

Young Poets Recognized

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Langley Choir
Tours Europe

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Great Falls Farmers
Market Returns
To Village Centre

NEWS, PAGE 8

From left, Great Falls Elementary School fifth graders Sonia Toloczko, Olivia Garner and Laura Gersony, winners of the annual Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Poetry Contest at the Riverbend Country Club Wednesday, April 18

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The Langley High School Choir performs at the Benedictine Abbey in Melk, Austria during their Spring Break trip.



PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED

Langley Choir Tours Europe

Vocal groups win one silver, three gold medals at 2012 Young Prague Festival.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

On March 29, 113 Langley choral students and chaperones along with their director, Dr. Mac Lambert, and Langley High School administrator Sonya Williams gathered in the Langley High School auditorium with suitcases and passports in hand. At approximately 12:30 p.m., everyone and everything was loaded onto school buses for the first leg of their trip to Dulles International Airport. The Langley Concert Choir, Madrigals, Women's Chamber Choir and Women's Select Treble Choir all performed throughout the beautiful cities of Prague, Vienna and Salzburg.

"After flying overnight on a plane for eight hours, we arrived in Munich, Germany. We then rode on a coach bus for five hours and arrived in Prague in the Czech Republic that same day," said Sarah Salem, a

member of the Women's Select Treble Choir. "We arrived at a beautiful church and had to quickly change into our choir dresses. This was our first experience singing in one of the many churches on our trip and it was amazing being able to hear our sound reverberate throughout the church and echo against the walls and ceiling."

Other students enjoyed seeing the sights around Prague.

"My favorite part of the day was going on the river cruise on the Vitava River," said Women's Select Treble Choir member Celeste Saddler. "We met people from the other choirs and we had the opportunity to see some of the beautiful sights in Prague from the boat."

THE NEXT DAY the students participated in Young Prague 2012, an international competition.

"It began with a concert by Cancioneta Praga (a prominent Czech ensemble of young singers) who sang really fun songs from all around the world," said Ariana Kuhnsman, a member of the Women's Select Treble Choir and the Women's Chamber Choir. "Langley did well at the competition. However, everyone was nervous since there were many other

SEE SAXONS, PAGE 19

Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville) confers with Supervisors Jeff McKay (D-Lee) and Linda Smyth (D-Providence) before the budget mark-up session on Friday, April 20.



BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Budget Session Provides Snapshot of 2013 Budget

Highlights include restored funding for human services, libraries, employee pay.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Nearly 100 advocates packed a conference room at the Fairfax County Government Center Friday, April 20, to get a preview of coming attractions for the next fiscal year.

After months of debate, it appears the final \$6.7 billion fiscal year 2013 budget proposed by County Executive Anthony Griffin will restore pay adjustments for county employees, add public safety personnel, restore library hours and increase funding for a variety of human services programs.

"This budget will maintain the same effective tax rate as included in the budget proposal advertised by County Executive Tony Griffin in February," said Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large) after Friday's meeting. The board formally adopts the budget on Tuesday, May 1.

She said shifting a half cent from the storm water fee to the real estate tax rate (\$1.075 per \$100 value) will provide nearly \$10 million in "fiscal flexibility" for next year's budget. Other savings and adjustments – including more than \$4 million in fiscal year 2013 revenue reserve for state reductions – brings up the amount of available resources to nearly \$25 million.

"With that flexibility in place, and with savings identified within the advertised version, the final budget will improve public safety, restore library hours, maintain critical human services and establish a human services reserve, and restore pay adjustments for County employees," Bulova said.

In the proposed budget package, county employees are poised to receive a 2.5 percent merit increase on top of the pro-

posed 2.18 percent market rate adjustment at a cost of about \$16.5 million.

"They deserve a raise," said Supervisor John Foust (D-Dranesville). "Their cooperation over the past couple of really tough years has enabled us to avoid draconian service cuts without increasing the tax burden."

In addition to the increased pay for employees, the board proposed restoring cuts and providing additional funding for an array of human services programs.

"It does matter when people come to the public hearings," Bulova said. "These (recommendations) are based on feedback in response to recommendation from the Human Service Council."

In the past few years, Fairfax County's award-winning libraries have "taken an inordinate hit," Bulova said. The board recommended restoring nine hours each week at the county's regional libraries, and three hours at the county's community libraries. In addition, the board proposed funding 14 part-time positions to meet staffing needs at community libraries. Total cost: \$674,359.

Foust said he believed the proposed budget reflects "a reasonable balance" of the concerns and priorities we heard from many segments of the community.

"I think we have found some creative ways to restore some of the public safety and human services cuts that had been advertised," he said.

"When we adopt our budget, we are investing in our community's priorities. The fiscal year 2013 budget for Fairfax County, once marked up on April 24 and adopted on May 1, will do just that," Bulova said.



Students from the Langley High School Choir perform in a parade through Prague as part of the 2012 Young Prague Festival, where they won a silver and three gold medals during a Spring Break trip.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

Saint Luke Catholic School

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Security camera photo

Bank Robbery in Great Falls

Police responded to the report of an armed robbery at the Washington First Bank at 9851 Georgetown Pike on Wednesday, April 18 shortly after 11:30 a.m.

A man entered the bank, implied that he had a weapon and demanded money. An undisclosed amount of cash was handed over and the suspect fled on foot. There were no injuries.

The suspect was described as black, between 34 and 36 years

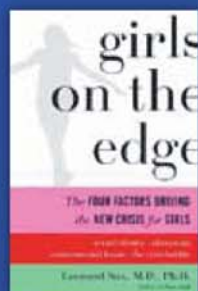
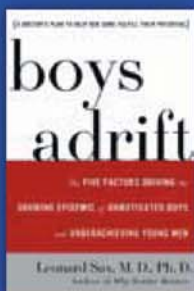
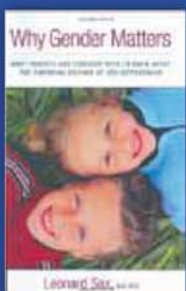
old. He was 5 feet 10 inches to 6 feet tall, with a slender build. He was wearing a white jacket and a black rain hat.

Police helicopter and K-9 units responded to check the area.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

SEE WEEK, PAGE 5

Join the Conversation About Education:



APRIL 16
7pm-9pm

Facebook Ate My Daughter

Dr. Leonard Sax, psychologist and author of *Why Gender Matters*, *Boys Adrift*, and *Girls on the Edge*, talks about the role of technology in the lives of teenagers – social media, video games, and the effects of growing up in virtual worlds. Dr. Sax will answer questions that parents have today – Should I be my child's Facebook friend? Which video games are OK? How much time spent playing video games is too much?



APRIL 30
7pm-9pm

Race To Nowhere

A documentary film examining the pressures faced by young people, teachers, and parents in our high stakes education system and pressure-cooker culture. Generate dialogue and examine assumptions about how to best prepare the youth of America to be healthy, bright leaders. The movie will be followed by a panel of educational experts including:

Patrick F. Bassett – President of the National Association of Independent Schools

Mary Ellen Weissman, Ph.D. – Clinical Psychologist



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Red Vase, Roberta Pruett Beasley

Art Exhibit

Join the Great Falls Artists' Atelier for the opening reception of a show by Roberta Pruett Beasley. The show, which features paintings and works on paper, will run from May 1 to May 31. Free and open to the public. May 4, - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. will be the opening reception. 1144 Walker Road, Great Falls. 703-994-3165.

WEEK IN GREAT FALLS

FROM PAGE 4

Fundraiser at L'Auberge Chez Francois

On Saturday, April 28, at 11 a.m., Chef Jacques Haeringer and L'Auberge Chez Francois will honor the men and women of America's military by hosting a cooking demo to raise funds for Freedom Alliance, a nonprofit located in Dulles, Va., founded by Lt. Col Oliver North in 1990.

This special cooking demo will be limited to the first 35 couples. To make a reservation online, go to: <https://support.freedomalliance.org/chezfrancois>, or call Amy Amundson at 703-444-7940.

The price to attend is \$150 per person.

www.LAubergeChezFrancois.com and www.ChefJacques.com.

Meeting on Travel Soccer

Have you ever wondered what travel soccer is all about? What is the time commitment? What is the tryout process like? Is it a good fit for my child/family? These questions, along with many other, will be answered on Wednesday, May 2 from 6-7 p.m. at Forestville Elementary in Great Falls at a meeting especially designed for the parents of rising U9 players (mainly rising 3rd grade students, contact us for birth date requirements). For more information contact administrator@greatfallssoccer.com.

Did You Know?

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OPINION

Connection Wins Public Service Award for Homeless Coverage

VPA Award for Journalistic Integrity and Community Service; plus 44 other awards.

The Connection Newspapers was awarded the Virginia Press Association Award for Journalistic Integrity and Community Service last Saturday, April 22, “for exhaustive coverage of homelessness in the newspaper’s circulation area.” The award was announced in Roanoke at the press association’s annual convention.

The public service entries were judged by Robert Giles, former editor and publisher of The Detroit News and the immediate past curator of the Nieman Foundation.

Giles wrote of the Connection coverage: “Its stories gave voice to the homeless. Its stories effectively portrayed the plight of the poor living in tents and other makeshift shelters. It reported on how poverty and homelessness affects children. It examined the causes of homelessness and explained why people don’t have a place to live even when some have a job. It reported on the role of government and groups that advocate for the poor.

EDITORIAL

It provided extensive lists of community organizations with missions to help the poor and homeless, and told how individuals could volunteer.

“It invited knowledgeable citizens to contribute guest editorials that offered perspectives and fresh ideas for addressing the problems of homelessness.”

The online component of the homeless project also won first place in the multimedia category. Edited by Michael O’Connell, the project included stories, video and photos by Victoria Ross, Deb Cobb, Robbie Hammer, Bonnie Hobbs and Amber Healy.

The Connection Newspapers group, including the Alexandria Gazette Packet, Mount Vernon Gazette and Centre View and Potomac Almanac, won 45 awards in all.

The Alexandria Gazette Packet won 17 awards.

The top award winner was Michael Lee Pope, who won 12 awards including first place for government writing; health, science and environmental writing; in-depth or investigative

Read the Winners

Many of the winning entries are posted at www.ConnectionNewspapers.com/

reporting; breaking news and public safety writing.

In addition to her work on the homeless project, photographer Deb Cobb won individual first place awards for photo illustration for a cover depicting a vampire; for an online slide show of “wounded warriors at bat,” and for general news photo.

Bonnie Hobbs won two first place awards, one for education writing and one for feature portfolio. Alex McVeigh won first place for in depth or investigative reporting for his coverage of a land use issue in Great Falls. Montie Martin won two first place awards, one for business writing, the other for personal service writing.

The Children’s Connection won an award and judges said it was a “simple and elegant idea showcasing children’s artwork, a great way to attract young readers.”

While it is gratifying and fun to win awards, it reflects our mission to tell the stories of the local community. We welcome your ideas and suggestions about what we should be covering now.

MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM,

WWW.TWITTER.COM/MARYKIMM

American Smokeout, Getting into ‘Right Fit’ Private School; Judges comments: Trio of strong entries.

❖ Mike O’Connell, Victoria Ross, Deb Cobb, Robbie Hammer, Bonnie Hobbs, Amber Healy 2nd place, Fairfax Connection, Special Sections or Special Editions, End to Homelessness, Judges comments: “End to Homelessness” tab. It is nice to see a newspaper commit to a project such as this in the form of a special tab.

❖ Julia O’Donoghue, 2nd place, Fairfax Connection, Education Writing W2W06 31912 Judges comments: Very nice variety in these stories, again, like the first place winner, going much deeper into the multitude of possibilities available in coverage of education and schools.

❖ Kenny Lourie, longtime columnist and Connection advertising representative, won two 1st place awards from the Maryland Delaware DC Press Association, one for local column and one for sports column. Lourie has been writing about his odyssey with Stage IV lung cancer, and the judges noted: “Writer chooses tough subject, his own mortality, and handles it quite well. He gives us an honest look at a very personal issue.”

❖ Kemal Kurspahic, Laurence Foong, Amna Rehmatulla, 3rd place, Reston Connection, Special Sections or Special Editions W2M08 30698, Children’s Connection, Judges comments: Simple and elegant idea showcasing children’s artwork, a great way to attract young readers.

❖ Victoria Ross, 3rd place, Fairfax Connection, In-Depth Or Investigative Reporting

❖ Mary Kimm, 3rd Place, Burke Connection, Editorial Writing, Judges comments: Mary Kimm’s columns are strong, particularly the one taking to task a school board on its disciplinary procedures in light of a student’s suicide. The community is better for her work.

❖ Michael Pope, 3rd place, Mount Vernon Gazette, In-Depth Or Investigative Reporting

ment. Wonderful.

❖ Deb Cobb, 1st Place, Burke Connection, Photo-Illustration, Vampire Feast, Judges comments: The intensity in the model’s face combined with the high contrast photo make this a dynamic illustration for a story about vampires.

❖ Victoria Ross, 2nd place, Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton, In-Depth Or Investigative Reporting

❖ Jon Roetman, 2nd place, Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton, Sports Writing Portfolio, Judges comments: This entry exhibits solid sports reporting, plain and simple. The completeness of these stories is the name of the game here. The reporter demonstrates versatility, switching from feature to news writing within the articles themselves, giving the reader the whole story.

❖ Jeanne Theismann, 2nd place, Mount Vernon Gazette, Feature Story Writing, 10th Anniversary of 9-11, Judges comments: Good job of writing about the 10-year anniversary of 9/11 — many stories were written, this was one of the better ones. Nice work.

❖ Louise Krafft, 2nd place, Mount Vernon Gazette, Picture Story or Essay, Graduation Day in the Mount Vernon District, Judges comments: Good variety of a regular event in the community.

❖ Michael Lee Pope, 2nd place, Mount Vernon Gazette, Business and Financial Writing

❖ Lashawn Avery-Simon, 2nd Place, Arlington Connection, General News Photo, ribbon cutting at park, Judges comments: great expression and tight composition

❖ Michael Lee Pope, 2nd Place, Arlington Connection, Health, Science and Environmental Writing, Judges comments: Excellent writing. Diverse topics. Took what could be dry material and led me through it and kept me interested. Good work.

❖ Marilyn Campbell, 2nd Place, Great Falls Connection, Personal Service Writing, Beating the Holiday Blues, Great



Victoria Ross



Deb Cobb



Robbie Hammer



Alex McVeigh



Bonnie Hobbs



Louise Krafft



Lashawn Avery-Simon



Jeanne Theismann



Kenny Lourie



Laurence Foong



Michael Lee Pope



Mary Kimm



Marilyn Campbell

Great Falls CONNECTION

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

Kemal Kurspahic
Editor ♦ 703-778-9414
kemal@connectionnewspapers.com

Amna Rehmatulla
Editorial Assistant
703-778-9410 ext.427
arehmatulla@connectionnewspapers.com

Alex McVeigh
Community Reporter
703-778-9441
amcveigh@connectionnewspapers.com
@AMcVeighConnect

Victoria Ross
County Reporter ♦ 301-502-6027
rosspinning@yahoo.com

Rich Sanders
Sports Editor ♦ 703-224-3031
rsanders@connectionnewspapers.com

ADVERTISING:
For advertising information
e-mail:
sales@connectionnewspapers.com

Salome Howard-Gaibler
Display Advertising
703-778-9421
salome@connectionnewspapers.com

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

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

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

Executive Vice President
Jerry Vernon
jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com

Editor in Chief
Steven Mauren
Managing Editor
Kemal Kurspahic
Photography:
Deb Cobb, Louise Krafft, Craig Sterbutzel
Art/Design:
Laurence Foong, John Heinly, John Smith
Production Manager:
Jean Card
Geovani Flores

Special Assistant to the Publisher
Jeanne Theismann
703-778-9436
jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com
@TheismannMedia

CIRCULATION: 703-778-9426
Circulation Manager:
Linda Pecquex
circulation@connectionnewspapers.com

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Distortion of Delegate's Votes

To the Editor:

Last week a good sized group of citizens attended a "town hall" meeting where our elected Delegate, Barbara Comstock, was supposed to give us a rundown on the recent session in Richmond and then take questions. Many in attendance were concerned about her recent votes – especially on education, transportation and women's issues - and feel that her votes have shortchanged us here in Northern Virginia.

Delegate Comstock voted to cut \$65 million in costs to compete funds that benefit northern Virginia schools; she voted to divert a portion of our general funds to transportation and failed to admit that the money would have to come out of our education, health, and public safety funds; and she voted against additional funds for Dulles Rail.

In a rambling and lengthy presentation she provided us with a stunning distortion of her votes to deny and restrict women's access to health care privacy. She claimed her vote for mandatory invasive ultrasounds was to give women a choice to look at their ultrasound image (an expensive and often useless procedure). She continued to disguise her voting record by claiming she voted for the personhood bill because it was actually a wrongful death bill.

Even a simple question from a constituent on when and how we might see new transportation money resulted in a ten minute almost incoherent explanation about how gas prices are high.

Her obfuscation of the facts was shocking. I was amazed that she could think anyone would go along with her explanations. I certainly wasn't fooled.

Kathleen Murphy
McLean

Different Perspective

To the Editor:

If "lifelong Democrat" Jim Daniels ("Missing Republican Party," Connection, April 11-17) would remove the partisan goggles he might find there really is another way of looking at the world. Every time a fraudulent vote is cast, a legitimate vote is canceled and a voter disenfranchised. Up till now anyone who showed up at the polls without proper ID was allowed to vote by simply signing an affidavit swearing they're a registered voter. We require valid ID to board a plane, buy cigarettes, or beer and no one seems to find it unduly burdensome. Few would be foolish enough to be satisfied with having a 15-year old beer purchaser sign an affidavit saying "sure I'm 21 years old." Why should voting be held to a lesser standard than

fraudulent teen beer-buying?

"Women's control over their reproductive health" is a strained rationalization for gutting the First Amendment's guarantee of the free exercise of religion. Especially since no one is preventing any woman from controlling her reproductive health, just stopping the abortion industry from forcing religious objectors to fund practices they find morally reprehensible. Doesn't sound so high-minded when you look at it from someone else's perspective, does it?

It would be easier to believe a claimed commitment to fighting "dependency on fossil fuels" when the crusaders begin abandoning their own luxury cars and jets for wind-powered wagons. And wasn't it just a short time ago when "the truth of global climate change" was "the truth of global warming" and before that "the truth of global cooling"? Nostalgic for the ozone hole, acid rain, and nuclear winter? Seems like "the truth" is whatever notion is politically useful this week.

And how exactly is the Democrat takeover of healthcare respectful of "privacy rights"? Every personal health decision is to be forcibly pried into and approved or disapproved by swarms of apparatchiks. Where exactly are the Democrat programs that would decrease their power?

Michael Crawford
Great Falls

Spring Art Exhibit Opens at Great Falls Library

An art exhibition featuring 43 paintings, photographs, art quilts and other new works by Great Falls artists, opened April 3 and will be displayed through the end of the month at the main conference room of the Great Falls Community Library. Several of the artists are exhibiting with Great Falls Studios for the first time. The show is sponsored by Great Falls Studios, a network of artists based in Great Falls. In addition to the work in the main conference room, four pieces are located in the glass-fronted case in the main hallway.

The event is one in a series of monthly exhibitions at the library made possible by Friends of the Library. The works on display are for sale, with 10 percent of the sale price going to the Friends of the Library to support library programs.

The Spring Exhibit includes paintings in oil, acrylics and watercolor, plus photographs of



"Magnolia Pod," a painting by Nancy Keane, is a finely detailed still life. It is one of the featured pieces in the Great Falls Studios Spring Exhibit at the Great Falls Community Library.

local scenes and landscapes from other parts of the country. You can see a portrait of Mark Twain in a porch rocker, boats pulled up on a beach, cherry blossoms and waterfalls, plus abstract compositions bursting with color and texture,

among others.

The library is located at 9830 Georgetown Pike and is open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday; 1 to 9 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

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Great Falls Farmers Market Returns to Village Centre

Opening day set for Saturday, April 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Great Falls Community Farmers Market is opening on Saturday, April 28, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the parking lot at the Walker Road entrance to the Great Falls Village Centre — where it was the year before last.

The purpose of the local community farmers market is to bring growers, producers, makers, and

crafters directly in touch with local residents so they can buy from the people who are personally responsible for the generation of agricultural produce and products, crafts, and other hand-made or original offerings. A second purpose is to provide an access to a circle of residents who can provide the comments and feedback that

encourage small businesses to grow. Jennifer Falcone of Jennifer's Pastries declares on her website that she moved from winning pie baking contests to launching a baking business because of her participation in the Great Falls Community Farmers Market. Chris and Sara Guerre, owners of the On The Go Gourmet truck that has

been present at the Great Falls farmers market from the very beginning, now reside on Laura Nichols Hidden Spring Farm and they are tending a huge "organic equivalent" (i.e. not yet certified) vegetable garden on local Great Falls soil. They will pick their crops within 24 hours before arriving at the market so that the community can enjoy the vibrancy of immediately picked produce. And finally,

the farmers market is a way for Great Falls residents to enjoy the village center on a Saturday, where community news can be posted on a bulletin board, where friends and family can meet and greet each others, take a stroll, have a chat, and experience the joy of wholesome nutrition, and feel the energy of producers in intimate touch with their offerings.

The organizers are in search of 10 volunteer interns who want to learn about bringing things to market, village communications, and market logistics. They are assembling an Advisory Council of members to represent the community in overseeing the market. They also invite local producers to submit an application to be considered as a vendor as our market.

Originally launched in May 2007, by St. Francis Episcopal Church under the leadership of Rob Watters, the Farmers Market was taken over by Brogue Charities and Mike Kearney in the middle of its first season. It had two additional successful years at parking lot at the Walker Road entrance of the Great Falls Village Centre before moving to the Village Green Day School parking lot last year. Since there was only one entrance and exit, residents found that space was difficult to maneuver, even though it was a very beautiful location. Mike Kearney is now passing the baton to Kathleen Murphy, who has set up the Great Falls Community Farmers Market, and is returning the location to the previous Village Centre location, thanks to the thoughtful hospitality and consideration of Jorge Kifoury of Linden Development, Inc., the owner. An application is being made to set up the farmers market as a non-profit in service to the nurturing of our community of Great Falls.



The original launch of the farmers market at St. Francis Episcopal Church in Great Falls.

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SCHOOLS



Great Falls Elementary Performs at Centennial Cherry Blossom Festival

Accompanied by Mamiya Worland (Sahara Sensei), 19 first graders, 12 third graders, and four fourth graders from the Japanese Immersion Program at Great Falls Elementary School performed at the Cherry Blossom Festival on Saturday, April 14. This festival was particularly memorable as it is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the gift of the cherry trees from Japan. The students performed four songs and dances and also enjoyed other cultural activities as well. They were greeted by Ambassador Malott and Ambassador Fujisaki who gave the children Cherry Blossom Festival bands.

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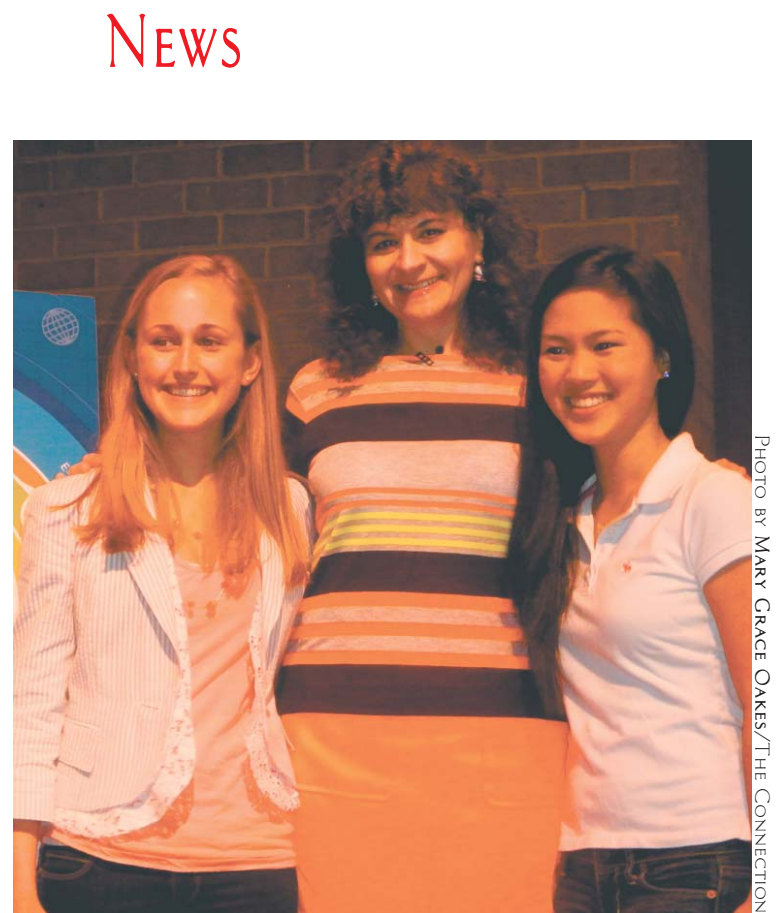
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Dr. Karen Panetta poses for a quick photo with Senior Micah Parks (left) and Junior Chelsea Hartanto (right), the two AP Physics students who introduced her.

‘Nerd Girls’ Founder Comes to Madeira

BY MARY GRACE OAKES
THE CONNECTION

On Thursday April 12, Tufts University engineering professor and “science rock star,” Dr. Karen Panetta, spoke to students at the Madeira School.

In addition to being the founder of “Nerd Girls,” a nationally-acclaimed outreach program aimed at inspiring female students to pursue engineering, Panetta is also a recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering, and currently serves as the World-wide Director of the IEEE Women in Engineering. Her visit to the Madeira School was part of a promotional tour for the upcoming USA Science & Engineering Festival, known as the Nifty Fifty Program, in which top scientists and engineers travel to D.C. area schools “to ignite middle and high school students’ passion for science and engineering.”

After energizing the audience by giving away “freebies” that included “Nerd Girls” bouncy-balls and purple IEEE highlighters, Panetta explained to the students just what makes a “Nerd Girl.” “I want to dispel the idea that nerds are ugly. Nerds are really cool,” she said, joking that “President Obama

thinks so too.”

She then described the paths her career has taken. Panetta lamented that, like other female scientists, she has faced the “negative stereotypes” of women which are reinforced by the media; she claims the biggest challenge she faced in achieving tenure at Tufts was that “my first day I wore a pink suit and pink high heels...that automatically set the bar lower for me.”

Yet despite facing obstacles, Panetta asserted that she has had a rewarding career, telling students “I love helping people, and that’s why I love being an engineer.”

After describing her involvement in projects ranging from the construction of a solar-powered car, to the development of an electro-larynx that better mimics the natural voice, Dr. Panetta opened the floor to questions. When asked by senior Caroline Hudson-Hale if she had any advice for students, Dr. Panetta replied, “Connect your passions to science and engineering.... I want you to go for it.”

The USA Science & Engineering Festival and Book Fair is a “free, family-friendly expo,” hosted by Lockheed Martin, which takes place at D.C.’s Walter E. Washington Convention Center from April 28-29.

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From left, Great Falls Elementary students Rachel Vanderven, Maddie Cross, Sabrina Barker, Nicole Medina, Hannah Femia, Laura Gersony, Olivia Garner, Nicholas Trunnell and Sonia Toloczko, winners of the annual Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Poetry Contest.

PHOTO BY
ALEX McVEIGH/
THE CONNECTION



Great Falls Elementary Poets Recognized

Friends and Neighbors Club awards nine at annual luncheon.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

The Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Club held their 30th annual poetry contest, awarding nine Great Falls Elementary School students during a luncheon at Riverbend Country Club.

"I can't believe it's been 30 years that this club has been showcasing our students," said Ernest Leighty, principal of Great Falls Elementary. "It's always been a great opportunity to show their work, and it's been a highlight of my career to see these students participate."

The club recently underwent a transformation, as the Great Falls Women's Club and the Great Falls Newcomer's Club merged to become the Great Falls Friends and Neighbors.

"This contest has a great impact, not only instructionally, but also creatively," said contest coordinator Joanne Schilling. "They have great fun writing their poems and sharing them with classmates. They even had a mini crisis when the school's server went down few days before the contest deadline, but it all got figured out."

The nine students, three each



From left, Great Falls Elementary School sixth graders Nicole Medina, Hannah Femia and Sabrina Barker, winners of the annual Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Poetry Contest at the Riverbend Country Club Wednesday, April 18

from fourth, fifth and sixth grades were recognized for a variety of works. Some wrote in standard rhyme, others in more of a freestyle format.

Sixth grader Nicole Medina and fourth grader Nicholas Trunnell wrote about family members they had lost, Medina her father and Trunnell his grandmother.

"I really miss my father, when he died it felt like a big hole was blown into my heart, I had almost lost all hope," Medina said. "But then I remembered something he

once told me, 'Family is forever, as long as you have them in your heart they are never really gone, you just can't see them.'"

Club member Allison Grandstedt said she hoped the students would nurture their creative side as they grow older.

"My son just got into the honors programs and honors dormitory for the Virginia Tech engineering program, and he got in because he wrote a poem with his application," she said. "So you never know where it will take you."



From left, Great Falls Elementary School fourth graders Maddie Cross, Rachel Vanderven and Nicholas Trunnell, winners of the annual Great Falls Friends and Neighbors Poetry Contest at the Riverbend Country Club Wednesday, April 18.

ENTERTAINMENT

Send announcements to greatfalls@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged. For additional listings, visit www.connectionnewspapers.com

THURSDAY/APRIL 26

Fenwick Fellow Lecture and Reception. 2 p.m. George Mason University, Johnson Center Instruction Room, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. With Dr. Michael Chang, 2010-2011 Fenwick Fellow, on "Service at the Manchu Court: The Young Kangxi Emperor and His Personal Advisors." Refreshments served. 703-993-2491 or dhogan1@gmu.edu.

"No Crime Like the Present." 7:30 p.m. Falls Church High School, 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church. A whodunit murder farce. \$5-\$8. fchsdrama.org.

Singer/Songwriter John McCutcheon. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Folk music. \$22. www.wolftrap.org.

Friday Afternoon Chess Group. 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. All ages and skill levels welcome. 703-757-8560.

"The Fantasticks." 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

"Deathtrap." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Comedy-thriller about a play within a play. \$14-\$16, group rates available. 866-811-4111 or www.mcleanplayers.org.

The Life And Music Of Sam Rotman. 12 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St., N.W., Vienna. A variety of classical music from the works of Beethoven and others. \$20, includes lunch and program. www.viennapres.org/samrotman or www.bridgepointconnections.org/blpluncheon.

Spring Heirloom Plant Sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Flowers, herbs, heirloom annuals, vegetable transplants and some herbaceous shrubs. 703-442-7547 or www.1771.org.

Concert Pianist Joyce Yang. 8 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Including pieces by Bach, Schumann, and Brahms. \$35. www.wolftrap.org.

"My Love, My Love." 7 p.m. Joyce Kilmer Middle School, 8100 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. A peasant girl uses love to bring people together. \$5. 703-846-8963.

SATURDAY/APRIL 28

Taste of Vienna. 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Vienna Volunteer Fire Department, 400 Center St. South, Vienna. Admission is free and guests will be able to purchase food from more than 25 local restaurants. Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. Proceeds benefit The Vienna Volunteer Fire Department. info@vvpfd.org or tasteofvienna@vvpfd.org.

Salting Fish Participatory Event. 1-4 p.m. Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Visit the colonial Claude Moore Colonial Farm family as they clean and salt-down their yearly catch of herring. Help scale, prepare and pack the fish into jars. Learn about the contributions the Potomac River made in colonial times. \$3 adults, \$2

children, under 3 free. www.1771.org.

"No Crime Like the Present." 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Falls Church High School, 7521 Jaguar Trail, Falls Church. A whodunit murder farce. \$5-\$8. fchsdrama.org.

Children's Show: The Smithsonian and Jammin' Java present Tim and the Space Cadets. 10:30 a.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Vance Gilbert at 7 p.m.; Aaron Crawford & The Badcards at 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

Rare and Unusual Teas. 1 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Dark tea, brick tea, red tea, blue tea and hard to find teas. \$25. Reserve at 703-759-2771.

Washington Balalaika Society. 7 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E., Vienna. Russian and Eastern European folk music with soprano Olga Orlovskaya, the WBS orchestra with conductor Svetlana Nikonova and traditional Russian instruments. \$15-\$25, age 12 and under free with adult.

www.balalaika.org or 703-644-9151.

Run for the Children 10K Race and 5K Run/Walk. 8:30 a.m. Fairfax County Courthouse, 4110 Chain Bridge Road Fairfax. ChronoTrack timing and scoring. Proceeds support CASA volunteers advocating for abused and neglected children. \$20-\$35. www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com.

Music: An Insider's Guide Lecture. 4 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Broadway Classics. Presented by A. Scott Wood, conductor of the Amadeus Orchestra. Adults. 703-356-0770.

"The Fantasticks." 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

"Deathtrap." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Comedy-thriller about a play within a play. \$14-\$16, group rates available. 866-811-4111 or www.mcleanplayers.org.

Virginia Ballet Company: Swan Lake. 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Northern Virginia Community College Ernst Cultural Center Theater, 4001 Wakefield Chapel Road, Annandale.

Tchaikovsky's four-act full-length classic ballet, with local dancers Christine Gilmore and Eleni Thomas alternating in the role of Odette/Odile. www.virginiaballetcompany.org.

Yard and Bake Sale. 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Wesley United Methodist Church Preschool, 711 Spring St. S.E., Vienna. Proceeds will be used to purchase supplies for the preschool. yardsaleforwesley@gmail.com.

Spring Heirloom Plant Sale. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean. Flowers, herbs, heirloom annuals, vegetable transplants and some herbaceous shrubs. 703-442-7547 or www.1771.org.

Folk Duo The Nields. 7:30 p.m. The Barns at Wolftrap, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Traditional folk music. \$18. www.wolftrap.org.

"My Love, My Love." 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Joyce Kilmer Middle School, 8100 Wolftrap Road, Vienna. A peasant girl uses love to bring people together. \$5. 703-846-8963.

"Mardi Gras for Missions" Auction. 7 p.m. Vale United Methodist Church, 11528 Vale road, Oakton. More than 250 items available for bid, including seating for the Macy's Thanksgiving parade, a private flight over Virginia, vacation



The Washington Balalaika Society will present a concert of Russian and Eastern European folk music on Saturday, April 28 at 7 p.m. at the Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St. N.E. in Vienna. The concert will feature soprano Olga Orlovskaya, the WBS orchestra with conductor Svetlana Nikonova and traditional Russian instruments. Tickets are \$15-\$25, age 12 and under free with adult. www.balalaika.org or 703-644-9151.

getaways, sports tickets and more. All proceeds fund local and international missions. Red beans and rice, jambalaya, King (cup) cakes, beignets and chicory coffee available. ahrjturn@verizon.net.

Cedar Lane, Vienna. Photography lecture with Victoria Restrepo. www.vps-va.org or 703-451-7298.

THURSDAY/MAY 3

"How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." 7:30 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. \$10-\$12. www.madisondrama.com.

Lupe Fiasco. 8 p.m. George Mason University Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. Tickets \$35-\$45, available at www.ticketmaster.com or 1-800-745-3000. Accessible seating is available for patrons with disabilities by calling 703-993-3035.

Company of Thieves and Chris Merritt And The Dirty Girls. 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

FRIDAY/MAY 4

Artists' Reception. 4-9 p.m. Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road N.E., Vienna. Lisa Neher, Barbara Wagner, Sarah Swart, Jackie Ellwell, Elaine Florimonte, and Debbie Glakas in "Six Artists, Once Again." teresa@tclillustration.com.

Super bob and Almost Kings. 10 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. www.jamminjava.com.

ValeArts Spring Show. 10 a.m.-9 p.m. Vale Schoolhouse, 3124 Fox Mill Road, Oakton. "Full Spectrum," featuring nine local artists. Reception, 7-9 p.m. Free admission. www.valearts.com.

"Deathtrap." 8 p.m. McLean Community Center Alden Theatre, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Comedy-thriller about a play within a play. \$14-\$16, group rates available. 866-811-4111 or www.mcleanplayers.org.

"The Fantasticks." 8 p.m. Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Musical comedy. \$14, \$12 students and seniors. 703-255-6360 or www.viennatheatrecompany.org.

"How to Succeed In Business Without Really Trying." 7:30 p.m. James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Drive, Vienna. \$10-\$12. www.madisondrama.com.

An Art Affair. 7 p.m. Madeira School, Georgetown Roan, McLean. Art auction and exhibit. Proceeds benefit Freedom in Creation, providing art therapy to children in Uganda. www.freedomincreation.org.

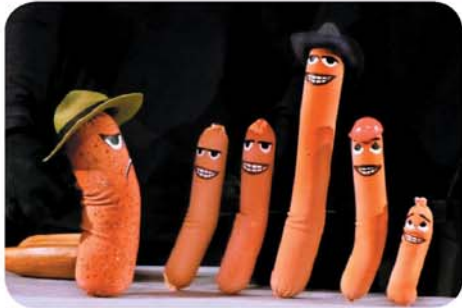
Artist's Reception. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Great Falls Artists' Atelier, 1144 Walker Road, Great Falls. Paintings and works on paper by Roberta Pruett Beasley. Free admission. 703-994-3165.



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"If I Were a Rich Man," *Fiddler on the Roof*

A catchy show tune, a mesmerizing photograph, stunning computer graphics, a stirring orchestra rendition, an eloquent pencil drawing, or the graceful movements of a modern dance performance – each has the power to move audiences and transport them to a moment in time.

This Just In:

Fifteen Fairfax County Public School students received national medals for their entries in the 2012 Scholastic Art Awards sponsored by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers.

Students in grades K through 6 receive music and art instruction taught by certified art teachers. Middle school and high school students may choose to enroll in a variety of elective course offerings in all fine arts disciplines to include dance, music, theatre, and visual art. Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) art classes are offered for students in grades 11 – 12.

Art engages students in a process that helps them develop the self-esteem, self-discipline, cooperation, and self motivation necessary for success in life.

"Art making involves critical thinking and problem solving to create a product," said Aaron Stratton, art education specialist at FCPS. "In this sense, art is an authentic approach to providing students with essential skills they will need in the 21st century to

develop creative solutions to challenges. Creativity and problem solving are essential components of innovation which will feed the economy and industries of the future."

Art All Around Us

Students can explore many forms of art including art, music, photography, computer graphics, dance, orchestra, theatre, band, and more. Beginning in elementary school, students are introduced to concepts and processes that nurture creative thinking and problem solving through art and music classes.

"As they advance to the next grade level, students are exposed to recognized works of art and become actively involved in finding connections between images and ideas," said Stratton. "Emphasis is placed on exploring themes and concepts related to family and a sense of place. By participating in real and meaningful art experiences, students increase their understanding of the value of the visual arts to themselves, their family, and to the world in which they live."



Music to Your Ears

More than 40,000 FCPS students are enrolled in the music elective programs of band, chorus, general music, orchestra, and guitar. The vocal and instrumental ensembles are seen and heard worldwide. Locally, the ensembles perform at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, George Mason Center for the Performing Arts, and the White House among others.

"Music, through its inherent ability to develop intellectual and emotional communication skills, encourages cultural awareness and enriches society," said Tamra Ferreira, fine arts coordinator at FCPS. "The FCPS music curriculum provides opportunities for students to attain the knowledge and skills necessary to become musically literate, well-rounded individuals."

Let the Shows Begin!

Springtime theatre productions bring performance spaces alive throughout Fairfax County Public Schools. The study of theatre provides students opportunities for personal and academic growth, ways to create bridges to other subject disciplines and other cultures, and the development of skills which provide lifelong enjoyment. In middle school, FCPS students discover and explore the basic elements of theatre, and augment that study with a variety of theatre presentations and special events. At the high school level students develop and expand their knowledge, skills, and resources to create a high level of accomplishment in the classroom and in performance.

Go see a show at a Fairfax County Public School. Many events are free or inexpensive. Find out more at www.fcps.edu and click on the blue Events tab.



Getting To Know Us:

Herndon High School Theatre Teacher
Zoë Dillard

Zoë Dillard grew up around theatrical personalities, so it was an obvious choice when it came time to decide on a career. Theatre, of course.

Though she initially pursued acting roles, it was a request in 1982 from Falls Church High School to help them choreograph a musical that confirmed her love of working with young people in the theatre.

Today, she serves as the theatre director and teacher at Herndon High School.

Dillard believes theatre offers students a chance to discover themselves.

"High school is all about finding your niche. Some students come into the theatre to see what's

here and what's going on. Once they are here, they realize there are many opportunities," said Dillard. "They can direct children's theatre or participate in improv. They can be part of the ensemble or put their technical skills to work building sets. They can work with 5th and 6th graders in the children's theatre. They can also use their computer graphic design skills for publicity."

"I try to offer students many different kinds of opportunities in the theatre so they will grow," she said. "It's not just about acting."

"I love their energy," she continued. "By the time they are seniors, they've changed and grown. I find that inspiring to watch."

Did You Know?

More than 33,000 secondary students enrolled in fine and performing arts courses during the 2011-12 school year:

- Visual art – 12,400
- Music – 12,600
- Theatre – 2,600
- Dance – 200

Cappies: Award-Winning Performances



For those who would rather critique than perform, the Cappies, or Critics and Awards Program, is designed for high school theatre and journalism students who are trained as theatre critics, attend shows at other schools, write reviews, and publish the reviews in local newspapers and online. The international program was launched by FCPS in 1999.

Each spring, Cappies critics nominate actors and technicians for Cappies awards, which are presented, along with awards for critics, at the annual Cappies Gala at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

"The Cappies Gala showcases the amazing artistic talents of our high school students," said Judy Bowns, co-founder of Cappies and theatre arts and dance specialist at FCPS. "Student actors, backstage technicians, singers, dancers, and musicians are honored with a Cappie by their peers who acknowledge this excellence by their votes. It's the only student theatre awards program that is student-driven with no awards decided by adults."

The gala draws more than 2,000 theatre students and their families. For more information visit www.cappies.com.



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SCHOOLS

A Gripping Play

Langley High's production of 'The Crucible.'

BY KATE CAMPBELL
JAMES MADISON HIGH SCHOOL

A maddening witch hunt, a town turned on its head, and a court fallen to corruption — and it all started with a dance; this crazed phenomenon, the hunt for witches, that swept Salem, Mass., in 1692, was depicted beautifully in Langley High School's production of "The Crucible."

"The Crucible" was written by Arthur Miller in 1952, at the height of America's era of the Red Scare and McCarthyism. The play was written as an allegory, comparing the Salem witch trials of the late 1600s to the hunt for communists in the 1950s. The story centers around John Proctor (Brian Patterson), whose wife, Elizabeth (Taylor Goodson), as well as many other women of the town of Salem, has been accused of witchcraft. He endures humiliations and frustrations, and eventually is forced to confront his own sins to reveal truth to the town and the courts.

Langley's performance of "The Crucible" displayed a spectacular level of character development and comprehension of the script. Each person onstage was well-defined and well-depicted; every actor was fully in character and remained engaged in the action of the plot during the entirety of the show. Langley was able to produce a rather refreshing rendition of "The Crucible" in that the cast maintained a steady pace that pushed the plot forward, and was able to successfully avoid any dull moments throughout the show.

The cast in its entirety was incredibly talented, and the leading roles reflected this talent. Brian Patterson, who played John Proctor, handled the difficult role spectacularly. He had a very commanding voice and presence; his demeanor, mannerisms and facial expressions were highly convincing. He portrayed a huge range of emotions brilliantly. His interactions with Taylor Goodson, who played his wife Elizabeth Proctor, were beautiful to watch; they portrayed a dynamic married couple incredibly, ranging their interactions from tense to compassionate to tender. Goodson performed with gracefulness and maturity;



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Langley High School seniors Lauren Fernandez, as Abigail Williams, argues with Brian Patterson, as John Proctor, during the school's production of "The Crucible."

her performance as an older woman was amazingly believable.

Other characters showed similar chemistry and development onstage. Abigail Williams (Lauren Fernandez) was a character that the audience loved to hate. Fernandez portrayed her character with incredible depth. She displayed a great amount of passion, without being overly dramatic, and had wonderful interactions with both Patterson as well as the ensemble of girls who she so maliciously manipulated. Other characters showed a similar level of character development and gave impressive performances, including Kaity Hinojosa as Tituba, Chris Baughman as Reverend John Hale and Caroline Callahan as Mary Warren. The ensemble was very interactive and maintained interest in every scene.

Though simple, the set and props were highly effective and allowed for more focus to be placed on the actors. Even without microphones, actors could easily be heard and understood. The scene changes were somewhat long, but the use of music during such changes was valuable. In a unique use of their stage, Langley chose to include the audience in the action to create personal setting for their production. At times, this posed an issue for blocking, as it required some actors to put their back to some part of the audience; however, the cast handled this type of staging exceptionally well.

Overall, Langley High School delivered a fantastic performance of a gripping play. The cast truly displayed an admirable amount of passion through the entire performance, which had audience members waiting at the edges of their seats.

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Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34), Virginia's First Lady Maureen McDonnell, Gov. Robert McDonnell, Kevin Fay, Dranesville District Rep. Fairfax County Park Authority Board, Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors (D-At-Large), and Juliann Clemente, hostess and President of Friends of Clemyjontri Park, welcome supporters to the Park's annual fundraiser.



PHOTO BY NIKKI CHESHIRE/THE CONNECTION

Members of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Allison Bailey, Tim Wade, Greg Rupert, and Andrew Hesse provided the entertainment for the event.

Supporting McLean's Clemyjontri Park

Concert in the Park moves indoors, to the home of Dan and Juliann Clemente, minutes away from the Park.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

On Saturday, April 21, the Friends of Clemyjontri Park Foundation in McLean held their second annual Concert in the Park – sort of. The theme of this year's black-tie fundraising event was "Under the Big Top" and was scheduled to take place under the park's newly installed 900 sq. ft. canopy, built to provide shade and available for rental for special occasions. The Fairfax Symphony Orchestra was prepared to play an appropriate selection of circus-worthy selections under the baton of FSO Music Director, Christopher Zimmerman.

The event had been re-scheduled from last September, due to inclement weather. Sadly, the weather once more refused to cooperate: Instead of gathering under the Big Top, the 100 guests, including Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell and First Lady Maureen, huddled under umbrellas as they entered the new venue – the home of Dan and Juliann Clemente, just minutes away from the Park.

Julie Clemente is the founder and president of the Friends of Clemyjontri Park, and along with her husband and numerous family members, has been instrumental in seeing the park come to life from the drawing board and the dreams of Adele Lebowitz, the widow of Mortimer Lebowitz who founded Morton's Department Stores in Washington, D.C. in 1933 and ran them for more than 60 years. In 2000, Adele Lebowitz donated the family's 18.5 acre McLean property to the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA). The name, Clemyjontri,



PHOTO BY NIKKI CHESHIRE/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County Park Authority Board Member Kevin Fay, Friends of Clemyjontri Board Member and hostess Julie Clemente, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova present an overview of the mission and successes of Clemyjontri Park

was derived from Lebowitz's four children: Carolyn, Emily, John, and Petrina.

"She had just a few conditions to go with her very generous donation," said Clemente. "The park had to be built within five years. It had to have a carousel, and that carousel and all the playground's equipment had to be accessible to all, regardless of mobility. And that is how and why Dan and I got involved." Clemente explained how they were contacted by the FCPA in the fourth year following the bequest. "Building and maintaining an all-accessible

playground costs a lot more than a regular play park," she said. "I guess they figured with 9 kids, we would be unfair users of the facility," she laughed, "so we got the call, we founded the 501(c) (3) Friends, and the money was raised. Now there is this wonderful park, the first in the Commonwealth, and one of just a handful anywhere, where everyone can play and enjoy themselves.

AN ADDED BENEFIT to the park not thought of when it was created is how it is now being used by military personnel in-

jured in combat. Clemente and Heather Cox, Executive Vice President with sponsor Capitol One Bank, both spoke about the rising use of the park by this constituency. "What a way to give back to our community," Cox said. "It is so heartwarming to see our service personnel who have already sacrificed so much, really able to play with their children, not just watch from the sidelines," added Clemente.

The Foundation continues to raise funds to add additional equipment like the wheelchair-accessible Liberty Swing installed last year and to maintain the park's facilities. "All the money raised goes directly to the park. No salaries and overhead," added Clemente.

The distinguished supporters who enjoyed the delights provided by Susan George Catering and the strains of the Fairfax Symphony Quartet, included Kevin Fay, Dranesville District Representative on the Fairfax County Park Authority Board, and the evening's Master of Ceremonies. Fay introduced Gov. and Mrs. McDonnell, Sharon Bulova, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, delegate Barbara Comstock, the Clementes and other honored attendees. "Although everyone here is a distinguished guest," noted Mr. Fay, "none of the this is possible without each and everyone of you."

Governor also addressed the gathering. "Next time Virginia has a drought, I am calling you Julie," he joked with Mrs. Clemente. Governor McDonnell then thanked all the contributing sponsors and guests for their continuing efforts and support and care for the residents of Fairfax County, and in fact, for all Virginians.

TO LEARN MORE about Clemyjontri Park, or to become a Friend of this foundation, check out their website at www.Friendsofclemy.com.

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Really?

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Having recently upgraded my cell phone, I have finally, due to its larger keys and simplified data-entry process, learned how to enter "contacts" and their phone numbers as well as select some of these key contacts for speed-dialing. This relatively basic function, which had eluded me for years, has opened up a slew of possibilities, that even I can see will lessen the burden on my brain to remain engaged. Now I won't have to think nearly so much about what I've spent 40-plus years doing: dialing a phone number from memory and/or referring to a phone/address book for that number. Thanks to my new phone, I have finally turned the corner of technology. I have passed "Go." Next we'll see where I land: "Boardwalk" or "Baltic" and see if there is a monopoly of my time as a result.

One week into my new communication life, I have entered 16 contacts, some with only one phone number, others with mobile, home and work. In addition, I have entered/selected two speed-dial numbers. Obviously, I have ample space remaining for future contacts and certainly more space for speed-dials. Going through the list of prospective "speed-dialers" and "contacts-to-be," I have now reached a point where I'm sort of looking for people/numbers to add; I suppose you could say I've reached the second tier. I've already entered/allocated from the top tier (most called, most familiar, most logical: friends, family and business). Yet spots remain, so I've begun a mental search of who/what numbers might be cell phone-worthy (meaning whose phone numbers might I want to include in my cell phone) either as a "contact" or a "speed dial" since the process of doing so is now clearly within my rather limited abilities.

Two numbers that I've thought about adding – and which relate directly to this column's title, are my car's auto repair shop and my oncologist. I have most definitely entered them as contacts. However, given the semi-precarious nature of driving a car with 137,000 miles on the odometer, perhaps it would be prudent to assign a speed dial number to my mechanic. Not that I want to be calling him that often or have the circumstances be so time-sensitive that speed – in our ability to connect with one another over the phone – is of the essence but, hoping and praying don't necessarily make it so. And let's be honest, my car is not getting any newer.

I have similar feelings toward my oncologist. I don't want to have to/need to call him that quickly, but again, let's be realistic; I'm probably not getting any healthier. As such, if I did call him, presumably it wouldn't be to inquire about the weather; more likely it would be to inquire whether a new symptom or a deterioration of some kind relating to my being a stage IV lung cancer survivor (who has now outlived his original "13-month-to-two-year prognosis" by years) is significant. But if I'm being honest about my life/health circumstances, who better to call – and be able to call quickly and efficiently, than the doctor who is primarily responsible for my well-being/treatment? I don't want to feel this way, but if there's anything that seems increasingly more relevant (as I continue to live beyond my original prognosis), it would be to plan for circumstances that are beyond my control (although I'm not saying/admitting to their inevitability), especially if there are other people (close to me) who might need some assistance attempting to control those circumstances, should they occur.

Admitting to their significance – and need however, and in turn acting/planning on their behalf, so to speak, are tough pills to swallow. Never do I want to give credence to my original diagnosis and accept my fate, sort of. Nevertheless, organizing my phone to prepare for the worst, while still hoping for the best, might be the best way – for me, to take care of myself and those closest to me as well. But thinking that technology, specifically my phone, would play a major role in that task, is a really big surprise, all things considered.

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

Saxons Perform in Prague, Vienna, Salzburg

FROM PAGE 3

great choirs from all over: Puerto Rico, Denmark, the United Kingdom and many other countries."

Andrew Jones, a member of the Madrigals, said he enjoyed seeing such a diverse group of acts.

"The cultural interaction and immersion proved to be a very eye-opening experience for me personally," he said. "The opportunity to see a variety of musical styles across a plethora of cultural backgrounds helped me to better understand and appreciate the many forms of music in our world's varied society."

On their final day in Prague, the group sang in the historic St. Nicholas Church before joining in a parade with the other groups in the competition.

"The parade was very fun because we would do the 'Hail Saxons' cheer and high-five many of the people of Prague. After the parade, we had dinner at our hotel and got ready for the awards ceremony and disco party," said Lauren Meyer, a member of the Women's Select Treble Choir. "The party was at the National House Vinohrady where we had performed the day before. They announced the winners of each category and Langley did extremely well, winning three gold awards and one silver award."

Some students called that day the highlight of the trip.

"This day was my favorite because it was loads of goodness all compiled into 24 hours," said Hannel So of the Concert Choir. "It was a very joyful and proud moment for me and I felt like a true representative of Langley High School and the USA."

ON APRIL 1, the group made their way to the Vienna - to sing at the Schlosskapelle Imperial Chapel in the Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna.

"The palace is so beautiful and, despite the cold, I think the concert sounded great. Following the concert, we quickly passed through a market on the palace grounds," said Amy Welch of the Women's Chamber Choir. "I enjoyed this because I was able to try my first Austrian pretzel and see the stilt-walking chicken lady. It was exciting to experience the Austrian culture in the market."

Julia Isacson said the trip to Vienna was a breath of fresh air.

"We came from the cold, rainy weather of Prague to the shining sun and the warm weather of Vienna. When we performed in the Schonbrunn Palace, it was a life changing experience. The acoustics in the chapel were phenomenal," she said. "The notes lingered in the air a couple of seconds and with each second, the sound was more breathtaking. I will never forget visiting the music capital of the world."

During their next day in Vienna, the students were able to visit the graveyard where



Members of the Langley Choir visit the Mirabell Gardens in Salzburg during their Spring Break trip to Europe, where they were awarded one Silver and three Gold medals in the 2012 Young Prague Festival.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Students from the Langley Choir visit Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna during their Spring Break trip to Europe.

many famous composers were interred.

"As choir nerds, we were just a little over-excited to see the musical geniuses' graves," said Ivy Kenton of the Women's Select Treble Choir. "We then went to the large chapel within the cemetery grounds. It was breathtakingly beautiful. There was so much color with a huge dome ceiling decorated with blue tiles."

Andrew Myers of the Concert Choir called the Benedictine Abbey in Melk the most beautiful building he has ever seen.

"We toured the different colored rooms and in each room were amazing artifacts made of gold and gems," he said. "In the library, there were thousands of big books. The ceiling of the library had the most beautiful painting I could ever imagine."

Jesse Levine of the Madrigals said the acoustics of the church made that performance one of their best ones.

"The reverb of the room made the parts sound especially uniform and I believe it was our best performance," Levine said.

"The church was also decorated beautifully and almost completely covered in gold."

While in Vienna, the students went on a tour inspired by "The Sound of Music."

"I loved going to the gazebo where they filmed the number 'Sixteen Going on Seventeen.' We also saw the real von Trapp house as well as the two houses they used for the movie," said Jamie Joeyen-Waldorf of the Women's Select Treble Choir. "We then toured the Salzburg Salt Mines, donning miners' smocks. The slides were very fun to go down and we traveled from Austria to Germany underground in seconds."

After their tour of the mines, the group gave their final performance at the Parish Church of Mulin in Salzburg.

"It was great seeing that we made the people we performed for happy," said Emily Nesbit of the Women's Select Treble Choir. "The last thing we did on our trip was go to a Mozart dinner. The singing was beautiful and it was a great conclusion to an altogether amazing trip."

Forestville Goes to World Finals

Forestville Elementary students win State Odyssey of the Mind Finals and head to 2012 World Finals.

BY JEAN T. JIANOS
THE CONNECTION

The Forestville Elementary Odyssey of the Mind team won at the Virginia State Finals in Newport News on Saturday, April 14, and will be competing in the 2012 World Finals being held May 23-26 on the campus of Iowa State University.

Teams from all over the United States and from approximately 25 other countries participate in Odyssey of the Mind. The program also will be hosting a Eurofest in Russia at the end of April for teams from approximately 15 countries. The decades old program describes itself as an international educational program designed to teach life-long problem solving skills, emphasizing working in a team, productive creativity and the philosophy that there are no wrong an-



PHOTOS BY VISHAL KHERA

Forestville team in costume for performance at Virginia State Finals. Standing (behind - from left): Coaches - Alex Newman, Jeff LeLoup (Forestville Teacher), Vanitha Khera (Chairperson, Forestville Odyssey

swers to the competition's open-ended problems. The program includes both long-term problem solving on which a team works in preparation for the competition, as well as short-term spontaneous problem solving at the competitions.

The Forestville team competes in Division 1, the division for grades kindergarten through fifth grade in the U.S. and in countries with similar educational structures, or for students who are younger than 12 years old from other international coun-

tries. They compete against other Division 1 teams who have chosen the same problem to solve: a musical and theatrical interpretation of the Classics problem presented by William Shakespeare in the play "Hamlet". The Forestville team is made up of two third graders, Sarina Bell and Daniel Silvestri; three fourth graders, Aditya Khera, Caroline Keys, and Sydney Pham; and two fifth graders, Gwyn Murphy and Lawrence Kang; and is led by Jeffrey LeLoup, a third grade Advanced Academics Program classroom teacher at Forestville. LeLoup is or has been the classroom teacher for all of the team members. He is assisted as coach by Alexandra Newman, a journalist and adjunct professor for journalism at American University.

Before the start of the 2011-2012 academic year, it wasn't certain that Forestville would be fielding a team at all. Vanitha Khera, the parent of fourth grader, did volunteer to act as chairperson, despite the demands of running a Federal IT consulting company that she had newly formed. She says that she could not have taken on the role of chairperson for the Forestville team without the support of her husband, Vishal Khera. Team members and other parent volunteers were recruited; and in November

SEE WORLD FINALS, PAGE 21

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Grand Day for Great Falls Little League

Great Falls Little League (GFL) celebrated its annual Opening Day on Saturday, April 14. Current youngsters within the league were on hand in full uniforms, excited about the prospects of the upcoming season and cherished days of team camaraderie ahead. Also attending the ceremonies were former GFL players who are now part of the local high school softball scene at Langley, McLean or Stone Ridge High Schools; parents, who were there to cheer on their favorite young players and teams; league administrators, coaches and volunteers; and community members who love the tradition of a grand old Opening Day.



PHOTOS/COURTESY OF KAZ NATAL

The young Great Falls Little League players surround Langley High freshman Caroline McQuaig as she sings on Opening Day.



Former Great Falls Little Leaguers, now competing as high school softball players, were attired in their bright, colorful school team uniforms as part of the Opening Day festivities.

Going to World Finals

FROM PAGE 20

2011, LeLoup and fellow coach Newman began team practices on Saturday mornings in the basement of the Khera family's home. The Regional Tournament for the northern sections of Fairfax and Prince William counties was held on March 31 at Langley High School. From there, the winning Forestville team went on to the Virginia State Finals held in Newport News this past Saturday, April 14.

Aditya Khera says, "Most of the students and coaches were first timers and really worked very hard - but had a great time putting the show together. All of the team members have been in Jeff's class and have had . . . experience with creative ways to make presentations. He has a unique way of making Social Studies fun in 3rd grade by having the entire class make a movie . . . This helped the team tremendously with stage presence, dialog writing, timing and using humor to their best advantage. And

the best part was, they had so much fun during the whole process! . . . The judges at the competitions, at both Regional and State, noted the very talented group of young artists we have in our team, who enthralled the audiences and judges with their performance."



Forestville team members at State Finals award ceremony: from left - Sarina Bell, Gwyn Murphy, Sydney Pham, and Aditya Khera with Voices Director Barry Stamey.

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Worek Wants to Continue McLean Football's Winning Ways

Former Langley, Madison head coach believes Highlanders have strong program in place following three years under Jim Patrick.

BY ALEC HAVÉUS
THE CONNECTION

This past Jan. 25, McLean High School announced that Dennis Worek would be the man to coach the Highlanders' high school football team. This after Jim Patrick stepped down as the McLean head coach to devote more time to being the school's director of student activities.

Coach Worek arrived at McLean High School after spending two seasons as the defensive coordinator at Thomas Jefferson High. But he has a lot more experience than that.



McLean High football, shown here in action versus Fairfax High last year, was 0-10 in Jim Patrick's first year as head coach in 2008. But the Highlanders, under Patrick, went on to qualify for the region playoffs the following three years. Patrick, following last year's successful season, stepped down and Dennis Worek, a long time football coach in the Northern Region, was named the Highlanders' new head coach. Patrick remains a big part of McLean High athletics as the school's director of student activities.

PHOTO BY CRAIG STERNUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Starting off as a freshman coach at West Springfield High, he became the offensive coordinator at Hayfield after just one year with the Spartans. He moved on to be the offensive line coach at Lake Braddock and after that stop became offensive coordinator at Catholic University (Wash., D.C.).

Worek next joined W.T. Woodson as a defensive assistant/special teams coach before landing his first job as a head coach at Langley High School. After spending four years at Langley he joined James Madison High School to become their new head coach.

After seven years as James Madison's head coach, Worek looked for a new challenge and found it at Chantilly High School, becoming its new assistant Principal.

He ultimately got back into football coaching, joining the Jefferson High program as its defensive coordinator and then, most recently, landing the job as McLean High School's head coach.

Coach Worek believes that former McLean head coach, Jim Patrick, did a great job before stepping down. Worek explained that he wants to continue the winning tradition.

"McLean is already competitive," said Worek. "They have been in the D-5 playoffs the last three years. There is a strong program in place."

SPORTS ROUNUPS

This week the undefeated McLean High boys' tennis team, under head coach Aavo Tomkov, had a challenging slate of competition versus Liberty District opponents. The Highlanders (8-0), earlier in the week on Tuesday, April 24, were scheduled to travel to cross-town and Liberty District rival Langley High (7-1). Two days later, on Thursday, April 26, the Highlanders were set to host district opponent Jefferson High (6-2) for a 3:30 p.m. competition. The match versus the Colonials will be the second meeting between McLean and Jefferson this spring. The Highlanders won a close match versus Jefferson in the first meeting. Last spring, Jefferson captured the Northern Region championship. On way to the crown, the Colonials defeated McLean in the region semifinals, 5-3. The Colonials then bested district opponent Langley in the region finals.

The Langley High girls' softball team hosted the Marshall Statesman last Friday, April 20, winning 7-6. Emily Templin pitched all seven innings for the Saxons, holding the Statesman to two runs and four hits while striking out eight and walking one over the

first six innings.

A triple by Ashley Panetta in the first inning gave Langley a 1-0 lead. Marshall tied it up in the top of the fourth and Langley retaliated in its half, swinging hard, multiple hits by Taylor Chason, Kaitryn Evans, Maggie Natal, Panetta, and Templin, as well as a home run by Gabi Pijaca.

Marshall squeaked out an additional run in the top of the fifth. As Langley approached the seventh inning, it looked as if the Saxons had the game well in control, but the Statesman rallied behind six hits to get within 7-6. With the bases loaded and two outs, Templin struck out the last batter (her ninth strikeout of the game) to secure the win for the Saxons.

Earlier last week, Langley, playing at home, lost 9-5 to rival McLean. Julia Weeks, Evans, and Chason each hit home runs for the Saxons.

This week's Northern Region Top 10 Baseball Coach's Poll is as follows: Lake Braddock of the Patriot District remains at the No. 1 position, with a trio of Concorde District clubs - No. 2 Centerville, No. 3 Chantilly, and the No. 4 Herndon Hornets - following. The five through seven slots are filled by teams from the Liberty District



Some of the Langley women crew members displaying one of the boats that was re-laced in a show of support for Coach Hess.

Langley Crew Wins Races, Helps Community

The Langley crew team has three regattas under their belt with some great successes: Several boats have come in first, second or third in their heats. The freshmen and novice boats have produced some great times - building future successes for the team. Out of 23 events, well over half of the boats have placed in the top three positions—including five first places finishes. Langley Crew has raised several hundred dollars for Share of McLean during their annual "Ergathon" — an indoor rowing competition held every year in February against West Springfield HS.

And Langley Crew has joined with the larger

Langley community in supporting Coach Hess and his family. Coach Hess's daughter was recently diagnosed with cancer and the Langley community has rallied to support the Hess family. There have been various fundraisers, including the students selling bright neon green shoelaces to show their support. If you are unfamiliar with rowing you might not know that the rowers actually lace their feet into special shoes built into the boats called foot stretchers. The Langley rowers re-laced the stretchers this spring with the green neon laces as a show of support.

— JAN ROSSBERG

with the McLean Highlanders at No. 5, the Madison Warhawks No. 6, and the Stone Bridge Bulldogs No. 7. The next two teams in the poll are defending Northern Re-

gion champion South County (Patriot District) at No. 8 and Oakton (Concorde District) at No. 9. Two teams, Langley High (Liberty District) and Westfield (Concorde)

are tied for the No. 10 position. Other teams receiving votes were: W.T. Woodson, West Springfield, Robinson, and Marshall.

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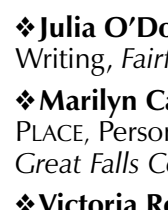
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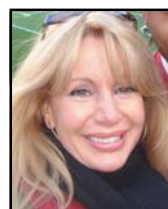
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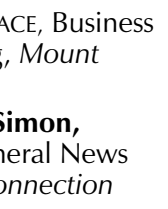
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Ken Moore



Jeanne Theismann



Marilyn Campbell

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❖ **Carole Dell**, SECOND PLACE, Local Column, *Potomac Almanac*

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❖ **Michael Lee Pope**, THIRD PLACE, In-Depth or Investigative Writing, *Alexandria Gazette Packet*

❖ **Michael Lee Pope**, THIRD PLACE, In-Depth or Investigative Reporting, *Mount Vernon Gazette*

❖ **Mary Kimm**, THIRD PLACE, Editorial Writing, *Alexandria Gazette Packet*

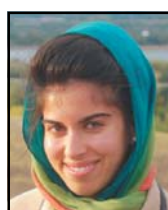
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Amna Rehmatulla

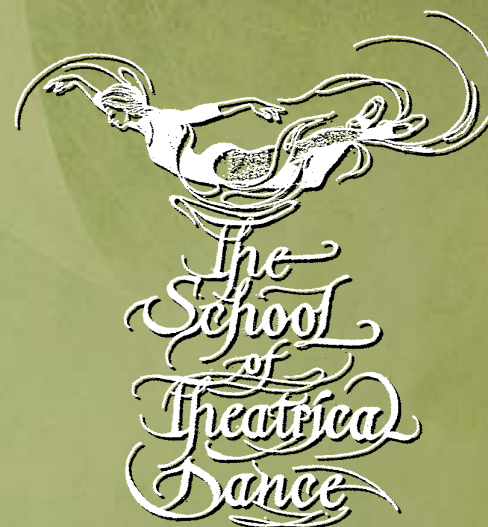
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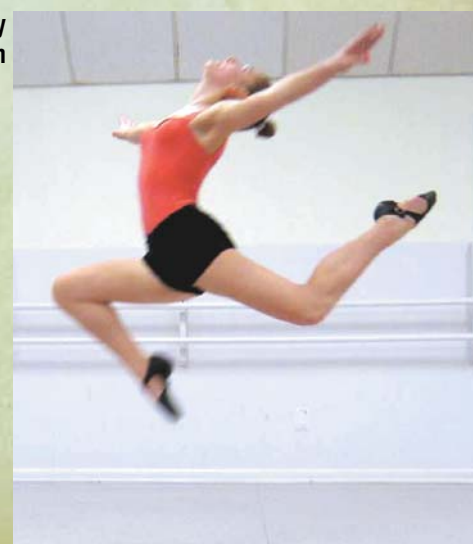


Lauren
Megrue



Lauren Megrue, Emma Volanth,
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