$557,000 for Contributory Program:** This money would be contributed. About \$444,000 would go to the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District, which protects the county's soil and water resources. About \$113,000 would go to the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Program.

Sabatier Named FCPS Teacher of Year

Charles Sabatier, a physics teacher at Mount Vernon High School, has been named the Fairfax County Public Schools 2012 Teacher of the Year. Sabatier will represent FCPS in Virginia's Teacher of the Year competition; the winner will be announced in the fall.

Sabatier, who serves as the science department chair at Mount Vernon, has also won the Washington Post Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Award for educational excellence, which is presented annually to a teacher from each school division in the Washington metropolitan area. The goals of the Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher Awards are to recognize excellence in teaching, to encourage creative and quality instruction, and to contribute in a substantive way to improving education in the Washington area. The award includes a \$3,000 prize, which Sabatier will receive at a recognition ceremony in April.

"Be Respectful, Be Honest, and Be Incredible" read the rules posted on Sabatier's desk. The 2012 Teacher of the Year said he realized early in his career that he was "a really good 'edutainer'" and quickly learned to focus the fun on learning. He began to incorporate flying pigs and spinning buckets of water over his head into lessons when appropriate, and encouraged students to use new technologies like video analysis and wikis as part of their learning. Mount Vernon student E.J. Coleman, who is the current student representative to the Fairfax County School Board, said that when teaching students the game Whizz, Bang, Chazzum, "Mr. Sabatier always put emphasis on working together as a unit as opposed to just a random group of students ... Under his direction, it always felt like a community and all of the students were neighbors."

English teacher Melinda Bloomquist said that Sabatier created and organized the schoolwide Major Time Cup Competition to



Mount Vernon High school physics teacher Charles Sabatier with Superintendent of Schools Jack Dale

encourage school spirit and unity, foster team building and bonding between students and teachers, and improve the Mount Vernon experience. Major Time is a special period devoted to sustained silent reading activity and enrichment or remediation with classroom teachers.

Sabatier currently serves as a co-sponsor of the engineering and robotics club, sponsor of the Student Government Association, and member of the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports committee. In his spare time, he works with a member of the community to study an osprey that has a nest atop one of the lights in the Mount Vernon High stadium, and is part

of an International Baccalaureate physics collaborative learning team with three other IB physics teachers in Northern Virginia, funded by a grant he received from the Knowles Science Teaching Foundation.

Sabatier earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi and his master's in curriculum and instruction from George Mason University. He has been employed by FCPS since 2003, when he was hired to teach physics at Mount Vernon High. He earned certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in 2009, and has made presentations at state and national conferences.

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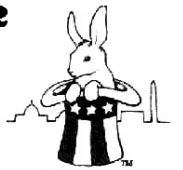
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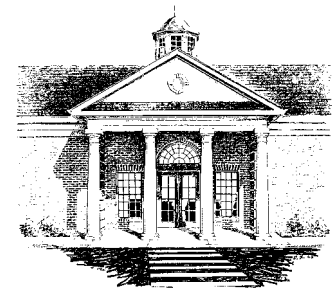
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Voter Registration At Gum Springs

The Fairfax County Women in the NAACP (WIN) voter registration drives will be held Thursday, March 29, 5-7 p.m. and Saturday, March 31, 2-4 p.m. at the Gum Springs Community Center, 8100 Fordson Road.

For more information on WIN, visit www.fairfaxvawin.org.

OPINION

Interrupting Harassment and Bullying

Empowering bystanders to intervene, students to set boundaries.

With a controversial and much discussed new movie, "Bully," coming out this week, local school districts continue to wrestle with the issue of bullying in the schools.

And while school officials are still looking at "cyber-bullying" as novel and separate phenomena, it's fair to say that for students, there is little distinction between the teasing, harassment and worse that happens on school grounds and the school bus and the nastiness, rumors and character assassination that takes place online. The combined effect, including the graphic, lasting, visceral attacks that are possible online, can make school literally unbearable for some and more than unpleasant for others.

As adults, we can only be thankful that we escaped this environment before the advent of cell phone cameras and videos, instant posting to websites and other technological "ad-

vances." (I have long believed that middle school, by its very existence, is unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment.)

Fairfax County undertakes an annual survey of all students in grades 8, 10 and 12 that gives insight into the lives of teens.

More than 30 percent of Fairfax County students recently surveyed reported being depressed in the past year.

This is probably not unrelated to the fact that 56 percent of students surveyed reported being bullied while 43 percent admitted to bullying others. This is consistent with findings from other areas, with 8th grade as a bullying "hot-spot." In Fairfax County, 62 percent of 8th graders said they had been bullied and 55 percent admitted to bullying others. Of course there is some overlap in the two groups.

"We've seen that over 40 percent of the students who say they have been bullied have themselves bullied someone," Mary Ann Panarelli, director of Fairfax County Public School's Intervention and Prevention Services department told Connection reporter Alex McVeigh. "It's not a matter of punishing it out of the system, it's a matter of enacting a culture change."

In seeking that culture change, much of the outreach is dedicated to the bystander, the person witnessing someone being bullied, and their ability to make the bullying behavior less acceptable.

Students who witness bullying can say to the perpetrator: "Why would you say something like that? Why would you do that?"

Panarelli added: "Things like going up to the victim after, saying 'I saw what happened, and don't agree with it,' helps that victim from feeling isolated."

It's the sort of lesson that can start very young. We can learn to say: "This is not right," even in the face of fierce peer pressure. This ability to set boundaries which can begin in preschool will serve our children well later in life when they are resisting being a passenger in a car driven by someone who has been drinking or refusing to participate in rumors and ostracizing.

This starts with learning empathy, to care for animals, people and things who are vulnerable and face challenges.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM, ON

TWITTER @MARYKIMM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Appreciate Support

To the Editor:

The West Potomac Dance Team would like to thank the local community (including the Gazette), our sponsors*, the West Potomac Office of Student Activities and administration, and our families for supporting our "Road to Nationals." We couldn't have done it without all of you.

Earlier this month, we traveled to Orlando, Fla. to compete in the National Dance Alliance (NDA) National Championship. Being invited to this competition was a tremendous honor and an incredible experience that we will always remember. We were one of only three teams (out of 88) who were there for the first time.

In preparing for the competition, our team dedicated endless hours to rehearsals and fundraising that in turn strengthened the team's bonds. We are proud to have done our very best while competing against some of the best teams in the country.

We couldn't have done it without such a wonderful community behind us. It reminds us all of how lucky we are to live in an area where community support and involvement are a part of every-day life. Again, thank you! We appreciate all that you did to make this trip possible for us.



The West Potomac Dance Team in Florida for the National Dance Alliance National Championship.

The West Potomac Varsity Dance Team

*Sponsors: Heritage Presbyterian; Four Sales, Ltd.; Body and Sol; Sew N' Luv; Zenergy Yoga; Merkli, Inc.; Ft. Hunt Sportsmans Club; Just Dance; Mosaic Express; MBL Design Studio; Occasionally Cakes; Bodnar Chiropractic; Outback Steakhouse; Rorer's Produce; Hollin Hall Automotive; Primos Restaurant; Skopp Chiropractic; Hughes Orthodontics; Schneider Dental; Ft. Hunt Animal Hospital; Aitcheson Real Estate, and Ridgewood Corset Shop.

Live Within One's Means

To the Editor:

As a resident of the Mount Vernon community for 36 years, I enjoy the Gazette every week. But I have never felt compelled to write a letter to the editor until I read the front page article about the proposed meals tax. I am sick and tired of politicians offering citizens lim-

ited choices when it comes to taxes. According to Gerry Hyland, our only two choices are a meals tax or an increase in our property tax. There are two other choices which need to be aired and discussed.

The first is to do nothing and continue to fund schools and roads at existing levels. The second is to decide that schools and roads are more important than some other budget items and take money from

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 9

Mount Vernon Gazette

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NEWS DEPARTMENT:
To discuss ideas and concerns,
Call: 703-778-9410
e-mail:
gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

Steven Mauren
Editor, 703-778-9415
smauren@connectionnewspapers.com

Michael Lee Pope
Reporter, 703-615-0960
mpope@connectionnewspapers.com
@MichaelLeePope

Jeanne Theismann
703-778-9436
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

Steve Hibbard
Associate Editor, 703-778-9412
shibbard@connectionnewspapers.com

Jon Roetman
Sports Editor, 703-224-3015
jroetman@connectionnewspapers.com
@jonroetman

Louise Krafft
Photographer
lkrafft@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
e-mail:
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Julie Ferrill
Display Advertising, 703-778-9446
jferrill@connectionnewspapers.com

Helen Walutes
Display Advertising, 703-224-3028
hwalutes@connectionnewspapers.com

Andrea Smith
Classified Advertising, 703-778-9411
asmith@connectionnewspapers.com

Debbie Funk
National Sales
703-778-9444
debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com

Publisher
Jerry Vernon
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor & Publisher
Mary Kimm
703-778-9433
mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com
@MaryKimm

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly,
John Smith
Production Manager:
Jean Card
Geovani Flores

CIRCULATION: 703-778-9427
Circulation Manager:
Ann Oliver
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

A Connection Newspaper

LETTERS

FROM PAGE 8

other accounts to increase funding for schools and roads.

I live within my means and I expect my government to do the same. When I want to spend money on something new I have to make a choice. I can generate a new source of income (not from my fellow citizens, mind you), I can spend less of my budget on other items, or I can simply do without.

Our elected leaders should learn to live within the existing budgets that we taxpayers generate for them. It's way too easy to only think of solutions that require more funds when you're spending other people's money.

So Gerry, don't offer me only two choices, when both require increased taxes. Offer me choices that don't include increased taxes. I think the citizens who were interviewed outside the Roy Rogers restaurant had it about right. Taxes are high enough. Live within our means and prioritize spending.

James R. Lauducci
Mount Vernon

Status Quo of Gridlock

To the Editor:

In the March 22, 2012 article entitled "Hyland Calls For Meal Tax," the supervisor correctly notes that money is needed for schools and roads. Fairfax County cannot continue to rely only upon the real estate tax for revenue. The Mount Vernon Visioning Task Force, Transportation Committee, recommended that Fairfax County adopt and impose the transportation impact fee that the Virginia Assembly authorized in 1989.

Over 20 years ago, the Virginia Assembly authorized Fairfax County "to assess and impose impact fees on new development to pay all or part of the cost of reasonable road improvement that benefit the new development" (Va. Code Section 15.2-2319). However, Fairfax County elected officials chose not to adopt a zoning ordinance that would allow the collection of reasonable costs for much needed road improvements that would benefit a new development.

The inaction of the Board of Supervisors in the early 1990s has left us with the legacy of congestion on US Route 1 in the Mount Vernon District and other main roads in Fairfax County. The County continues to allow development, such as the Walmart at Kings Crossing, without any new transportation infrastructure. This extends to Phase II of Walmart at Kings Crossing where the already gridlocked area will receive more stores and more traffic without the developer contributing toward the needed extended or dual dedicated left turn lane(s) at that location.

Over 26 states, as of Feb. 26, 2011 (when I researched this matter), have laws that assess transportation fees to developers. In Virginia, Stafford County agreed with the conclusion reached by Virginia Tech: it would bring in revenue for needed transportation infrastructure. US Route 1 in Stafford County transformed from a two-lane country road to an expressway with a boulevard in between the north and south travel lanes using the revenue brought in under the Transportation Impact Fee. Stafford County also assesses developers using the proffer system for schools and other non-transportation items, and Stafford County receives more than double the amount in proffers per additional dwell

SEE LETTERS, PAGE 18




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OBITUARY

Hull

FROM PAGE 5

"Women Pioneering the Future" by the Arlington Commission on the Status of Women and a Leader in Criminal Justice Volunteerism by the International Association of Justice Volunteerism. She received U.S. Presidential Certificates by Volunteers in Prevention, Probation and Prisons, Inc. for the outstanding service to the volunteer criminal justice movement. She was an honorable mention in Women Making a Differ-

ence by WDCA-TV, the National Museum of Women in the Arts and the Chevy Chase Bank. She also received an honorable mention for the Special Achievement for Women Award by the Fairfax County Commission for Women.

Cynthia earned both a master of arts and a bachelor of arts degree in sociology from the University of South Florida, Tampa and completed coursework towards a Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Florida, Gainesville.

Surviving Cynthia are her parents, Duane and R. Edwina Hull of Lake Wales, Fla.; son,

Duncan Holley; daughter-in-law, Kristin Holley and grand-daughter, Pierce Holley of Bar Harbor, Maine; sister, Vida Hull of Johnson City, Tenn., and nephew, Marky Billson of Pittsburgh, Pa.

A memorial to celebrate the life and work of Cynthia will be held at Bethlehem Baptist Church, 7836 Fordson Road, Alexandria, on March 31, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. The Rev. Jeri Fields will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to United Community Ministries in Alexandria.

SCHOOL NOTES

Catherine Martinez recently represented **Mount Vernon Woods Elementary School** at the West Point Leadership and Ethics Conference for Middle Schools for eighth grade students. Martinez was the only sixth grade student to participate in the conference, which is designed to introduce leadership development to students and explain the decision-making processes students can use when faced with ethical challenges. Cadets from West Point facilitated the students' small group discussions on ethical situations. Other objectives of the conference were to help students be better prepared to make good choices — especially when confronted with every day societal challenges—and to serve as a role model for their peers in their schools, communities, and beyond.

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Great opportunity to own this pristine 1,200sf office w/7 rms + lg waiting rm. New carpet & wood flrs. Light & bright w/lots of windows. Busy office complex w/plenty of parking & great management. Ideal for medical/dental/insurance or any general office. Ready to go!

Candace Johnson 757.705.1997

NEW HOME!

8313 Mt. Vernon Hwy
\$775,000
New Home - Under Construction!
Brand new home opportunity in prime Mt. Vernon location by Wakefield Homes. Custom building with many modern amenities and upgrades. Features include: expanded master bedroom suite, front porch, gourmet kitchen, high ceilings, 2 car garage. Buy during construction and personalize the interior to suit your taste. Fabulous new home amenities combined with convenience of a prime Mt. Vernon location.

JUST LISTED!

9514 Mount Vernon Ld
\$1,950,000
MVOP WATERFRONT-PRIVATE DOCK
Unique opportunity to acquire direct waterfrontage with private dock in prestigious MVOP! Designed by leading architect to capitalize on stunning water views. Dramatic open flr pln, soaring cathedral ceilings, expansive glass walls and all brick exterior. All major components in place - personalize interior. Rare property in this price range.

9405 Ludgate Dr
\$2,195,000
Stunning Price Reduction!
Magnificent colonial custom designed to capitalize on views from elevated site overlooking river. Home has approx 10,000 Sq Ft of luxuriously appointed space. Numerous features: 4 finished levels, elegant trim detail, high ceilings, multiple decks & private balconies, fabulous gourmet eat in kitchen, formal dining, 5 fireplaces, elevator. Direct river access.

OPEN SUNDAY 1 - 4!
\$ 1,550,000
Alexandria
555 S Washington St #101
For those who appreciate luxury & legend, live in history on 3 completely renovated lvs, 3,812sf, quality finishes & craftsmanship, 1 wood & 2 gas FPs & wood floors! Every amenity, 2-car detached gar, private patio & outdoor FP. 3BR/2.5BA.

Michael Manuel 703.615.6317

\$ 1,219,000
Alex / Belle Haven
"FABULOUS"
Backs to parkland, this 5BR/4BA brick col was totally renovated - 2 main lvl family rms, gourmet kit, luxury Mstr Suite inc. marble BA, sunken tub, jetted shower, deck. Walk-out LL w/frpl, nanny rm w/BA opens to brick patio. '06 new HVAC/HWH/thermalpane wind & more! Classic slate roof. Garage.

Suzanne Backus 703.338.3594

\$ 339,900
Fredericksburg
"EXCEPTIONAL"
2-story family rm opens to huge kit & sunroom bumpout. Formal LR/DR. Main level office or 5th BR. Large Mstr w/ deluxe bath. Cul-de-sac w/quick access to I-95. Hike/bike to the Nat'l Battlefield Park. 4BR/2.5BA

Margaret Ruhe 703.599.7527

JUST LISTED!

3035 Battersea Ln
\$539,500
Spacious Home -
CONTRACT!
Pristine Condition! Pride of ownership evident throughout large 5 ownership evident throughout large 5

NEW PRICE

8355 Justin Rd
\$819,900
PERFECTION!
Owner has spared no expense updating this spectacular, spacious Colonial on quiet cul-de-sac in the heart of Mt. Vernon. Fabulous features include: open floor plan, high ceilings, expansive glass window walls, recently updated gourmet kit, 2 levels of hardwood floors, stunning MBR and the list goes on. Truly a remarkable home!

9017 Stratford Ln
\$949,000
Totally Expanded and Updated!
Understated elegance-modest front elevation belies stunning expanded interior featuring room sizes and amenities typically associated with new custom homes. Many fabulous features include gourmet kitchen, stunning master suite, hardwood floors, upgraded HVAC system, imported tile and many additional luxurious amenities. No cost was spared in renovation resulting in top of the line brands throughout.

\$ 329,000
Belle View
"TOWNHOUSE"
Looking for charm & convenience? This 3 level 2BR / 1BA, townhome, minutes from Old Town and Fort Belvoir, has great updates - granite, energy-efficient windows & new HVAC - and is perfect for bike & Metro commuters.

Margaret Keagle 571.332.5264

NEW PRICE!
\$ 799,000
Waynewood
8822 Fircrest Pl
Rarely available Concord 4-5BR/3.5BA model. Lovingly maintained since 1974. Updated kit/baths. New & newer HVAC, water heater, refrig., W/D, carpets, fam.rm French doors. Community parks, playground, ball fields, pools & tennis. Sidewalks to WWES & rec center & 11Y Bus Stop - a Commuter's Dream!

Marty Mullen 703.216.0811

OPEN SUNDAY 1 - 4!
\$ 739,000
Alexandria
"HAS IT ALL"
Hollindale - Spectacular updated Willmsburg Col. w/over 4,000sf, 5BR/3BA - lg, spacious BRs, sep DR opens to deck - great Sunroom w/skylights, fp - lg w-out Rec rm w/wet bar, fr - updated kit w/bkfst nook - gleaming hdds on main/upper lvs - oversized 2-car gar - beautiful landscape & more.

Frank Roberts 703.898.0840

8428 Old Mt Vernon Rd
\$759,000
Unique
CONTRACT!
Compound! One of a kind compound consisting of luxurious 5645 sq ft home and a totally remodeled and

JUST LISTED!

9219 Allwood Dr
\$525,000
Updated Home -
CONTRACT!
Spectacular Fabulous Lot! new listing! Move in ready! Stunning

8826 Cooper Rd
\$395,000
Country Views!
CONTRACT!
You won't believe this large updated rambler is

\$ 715,000
Alexandria South
"WALK TO METRO"
Stunning brick front center hall colonial w/ app. 4,000 sq ft of living space on 3 finished levels. 4/5BR, 3.5BA, walk-out LL w/full BA & bonus rm - perfect for guests or in-laws! Newly updated kit & BAs, lg formal rms, in home office, cul-de-sac location w/oversized deck & fab fenced yd. Walk to Metro & convenient to Pentagon, Old Town &

Kim Muffler 703.282.7739

\$ 675,000
Waynewood
1208 CROTON DR
1-of-a-kind totally renovated home. Brand New appliances, roof, windows, systems, & siding! 2 level Master suite, on 4th/5th levels. Large basement w/rec/mud/storage rooms, FBA, open kit/DR w/breakfast bar, granite & SS.

Anita D'Antonio 202.460.1809
Elke Kohler 703.967.7633

\$ 949,000
Accokeek, MD
"HISTORIC ESTATE"
"Bellevue" - Meticulously maintained Historic Estate on 10.23 acres 23/30 minutes from Old Town / DC. 4BR / 3BA Main House, 1BR / 1BA Guest House, Orangery, Folly (Greek Temple) w/IBA (currently used as office). Gated, wooded & private estate w/open green space & exceptional landscaping.

Daniel Lusk 202.412.8885



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PHOTOS BY LOUISE KRAFFT/GAZETTE PACKET

USC graduate student Moni Simeonov leads the advanced orchestra class through a concert piece March 27 at T.C. Williams High School.



Concert violinist Midori performs with the students during the afternoon session.



T.C. Williams High School orchestra director Dr. Tzu-Ching Tai introduces Midori and prompts the class on when to begin playing.



Moni Simeonov works with the students in an afternoon class.

Midori and Friends

Renowned violinist visits T.C. Williams High School.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN
THE GAZETTE

It was the chance of a lifetime for members of the T.C. Williams High School youth orchestra as world-renown Midori spent March 27 coaching aspiring musicians as part the legendary violinist's week-long Orchestra Residencies Program.

"This was an exciting day," said Midori, who selected Alexandria as one of only two communities in the nation to participate in the outreach program she founded in 2004. "This is the whole purpose of being here — working with the students and making music."

As part of her ORP initiative, Midori is spending the week in Alexandria and Northern Virginia collaborating with local youth and adult orchestras, visiting public schools and meeting with community leaders to advance the cause

of music and arts education.

Her schedule included a breakfast with business leaders March 28 at Jack Taylor's Toyota that was followed by a visit to Wakefield High School in Arlington and a night of rehearsals with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra at Schlesinger Hall, where she will perform in concert March 31 and April 1.

A Japanese native, Midori first picked up a violin at the age of 3 and was performing with the New York Philharmonic at the age of 11. On March 30, she will take to the stage at T.C. Williams, where she will be featured in collaboration with several student soloists in a performance of J.S. Bach's Concerto for 2 Violins in D Minor and Vivaldi's Concerto for 4 Violins in B Minor, Op.3 #10.

For her performance with the ASO, Midori will join Maestro Kim Allen Kluge in a program that includes the Firebird Suite by Igor Stravinsky and Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor. The ASO will also be performing the world premiere of a new composition by music director Kluge to remember the victims and survivors of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami,

entitled MEIBUKI - Regeneration.

To culminate Midori's week-long residency, the Alexandria and Arlington students participating in the program will join the ASO onstage in a performance that will also feature the Arlington Children's Chorus.

Considered one of the finest violinists of her generation, Midori has been consistently honored for her significant contributions to music education, notably by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who named her a United Nations Messenger of Peace in 2007. Her ORP program, in which Midori hopes to increase the community profile of youth orchestras, is substantially subsidized by Midori herself.

"We are very honored and excited to have her here with us," said ASO Executive Director Adrien Finlay. "She's a magnificent and exciting violinist and an inspiration for the young musicians of our community."

For tickets to Midori's performance with the Alexandria Symphony Orchestra March 31 and April 1, call 703-548-0885 or visit www.alexsym.org. For more on Midori's Orchestra residencies Program, go to www.GoToMidori.com/orp.

17 Artists join Torpedo Factory Through Annual Jury Process

The Torpedo Factory Artists' Association welcomes 17 new artists through the annual jury held March 19-23 at the art center. An outside panel of art experts made the selection from among 84 artists who applied during this year's annual jury process.

The Torpedo Factory's Target Gallery is holding a week-long exhibition of the selected work, March 24 – April 1, with a closing reception on Sunday, April 1, from 2-4 p.m.

The 2-D Newly Juried Artists include Rachel Kerwin, who creates striking paintings exploring the tension and beauty that can arise in spite of fear, violence, or chaos. Allen Levy experiments with light, color, and luminosity to create a sense of balance in his paintings, which he refers to as "dreamscapes". The remaining Newly Juried 2-D Artists include two other painters, Lesley Clarke and Jennifer Brewer Stone, and seven fine art photographers, Soomin Ham, Brady Wilks, Greg Knott, Eric T. Johnson, Guido Krueger, Fred Zafran, and E. E. McCollum.



Among the 3-D applicants, one jeweler, Dejan Jovanovic, and three ceramic artists, Bev Andrews, Jamie Fine, and Karin Abromaitis, were selected. Maureen Melville, who works with handmade German glass to create rich, colorful stained glass pieces, and fiber artist Holly Sugarman, who finds new meaning and purpose in everyday overlooked objects, were also among the 3-D artists selected in this year's annual jury process.

For the Torpedo Factory's annual jury process, there are separate 3-person panels judging the 2-D work and the 3-D work. The jurors are highly qualified professional artists, curators, teachers, museum directors and the like, who are independent of the Torpedo Factory.

SPRING FUN

MONTH OF MARCH

Radiance Yoga

Classes. \$5 for all weekday morning classes during month of March. For classes starting from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Arrive 10-15 minutes early for class. At Radiance Yoga, 110 King street, Alexandria. Visit www.Radiance-yoga.net or call 703-535-8282.

NOWTHROUGHAPRIL1

20 Years on The Avenue.

The 20th Anniversary Committee invites you to celebrate DRA's 20 years on "The Avenue" with past and present masterpieces. This member-only show runs from March 2-April 1, 2012 and will be juried from outside our DRA family of members. Opening Reception for the "XX" show on Friday, March 2, 7-10 p.m. and will feature local jazz band "Veroneau". (www.VeroneauMusic.com). Running March 3- April 1 special exhibits of Del Ray Artisans' history will be featured. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 30

String Quartet Concert. 8 p.m. Free. Members of the Air Force Strings will present an evening of string quartet. At The Lyceum, 201 South Washington St., Alexandria. Call 202-767-5658 or visit www.usafband.af.mil

SATURDAY/MARCH 31

How to Get To Wonderful. 5:15-6:45 p.m. Ronna Webb, Reiki Master, leads this 90-minute class on creating the life you want. Learn to use your intuition and attract health, success and peace of mind. \$47 Alexandria Massage Therapy, 1217 Prince St., Alexandria. Call 703-548-0310.

Palm Sunday Drama. 6 p.m. The Alfred Street Baptist Church will observe Palm Sunday with "Jesus: The Cornerstone of our Faith." At Alfred Street Baptist Church, 301 South Alfred St., Alexandria. Call 703-683-2222 or www.alfredstreet.org.

Virginia Grand Military Band. 8 p.m. A Salute to Henry Fillmore and Edwin Franko Goldman with principal guest conductor Colonel Arnald D. Gabriel Admission is \$20. At the Rebecca S. Wilburn auditorium at Hayfield Secondary School, 7630 Telegraph Road, Alexandria. Call 703-426-4777 or visit www.vgmb.com.

Archaeology of the Civil War Set. 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Free program. This will be a full day of informative presentations by experts in the field of archaeology and history. Seating is limited to 200 at the James Lee Center in the Monroe Gymnasium, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Call C.K. Gailey at 703 534-3881, extension 404.

SUNDAY/APRIL 1

Palm Sunday Services. 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Join in the triumphal procession with palm branches as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and hear the dramatic reading of the Passion story as Holy Week begins. At St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria; call 703-360-4221, www.staidanepiscopal.com.

Palm and Passion Sunday. 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Emmanuel Episcopal extends a welcome to all to join in its palm processions. All ages will enjoy this launch into Holy Week and the rich anticipation of a meaningful Easter. At Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 1608 Russell Road, Alexandria. Call 703-



MARCH 31 AND APRIL 1

Violinist Midori. Alexandria Symphony Orchestra with Kim Allen Kluge, conductor. Tickets are \$40/adults; \$10/students; \$5/children. Saturday, March 31 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, April 1 at 3 p.m. At the Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall & Arts Center, 3001 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria.

3 p.m. Includes puppetry, folk objects, song, dance, and food. Featuring: Amie Cazel, Daria Kondova, Konstantin Hadjipanov, Daniel Rovin and Gwendolyn Torrence. At the Masonic Theater at the George Washington Masonic Memorial, 101 Callahan Drive Alexandria.

Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic. 3 p.m. Tickets are \$20. Featuring Claude Debussy's Nocturnes, Gustav Holst's Concerto for Two Violins with violinists Marc Ramirez and Olivia Hajioff, Composition Competition Finalist Charles Bestor's Variations for Orchestra conducted by U.S. James; and Frederick Delius' Songs of Sunset conducted by Dr. Mark Whitmire with the NOVA Community Chorus, mezzo-soprano Grace Gori and baritone Rex Gori. At Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Rd., Alexandria. Call 703-799-8229 www.wmpamusic.org.

MONDAY/APRIL 2

Help Plant Seedlings. 10 a.m. to Noon. Volunteers are needed to help plant 40 to 50 seedlings at Grist Mill Park, 4710 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway, Alexandria. This is part of a Mt. Vernon Evening Lions Club project, in conjunction with the Fairfax Co. Park Authority and Fairfax Releaf. Call Andrea Corsillo at 703-960-4973.

R.E. Lee Camp Dinner Meeting. 6:15 p.m. Cost is \$25/person. Author Eric Buckland will be speaking on Mosby and his men. At American Legion Post 24 Hall, 400 Cameron Street at N. Royal St., behind Gadsby's Tavern in Alexandria. RSVP to Lawrence Graham at 703-217-7871. Checks should be made out to R.E. Lee Camp #726 and mailed to P.O. Box 4024, Oakton, VA 22124. Payments will be accepted at the door. Visit www.leecamp.org.

TUESDAY/APRIL 3

Professional Networking Breakfast. 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. The breakfast focuses on roundtable power networking and gives attendees the chance to exchange business cards, develop new prospects and share a 60 second commercial with each table. Members \$35; Non-members \$50. At the Virginia Theological Seminary, Refectory Building, 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria.

Ice Sculptures. 6 to 8 p.m. The Crystalline World of Ice and Snow in Harbin, China. Morrison House Presents: Tatyana Schremko Schriempf, Torpedo Factory Sculptor. At Morrison House, 116 South Alfred St., Alexandria. Visit www.morrisonhouse.com or 703-838-8000.

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the band, Scott Ramming and the Crawstickers. At the Carlyle Club,

SEE SPRING FUN, PAGE 16


Lucky Bucks!

Win up to \$300 in:

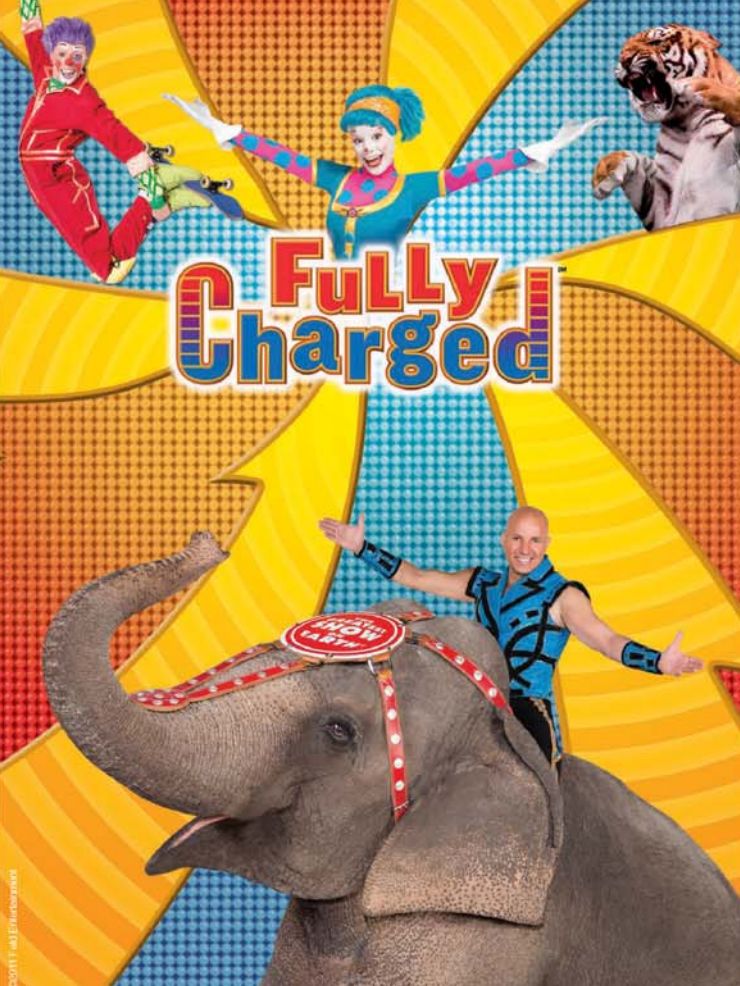
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APR. 4 - 15



Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
APR. 4	APR. 5	APR. 6	APR. 7	APR. 8	APR. 12	APR. 13	APR. 14	APR. 15
7:00 PM	7:00 PM*	1:00 PM	11:30 AM	1:00 PM	7:00 PM*	10:30 AM	11:30 AM*	1:00 PM
		7:30 PM*	3:30 PM	5:00 PM		7:30 PM*	3:30 PM	5:00 PM*

*SAVE 50% off face price of ticket, excluding fees. Excludes Circus Celebrity™, Front Row and VIP seats. No double discounts. Limit eight (8) tickets per order.

Ringling.com

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Regular Ticket Prices: \$14 • \$18 • \$30 • \$55 VIP
\$75 Front Row • \$110 Circus Celebrity
Additional fees may apply.



"So, where are you taking the kids to church this Easter?"

FREE PONY RIDES & PETTING FARM

EASTER SUNDAY @10 AM

www.wcchurch.com

"Washington Community Church at Carl Sandburg Middle School...
...all 137 of 'em!"



Scholarship applications for 2012 graduating high school seniors in Lee and Mount Vernon Districts, pursuing further education in a business related field, are now available. Scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$2,000 each.

Apply for this scholarship online at <http://www.mtvernon-leechamber.org/Education-Partnership.html>

Or call 703-360-6925 for more information.

**Application deadline
Friday, April 27**

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CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

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Mar. 24 - April 15: **Blossoms by Bike River Ride**

March 24: **Gunston Hall Kite Festival**

March 24: **8th Annual Great Rum Punch Challenge**

Mar. 26 - April 13: **Blossoms by Water**

April 12: **2nd Thursday Art Night: Spring Awakening**

April 15: **AIA's Annual Walking Tour**

April 21: **79th Annual Historic Homes & Garden Tour**

**Virginia
Alexandria**

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SPRING FUN

FROM PAGE 15

411 John Carlyle St., Alexandria.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 4

Children's Holy Week Service. 5:30 p.m. Children and their parents are invited for this interactive and experiential walk through some of Jesus' last week, including the Last Supper and washing the feet of his disciples. We will share a simple meal, hear stories, and sing songs as we prepare for Easter in a fun and engaging service designed especially for young children. At St. Aidan's Episcopal Church, 8531 Riverside Road, Alexandria; call 703-360-4221, www.staidansepiscopal.com.

❖ Thursday, April 5, 7:30 p.m. - Maundy Thursday Service with Footwashing

❖ Friday, April 6, 7:30 p.m. - Good Friday service

❖ Saturday, April 7, 8 p.m. - Great Vigil of Easter - We'll start outside the church just after sunset to light the new paschal fire, then continue into the church for the Great Vigil - an ancient and holy service which marks the end of Lent and ushers in Easter. The service is followed by a festal celebration with champagne and desserts.

❖ Sunday, April 8, 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. - Join us for a festival Easter celebration full of gorgeous flowers and joyous music. In between the services (at 9:30 a.m.) we'll host a fun Easter egg hunt for the kids on the lawn. Bring your Easter baskets!

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

Concert. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15/adults; \$5/children. Featuring Elisabeth de Merode (flute) and Laurent Tardat (violin). At Lyceum Hall, 201 South Washington St., Alexandria.

Joan Osborne. At the Birchmere Music

Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-549-7500.

APRIL 6 TO 29

Childhood Memories. Works by artists inspired by their childhoods. Memories are endless: an experience, a trip, a gathering, an animal, a poem, a person or a place that brings one back to a childhood memory. Show exhibits April 6-29; opening reception April 6, 7-10 p.m. Open Thursday-Sunday. Del Ray Artisans, 2704 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. 703-838-4827. www.TheDelRayArtisans.org

SATURDAY/APRIL 7

Great Vigil of Easter. 7:30 p.m. Fire, drama, mystery, baptism, music and more: this service, on the holiest night of the church year, has it all. Music is provided by both our Children's Choir and our Adult Choir, as well as congregational hymns. Bring bells to ring at the triumphal moment when we celebrate Christ's resurrection, and uncover the alleluias that the children hid away for Lent. At Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 1608 Russell Road, Alexandria. Call 703-683-0798 or administrator@emmanuelonhigh.org

Firearms Discussion. 1 to 2:30 p.m. Free admission. Doug Wicklund, senior curator for the National Firearms Museum, will display John Alden's actual rifle and talk about it and other arms carried by the Pilgrims on the Mayflower. At the Collingwood Library and Museum, 8301 East Blvd. Drive, Alexandria. RSVP by April 5 to KRGroff@CollingwoodLibrary.Org. Be sure to provide your full name and the name(s) of any guests. Presented in partnership with National Firearms Museum in cooperation with The Mayflower Society.

Cleve Francis and Friends. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$32.50. At the Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave.,

Alexandria. Call 703-549-7500. Visit www.clevefrancis.com.

SUNDAY, APRIL 8

Easter Flowering of the Cross and Egg Hunt. 8 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.; egg hunt at 11:50 a.m. Celebrate Christ's resurrection at Emmanuel Episcopal - enjoy special music at both services from the Adult and Children's choirs (children sing at 10:30 a.m. only). Children of all ages are invited to help flower the cross as a sign of Christ's resurrection. Stay on for an Easter Egg Hunt in the church grounds. At Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 1608 Russell Road, Alexandria. Call 703-683-0798 or administrator@emmanuelonhigh.org

TUESDAY/APRIL 10

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the Soul Tones of Swing. At the Carlyle Club, 411 John Carlyle St., Alexandria.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 11

DJ Dance Party. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$6. With DJ Dabe Murphy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St., Alexandria.

THURSDAY/APRIL 12

Explore Activities for Seniors. 10:30 a.m. At Chinguapin Park Recreation Center, 3210 King St., Alexandria. Visit www.seniorservicesalex.org or call 703-836-4414, ext. 13.

FRIDAY/APRIL 13

Mt. Vernon's Helping Hands. 4:30 to 10 p.m. Third-annual tennis charity event for youth and adults will be held at the Mount Vernon Athletic Club. It will benefit Inova Fairfax Hospital for Children Pediatric Oncology Programs with emphasis on children's access to

SEE SPRING FUN, PAGE 17

The Hoffman Town Center Presents:

Easter Buffet

At The Holiday Inn - 2460 Eisenhower Ave

Sunday April 8th | 10:30AM to 3:00PM

Salad Table

- Fresh Fruit / Cheese and Cracker Display
- Caesar Salad
- Hearts of Palm Salad
- Marinated Mushrooms and Olives

Entrée Section

- Broiled Cod with Dill Sauce
- Stuff Flounder with Artichoke and Spinach
- Chicken-Turkey A la King
- Roasted Pork Sirloin with Rosemary Sauce
- Rigatoni with Alfredo Sauce

Dessert Table

- Make your own sundae
- Assortment of cakes, pies and pastries

Soups

- Chicken Noodle Soup
- Beef and Barley Soup

Side Dishes

- Bacon
- Sausage
- Waffles
- Mediterranean Rice
- Steamed Mixed Vegetables
- Roasted Dill Red Potatoes

Carving Station

- Roast beef
- Honey Cured Ham

Egg Station

- Eggs and Omelets made to order

Kids' Corner

- Chicken Nuggets
- Mac and Cheese

Drinks

- Coffee, Tea and Soft Drinks



Adults: \$36.00++

Kids (3-5): \$14.95++

Meet the Holiday Inn Easter Bunny

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**Mount Vernon
Gazette**

SPRING FUN



Claudia Schmidt



Dulcie Taylor

SUNDAY/APRIL 15

Claudia Schmidt and Dulcie Taylor. 7 p.m. Tickets are \$18/general; \$15/advance. At Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria. Visit www.focusmusic.org. call 703-501-6061.

FROM PAGE 22

education, promoting physical exercise and activities, and maintaining connections with family and friends while the children are hospitalized. Youth activities \$10, from 4:30-6:30 p.m.; Adult activities \$25 (\$30 at door), from 6:30-10 p.m. Walk-ins without tennis \$10. Silent Auction, Raffle, Food & Beverages and more. At 7950 Audubon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703 360-7300. Visit www.mtvac.net.

APRIL 13 AND 14

Spring Garden Market. Vendors from throughout the mid-Atlantic region will be selling a wide variety of plants as well as garden supplies and garden art. Friday, April 13 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, April 14 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. AHS members-only preview night is Thursday, April 12 from 4 to 8 p.m. Hosted by the American Horticultural Society. At River Farm headquarters. Call 703-768-5700.

SATURDAY/APRIL 14

Magi-Whirl 2012. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with strolling magicians; showtime at 7:30 p.m. Las Vegas Style Family GALA Magic Show staged by Ring 50 of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and Bishop Ireton High School. Five world-famous magicians — one from Argentina. Tickets are \$12/adults, \$10/seniors and students; \$15/door — family packs available. At Bishop Ireton High School. Visit www.magi-whirl.org/gala/

The Grandest Congress: The French and Indian War in Alexandria. Noon to 4 p.m. Donation of \$5. Spring, 1755: Major General Edward Braddock, Commander-in-Chief of His Majesty's Forces in North America convened a meeting of five colonial governors at John Carlyle's Alexandria home. Among Braddock's objectives was to secure funding for his upcoming campaign against the French. Carlyle called this gathering "the Grandest Congress ... ever known on the Continent." Peek in on the meeting inside and enjoy the sights and smells of 18th-century style food being prepared for a grand dinner for Braddock and the Governors. Costumed interpreters will be on site to answer your questions.

Growing Flowers and Vegetables in Containers. 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Learn how to grow flowers and vegetables in pots, planters or other containers for maximum beauty and bountiful crops on your deck, balcony, porch or patio. Sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension, with the support of Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia. At the Duncan Library, 2501 Commonwealth Ave., Alexandria. To register, call 703-228-6414 or email mgarlalex@gmail.com or

visit www.mgnv.org

George Washington's Whiskey for Sale. 10 a.m. George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, will have the limited edition George Washington Rye Whiskey available for sale on April 14 at 10 a.m. This is a limited edition rye whiskey made at George Washington's reconstructed distillery – 600 bottles are available for sale. Each 375 ml bottle retails for \$95; purchases are restricted to two bottles per person. The whiskey will be available for sale in person only at the Distillery & Gristmill site gift shop and The Shops at Mount Vernon. The whiskey sale hours are: Mondays through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

APRIL 14 TO 22

"Tom Sawyer." Tickets are \$10/advance; \$12/door. Show times are April 14, 20, 21 at 7:30 p.m.; April 15 and 22 at 3 p.m. Featuring a cast of 54 actors ages 8-18. At Carl Sandburg Middle School, 8428 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria.

SUNDAY/APRIL 15

Family and Friends Day. 11 a.m. With Guest Speaker: Reverend Sonja Flye-Oliver. At Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church, 606-A South Washington St., Alexandria. Call 703-836-7332.

MONDAY/APRIL 16

Masters of Tradition. Celebrating the art of Irish music with seven of Ireland's most compelling musicians, including Fiddler Martin Hayes and singer Iarla O Lionaird. Will appear at The Birchmere Music Hall, The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria.

TUESDAY/APRIL 17

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. Featuring the band, All Wheel Jive. At The Carlyle Club, 411 John Carlyle St., Alexandria.

Mount Vernon Genealogical Society. 1 p.m. Free. Speaker Robert D. McLaren presents a lecture on DNA Testing for Genealogy: The Basics. Meets at the Hollin Hall Senior Center, Room 112, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. Contact Phyllis Kelley at 703-660-6969 or publicity@mvgenealogy.org.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 18

Swing Dancing. 9 to 11 p.m. Admission is \$10. With the band, King Teddy. At Nick's Nightclub, 642 South Pickett St.,

Alexandria.

THURSDAY/APRIL 19

Pollen as a Window Into the Past. 7:30 p.m. How Ecologists Use Pollen to Reconstruct Past Vegetation. Dr. Emily Southgate will illustrate how paleoecologists use the unique characteristics of pollen preserved in sediments as a window on the past. At Green Springs Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Visit www.vnps.org.

APRIL 19, 20, 21, 22

Spring Book Sale. The Friends of the Beatley Central Library in Alexandria host "It's Raining Books, Hallelujah." Preview is Thursday, April 19 from 4 to 8:30 p.m. Continues Friday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, April 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, April 22 from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Prices: paperbacks \$1; hardbacks \$3. At the Charles E. Beatley Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1702 or visit www.alexandria.lib.va.us.

APRIL 20 TO MAY 5

"Someone Who'll Watch Over Me." Tickets are \$18/adults; \$16/military, seniors and students; \$14/groups of 10. Show times are Fridays and Saturdays, April 20 to May 5, plus Tuesday, May 1. In addition, there will be matinees on Saturday, April 24 and May 5, starting at 2 p.m. At the LAT at Convergence, 1819 N. Quaker Lane, Alexandria.

APRIL 20 AND 21

Colin Hay in Concert. 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$30. At The Birchmere, 3701 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call the Birchmere at 703-549-7500 or visit www.birchmere.com; for tickets, please call Ticketmaster at 800-745-3000 or order online at www.Ticketmaster.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 21

Chalk Walk. 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. in the Mount Vernon High School Football Stadium. Run or walk around the track and school for exercise and honor your favorite teacher at the same time. The \$5 registration fee includes a Chalk Walk T-Shirt. Contact Ms. Card (703-619-3120 or bmcard@fcps.edu).

Author Event. 2 to 4 p.m. Local author Tansil Johnson will sign and discuss her new books, *Who Is Mooma?* And *Mooma and the Mouse*. At Charles Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria.

MVHS Class of 2012 Spring Mulch Sale.

\$5/bag - 3 cubic feet, double shredded hardwood bark mulch. Orders of 10 bags or more will be delivered to select ZIP codes. For more information or to order, send a note to mvhsmulchsale2012@gmail.com or call 571-214-4348. Proceeds will support the senior class All Night Grad Party.

Garden Day Herb & Craft Sale. 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sponsored by Friends of Carlyle House. An exciting mix of herbs and vegetable plants from Mount Vernon and Layng & Company will be available for purchase. Bring your family and participate in child-friendly activities, listen to performances by area musicians and living historians throughout the day, as well as shop for items made by local artisans and crafters. This event is free, however admission for the House tour is \$5 for



SATURDAY/APRIL 14

Explore Alexandria's Firefighting History. 1 p.m. Tickets are \$6/adults; \$4/youth. The walking tour, "Blazing a Trail: Alexandria's Firefighting Past." As they walk through Old Town, participants will learn about volunteer firefighting in early Alexandria and stop at historic buildings that once served as fire stations. At Friendship Firehouse, 107 South Alfred St., Old Town Alexandria. Visit www.friendshipfirehouse.net or by calling 703-746-4994.

adults; \$3 for children 5-12 years old; free for children 4 & under or free with your Alexandria Garden Day ticket. This event will take place rain or shine. Carlyle House Historic Park is at 121 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria.

APRIL 23

Bela Fleck & The Flecktones. The band is: Bela Fleck (banjo), Howard Levy (piano/harmonica), Victor Wooten (bass), and Roy Futureman Wooten (percussion/Drumitar). At the Birchmere Music Hall, 3701 Mount Vernon Ave., Alexandria. Call 703-549-7500.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 25

Author Andrew Wingfield. 7 p.m. Come and hear local author Andrew Wingfield speak about his book *Right of Way: Stories*, winner of the Washington Writers Publishing House 2010 fiction prize. At the Beatley Central Library, 5005 Duke St., Alexandria. Call 703-746-1702 or www.alexandria.lib.va.us

SATURDAY/APRIL 28

YMCA Open House. 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Join YMCA Alexandria at 420 East Monroe Avenue, Alexandria. Activities include pony rides, train rides, mini-manicures, make a kite station, family zumba, Face Painting, Balloon Sculptures, SeaPerch underwater robotics demo, Healthy Snack Attack Shack, Pirates of Alexandria Scavenger Hunt, and more! . It's free and open to the public.
Rebuilding Together Rebuilding Day. 8 a.m. Help repair 50 vulnerable Alexandria residents' homes during National Rebuilding Day. Some 1,000 volunteers are needed. Event kicks off at First Baptist Church, 2932 King St., Alexandria. Contact Shawn Flaherty at 703-554-3609.

FINE ARTS

MARCH 23 TO MAY 6

"In Medusa's Company." Ceramic artist Judith Kornett's works at the Schlesinger Center Margaret W. & Joseph L. Fisher Gallery at the Alexandria Campus of Northern Virginia Community College. Opening Reception Saturday, March 31, from 3 – 5 p.m. with Artist's Talk at 4 p.m.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 1

20 Years on The Avenue. The 20th Anniversary Committee invites you to celebrate DRA's 20 years on "The Avenue" with past and present masterpieces. This member-only show runs from March 2-April 1, and will be juried from outside our DRA family of members. (www.VeroneauMusic.com). Running March 3- April 1 special exhibits of Del Ray Artisans' history will be featured. Visit www.TheDelRayArtisans.org.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 1

"Large and Little" Ceramic Guild Show. At Scope Gallery, 105 North Union St., Ground Floor Studio 19, Alexandria. Call Scope Gallery at 703-548-6288 or visit www.torpedofactory.org/galleries/scope.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 2

"Play" Exhibit. Free. Artist Victoria Cowles provides hands-on art activities for children. "Play" is The Art League's kick-off for Minds Wide Open: Virginia Celebrates Children in the Arts. At the Art League, 105 North Union Street, Alexandria. Call 703-683-1780 or www.theartleague.org

NOW THROUGH APRIL 4

Winds of Change. Featuring enameled jewelry, wall pieces and bowls. At the Enamelists Gallery at the Torpedo Factory, 105 North Union St., Alexandria. Open daily 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Extended hours on Thursdays til 9 p.m. Call 703-836-1561.

NOW THROUGH APRIL 29

Japan's Gift to Nature. Solo exhibit of Oriental Brush Paintings celebrating 100th anniversary of planting of the cherry trees in D.C. Art exhibition at Green Spring Gardens Park, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Meet the artist's reception is Sunday, March 25 from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Visit www.Greenspring.org.

FROM PAGE 9

ing than Fairfax County does for its re-zoned developments.

Elected officials, businesses and residents are either part of the solution or part of the problem. Doing nothing does not contribute to our revenue needs and leads to the continuation of the status quo, such as creating more gridlock due to development without transportation improvements.

Catherine M. Voorhees

Fails To Address Voter ID Issue

To the Editor:

In my letter of March 15, I noted Queenie Cox's playing of the race card in her previous letter in response to my opposition to Virginia House of Delegates bill no. HB16. That bill proposed to restore voting rights to those convicted of non-violent felonies who have paid their debt to society in full. Ms. Cox attempted to make a connection between those who oppose HB16 and those who supported Jim Crow laws that intentionally discriminated against African Americans. See: <http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/re->

sources/lessonplans/hs_es_jim_crow_laws.htm

In my rebuttal of Ms. Cox's argument, I referred to her as an "African-American civic activist," making the connection to her reference to those Jim Crow laws. In her letter published on March 22, she has accused me of referring to her in that way "based on his visual of my skin color" and criticized me for allegedly doing so, implying that perhaps she is not, in fact, an African-American. A person reading Ms. Cox's letter would likely assume that Ms. Cox and I are unacquainted. That assumption would be false.

I've known Queenie Cox for many years. I've been welcomed in her home in Gum Springs more than once and have met and conversed with her mother. As chairman of the MVCCA's Planning & Zoning committee, I served with Queenie on the MVCCA's Board of Directors. In that capacity, I attended meetings of the New Gum Springs Civic Association, of which Ms. Cox has been president for many years, to help defend the Gum Springs community against a proposed land development the majority of the Gum Springs community opposed. I've heard Ms. Cox speak with pride about her

African-American heritage and the storied history of her Gum Springs community which was described in a published article as an "African American enclave": http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/virginia-politics/post/african-american-enclave-says-fairfax-ignoring-its-concerns-over-hospital-expansion/2011/07/20/gIQAZyoWSI_blog.html. The article quoted Ms. Cox multiple times. So it comes as quite a surprise that Ms. Cox appears to be denying she is African-American to divert attention from the fact that she has failed to prove a racial connection to opposition to HB16. How strange indeed.

I will, again, assert that one should not play the race card in a civic debate without having firm proof of justification for doing so. As I previously asserted, there is no evidence that minorities, African-American or otherwise, are disproportionately convicted of non-violent felonies under circum-

stances in which those convictions were unjustified. There is also no evidence that would support drawing an analogy between laws permanently disenfranchising convicted felons (regardless of race) and racially motivated Jim Crow laws. Ms. Cox's letter doesn't even address this issue.

H. Jay Spiegel
Mount Vernon

Re-examine Budget

To the Editor:

Supervisor Hyland's call to add a 4 percent tax to restaurant meals is a bad idea. Restaurateurs have been badly hurt by the three-year recession and they need a period of recovery. Surely there are savings somewhere in a County billion dollar budget to meet this shortfall.

Ronald Narmi
Alexandria

Write Us

The Gazette welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors.

Send to:
Letters to the Editor, The Gazette
1606 King St. ♦ Alexandria VA 22314
Call: 703-917-6444 ♦ gazette@connectionnewspapers.com

APRIL 2-6

Spring Break Camp. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Cost is \$365. Want to be in a play? Looking for a fun Spring Break activity? MVCCT's popular Spring Break Camp is just the creative, engaging experience your student is looking for. MVCCT's camps are fun, build confidence, teach teamwork and develop ease in public speaking. Held at Heritage Presbyterian Church, 8503 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Visit www.MVCCT.org or call 703-360-0686.

APRIL 2

Volunteers Needed. The Alexandria Domestic Violence needs volunteers to answer the hotline and cover the shelter on the weekends. Training starts April 2. Training lasts for seven weeks and an interview is required. Contact Jennifer Clayton at 703-746-4911.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

Help Reverse Citizens United. 7 to 9 p.m. Support a constitutional amendment to reverse the Supreme Court decision, "Citizens United vs. the FEC." Learn about the movement for a constitutional amendment to reverse "Citizens United" and what we can do in the Mt. Vernon District. At Martha Washington Library, 6614 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria. Contact Naomi 202 549 -6568, naomi22314@verizon.net
Parkinson's Disease Support Group of Alexandria. 2 p.m. Meets at Hollin Hall Senior Center, 1500 Shenandoah Road, Alexandria. All Parkinson's patients and caregivers are welcome.

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April 5, Maundy Thursday

7:30 pm: Holy Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar

April 6, Good Friday

11:00 am: Stations of the Cross
12:00 pm, 1:00 pm, 2:00 pm and 2:45 pm:
"Seven Last Words of Christ"
7:30 pm: Liturgy for Good Friday

April 8, Easter Sunday

8:00 am: Holy Eucharist
10:15 am: Holy Eucharist followed by
Children's Easter Egg Hunt

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21 Announcements

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West Potomac Produces Torrid Offensive Start

Wolverines hit seven home runs in first four games.

By JON ROETMAN
THE GAZETTE

Danielle McHugh started West Potomac's weekend long-ball party with a leadoff home run against West Springfield on Friday, March 23. After a double by Hannah O'Neil, Morgan Maniglia and Jasmine Picini launched back-to-back homers for the Wolverines. Maniglia would hit another later in the contest.

The following day against Edison, a cold, rainy afternoon did nothing to cool the West Potomac bats. Maniglia hit her third home run in two games, Picini went deep again and freshman Nikki Minnis — all 5 feet 2, 101 pounds of her — provided the finale by smashing a ball over a fence for the first time in her career.

The West Potomac softball team produced a torrid offensive start to the 2012 season. Through four games, the undefeated Wolverines outscored their opponents 55-6. After a 4-3 win against Mount Vernon in the March 15 season opener, West Potomac defeated T.C. Williams 20-1, West Springfield 16-1, and Edison 15-1. The Wolverines batted .403 during the four-game stretch and belted seven home runs.

While the Wolverines didn't face the fiercest of competition, and coaches and players have stressed the one-game-at-a-time mentality, Maniglia is hopeful West Potomac's bats will remain hot.

"I think it's contagious," she said, "so I think it's going to hopefully travel into the rest of the season."

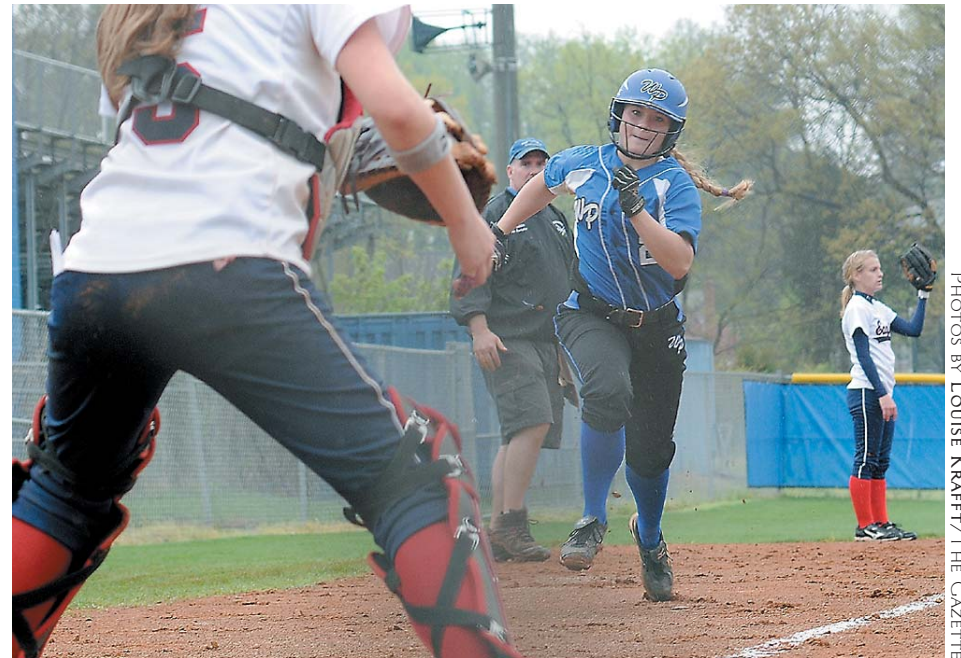


West Potomac senior Jasmine Picini needed just four games this season to equal her 2011 home run total of two.

Multiple Wolverines credited a practice drill called "rapid fire" for the team's success at the plate. Rather than going through a standard bucket-of-balls batting practice, each Wolverine gets just one pitch to make something happen. Players are to approach the drill as if they have a full count. If the pitch is out of the strike zone, one should let it go.

Head coach Craig Maniglia brought back the exercise after he said West Potomac struggled in the opener against Mount Vernon.

"The reason why we do it is because we look nervous in the batter's box," Coach Maniglia said. "... The way I've done it in the past with other teams is I'll throw a bucket of balls and everyone is standing around. This keeps everybody involved in the practice, everybody's moving."



West Potomac senior Danielle McHugh rounds third and heads for home during the Wolverines' 15-1 win against Edison on March 24.

Morgan Maniglia, who produced team highs in batting average (.714), home runs (3) and RBIs (12) to start the season, said the exercise has changed the team's approach at the plate. Entering her senior year, the standout pitcher had yet to hit a home run during a high school game.

"We're jumping on things," she said, "and being a lot more confident in the box."

Picini batted .533 with two homers and nine RBIs through four games. The senior all-district catcher had two home runs all of last season.

"['Rapid fire' is] just one ball and that's the one you have to hit," Picini said. "If you swing and miss, you're done. You have to go back to the end of the line. I think that's taught us discipline, in a way."

Minnis, the team's starting second

baseman, said she excels during "rapid fire" at practice and thinks about the exercise during games, causing her to focus on "anything close." Against Edison, Minnis said her home run was the first she had hit on any level.

"I thought it was just going out to the outfield," Minnis said. "But then it was going higher and higher and then [the left fielder] just put her hands up and I was like, 'Oh my goodness, it's over the fence,' and I got really excited."

McHugh batted .571 with one homer and three RBIs through four games. Maggie Grady had five RBIs and Minnis, Hannah Graham and Zoey Williams each had three.

West Potomac will host Annandale at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 29 before competing in the Madison spring break tournament on March 31.

West Potomac Seniors Underwood, McHugh to Compete in College Athletics

West Potomac seniors Sarah Jane Underwood and Danielle McHugh signed National Letters of Intent to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level. Underwood, a standout cross country and track athlete, will run for Penn State University and McHugh will play softball at Tennessee Tech.

Underwood has run varsity track and cross country for West Potomac since her freshmen year, lettering and earning all-district honors for each season and being named team MVP seven times. In cross-country, Underwood was named to the all-district team all four years and earned all-region honors three times. She also served as a team captain for the 2010 and 2011 seasons, leading the Lady Wolverines to back-to-back Patriot District titles, as well as the 2011 Northern Region title.

On the track, Underwood has continued to excel and has been a captain her junior and senior years. In addition to her 17 all-

district honors and 13 all-region honors, Underwood set a new Patriot District record in the 1000 meters en route to winning the title this year. She has also won three consecutive Northern Region titles in the 1000 and last year anchored the girls' 4x800-meter relay team to a state championship. In addition, Underwood has been named all-state 11 times in track and is the West Potomac school record holder in the 800, 1000 and 1600.

Underwood shines on and off the track. She is a member of the National and Spanish Honor Societies, has been a Girl Scout for the past 12 years, and has been awarded numerous civic awards. She has a GPA of 4.27 and was recently named West Potomac's Female Scholar Athlete for the 2012 winter season.

McHugh is a versatile athlete and a first-team all-district, first-team all-region and honorable mention AAA all-state softball player. She played travel ball for the Shamrocks and Vienna Stars Gold. Tennessee



West Potomac senior Sarah Jane Underwood will run for Penn State University. Pictured from left to right are: (first row) Mary Underwood (mother), David Underwood (brother) Sarah Jane Underwood, Dave Underwood (father), (second row) Coach Jenn Dietz, DSA Aaron Helmick.

Tech head coach Tory Acheson said in a press release: "Dani is a very strong student athlete who will make her mark on the field and in the classroom. She has played for



West Potomac senior Danielle McHugh will play softball for Tennessee Tech. Pictured from left are: Ms. McHugh, DSA Aaron Helmick, Danielle McHugh, Coach Craig Maniglia.

several very strong East Coast teams over the past few years and her experience with those programs have her well prepared to compete for a spot next year."

SPRING FUN

Mother Nature Is Local Resident

Some in the Mount Vernon area think Mother Nature moved away, perhaps to the shore or the mountains. Not true. She still lives in the neighborhood and likes folks to visit. Two locations stand out.

Fairfax County Parks Authority owns Huntley Meadows Park. A full range of “active” programs is offered for all ages and all interests, from birding to scouting merit badges to basic outdoor sciences instruction. However, the true treasures are “passive”: The trails. Birds. Trees. Signs of small animals. Underbrush. Sunlight slanting through the leaves.

Alone or not, sounds and sights of modern life fall away and a beautiful stillness takes over.

The National Park Service maintains a wildlife preserve called Dyke Marsh. This freshwater tidal wetland sits on the river beside the George Washington Parkway at Belle Haven. There is no visitors center. A few benches at scenic spots along the trail were built by a fledgling Eagle Scout. Occasionally, the sounds of a passing airplane or hum of tires on asphalt intrude. Mostly, however, it is all about waterfowl, birds, animals, acres of cattails and views of the river and its mudflats. Boaters find water-side approaches especially inviting.

Mother Nature loves company. Come join her for a walk.

— MICHAEL MCMORROW



Nature in Mount Vernon beckons.

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PHOTOS BY MICHAEL MCMORROW/THE GAZETTE



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— MICHAEL MCMORROW

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Mount Vernon Gazette



Fairfax County Public Schools: Go Inside the Classroom with Teachers

Coming in April: Visual and Performing Arts

When was the last time you visited a classroom? You may remember the desks, the chalkboard, or even the heavy copy of the dictionary sitting on top of the bookshelf.

Today's classrooms are dynamic and interactive settings where students learn from teachers who use a wide variety of resources and tools in the classroom to engage and empower students. Whether they are creating unique lesson plans or

inviting professionals into the classroom to share their experience with students, teachers provide opportunities for students to be curious and stimulate thoughts and ideas.

Sometimes the art of teaching requires the use of unique methods

to engage students. Jeff Lonnett, an art resource teacher at Mosby Woods Elementary School, is doing just that. Mosby Woods in Fairfax is one of 16 schools in the Washington, D.C., area that partners with the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts as part of its Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) program.

Through CETA, Lonnett works with teachers throughout the school to help them develop knowledge and skills to integrate the arts into other subjects such as history, math, language arts, and science.

"Our sixth graders recently completed a unit on the Revolutionary War and were asked to design propaganda posters promoting a real political position of the Revolutionary War," explained Lonnett.

"Art highlights the importance of learning at every opportunity," said Lonnett. "You can probably get through life without being an artist, but art teaches storytelling, problem solving, and creative thinking that you need for so many other things in life."

Teaching students the skills they need to lead responsible, fulfilling, and respectful lives is one student achievement goal in Fairfax County Public Schools. Tom Harlow works with more than 50 physically disabled students from around the county to help them develop the resilience and self-confidence required to deal effectively with life's challenges. He's the adapted physical education teacher at Falls Church High School.

Harlow started a program to bring general education students into the adapted PE classes to work with his students. It is called the Peer Teaching Program.

"At the beginning of the year, I have my students introduce themselves in front of the whole class and talk about what they can do," said Harlow. "Self-advocacy is an important skill and it makes them more confident."



The peer teachers get to know the other students helping by them participate in activities such as fishing, kite flying, in-line skating, archery, and much more.

"It's a win-win situation," said Harlow. "The students who serve as peer teachers come in to help, but by the time the class is finished, they have learned a lot about each other, especially about the ability of the other students. The physically disabled students enjoy working with their peers and have a lot of fun."

Every year, more and more students ask to be a part of the Peer Teaching Program.

"The Peer Teaching Program helps knock down walls that should never be there," said Harlow.

Knocking down walls on the other side of the county is Linda Martin, a resource teacher for the advanced academic program at Dogwood Elementary School in Reston. She is passionate about fostering interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

"Children are naturally curious and should be given simulated opportunities to innovate, create, and resolve unique problems," said Martin. "That's what we try to do through our clubs, camp, and classes."

Martin sponsors the Girls Excelling in Math and Science (GEMS) club at Dogwood and organizes the GEMS conferences annually.

"I believe very strongly in bringing professionals into the classroom to give us authentic experiences. Our students need to meet people in the field who are doing these things now. Suddenly their work is elevated. It has purpose, relevance, and there is a vision that starts to take shape in their minds."

"I never forget that this is their childhood and I am their teacher and I am creating indelible memories for them. I don't want them to just learn and remember things. I want their learning to be unforgettable."



Getting To Know Us

School-Based Technology Specialist Patrick Ledesma

"These are exciting times to be a teacher," says Patrick Ledesma, school-based technology specialist and special education department chair at Holmes Middle School in Alexandria.

"The greatest fulfillment as a teacher is helping students learn. The wide availability of technology tools today, when combined with effective teaching practices, provides almost unlimited ways to inspire students."

Whether students use mobile computing devices such as netbooks, tablets, and iPads in the

classroom or teachers use interactive whiteboards and classroom response systems, Ledesma says it will be the technology advances promoting more equitable student access to technology, rather than a specific brand or device, that will allow us to "inspire, enable, and empower all students to meet high academic standards, lead ethical lives, and demonstrate responsible citizenship," which are FCPS student achievement goals.

Ledesma says it is critical for students to be able to use technology to prepare for careers.

"Technology is seamlessly integrated into many job procedures and responsibilities today. Walk around any workplace or office, technology is evident somewhere in the background. To prepare students to use technology, we must continue to give students as many opportunities as possible to use technology in the learning process," he said.

"More importantly, we must focus on empowering students to be successful in applying higher level thinking skills. The more students are successful in activities that promote these skills, the more prepared they will be to use any technology available to them in the future."

Did You Know?

More than 10,000 (70 percent) of FCPS teachers have master's degrees and more than 370 FCPS teachers are certified by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, the highest credential a teacher can earn.

Students Engaged Through Technology

It may sound like something from a James Bond movie, but the Smart Pen is a teaching tool that is helping students of all ages.

The Smart Pen contains a computer that can capture handwriting and simultaneously record audio. The user taps a specially made sticker placed in a Smart Pen notebook to record the writing and audio.

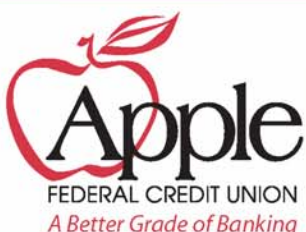
"My students are extremely excited and motivated when they use the Smart Pen," said Courtney Taylor, a kindergarten teacher at Parklawn Elementary School.

Taylor has multiple uses for the Smart Pen in her classroom.

"Recently each student wrote a report about polar animals and recorded themselves reading what they wrote," said Taylor. "Now any student can pick up the reports, use a Smart Pen to tap on the special dot in the notebook and listen to their classmates read their reports. It is a technology that fosters independence and engagement."

Taylor also records herself reading stories so her students can use free time to listen to a story on the Smart Pen and follow along in the book.

"The pens are very user friendly and my students love using them. They are even generating their own ideas on how we can use them!"



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\$500 CUSTOMER CASH, PLUS 0% APR
FOR 60 MO. ON SELECT NEW TOYOTAS.⁷

¹INCLUDES TAX, TAGS, FREIGHT, \$379 PROCESSING FEE, ACQUISITION FEE AND \$0 SECURITY DEPOSIT. 36-MONTH LEASE W/12K MILES PER YEAR. EXAMPLE CAMRY L. ²0% APR FOR 60-MONTH TERM ON SELECT NEW TOYOTA PRIUS WITH APPROVED TIER1+ CREDIT THROUGH TFS. UP TO \$1,000 CUSTOMER CASH AVAILABLE WHEN FINANCED THROUGH TFS. ³BASED ON KELLEY BLUE BOOK FAIR TRADE VALUE MINUS EXCESS MILEAGE AND RECONDITIONING. ⁴0% APR FOR A LIMITED TIME ON SELECT NEW TOYOTAS WITH APPROVED TIER1+ CREDIT THROUGH TFS. EXCLUDES \$379 DEALER DOC FEE. ⁵WHICHEVER COMES FIRST FROM DATE OF TCUV PURCHASE. ⁶FROM DATE OF TCUV PURCHASE. ⁷WITH APPROVED CREDIT ON SELECT MODELS THRU TFS. SEE DEALER FOR COMPLETE FINANCING DETAILS. ⁸WITH PURCHASE OF A NEW VEHICLE. COVERS NORMAL FACTORY SCHEDULED SERVICE. PLAN IS FOR 2 YEARS OR 25K MILES, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST. THE NEW TOYOTA VEHICLE CANNOT BE PART OF A RENTAL OR COMMERCIAL FLEET, OR A DELIVERY OR TAXI VEHICLE. SEE PARTICIPATING TOYOTA DEALER FOR DETAILS. ⁹ALL ACTIVE AND RESERVE U.S. MILITARY QUALIFY. MUST PRESENT VERIFIABLE PROOF OF MILITARY STATUS AT TIME OF PURCHASE ON APPROVED CREDIT THRU TFS. 0% APR ON SELECT 2011-2012 MODELS. EXCLUDES \$379 DEALER DOC FEE. ALL OFFERS EXPIRE 4/02/2012.

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