



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW

From left: Leidy Bernal, Westfield High; Camille May, Oakton; Kristopher Perry, Westfield; Chaz Coffin, Westfield; and William Morgan-Palmer, Chantilly, received Cameron Guy Dudley Book Scholarships.

Saluting Academic Achievement

CPMSAC celebrates
28 years of excellence.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Filing into Chantilly High's gym, Saturday afternoon, the students made their way to their seats while Kool & the Gang's classic anthem of rejoicing, "Celebration," played in the background. They came for the Chantilly Pyramid Minority Student Achievement Committee's (CPMSAC) 27th annual awards ceremony.

Middle- and high-school students were honored June 2 for their academic achievement. Elementary-school students received their awards on Sunday, June 3, at Willow Springs Elementary. And enjoying both ceremonies were parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, school-system officials and Fairfax County School Board members.

"We're excited to be here 28 years for the community," said CPMSAC board member and master of ceremonies Chuck Coffin on Saturday. "It takes an awful lot of volunteer spirit and hard work to put on a program like this. And students, we appreciate what you've done this past year and we're happy to be celebrating your achievements."

Throughout the year, CPMSAC offers tutoring and enrichment programs to help close the educational gap between high-achieving students and



From left: Westfield High's Valeria Sierraha and Oakton High's Ashleigh Wilson received the Shirley O. Nelson Memorial Scholarships.

those needing additional help. The organization's mission is "partnering with schools to increase parental involvement and student participation to enhance the social and emotional growth and academic achievement of minority students."

The group received several congratulatory letters, including ones from Supervisor Michael R. Frey (R-Sully) and Sully District School Board representative Kathy Smith. In his message to the students, Frey wrote, "Your dedication, perseverance and hard work toward maintaining excellence in

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Three Decades Behind Bars

Man sentenced in killing
of Centreville handyman.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

When criminals targeted the home of a wealthy Centreville man, two years ago, their motive was money — they planned to rob him and leave. Murder wasn't on the horizon.

But when the homeowner's handyman, Jose Cardona, tried to stop them, he paid with his life. He was shot and killed; and last Friday in federal court, one of the intruders, Reynard Prather, was sentenced to 30 years in prison in connection with Cardona's death.

"The tragedy of this crime can't be overstated," said U.S. District Court Judge Anthony J. Trenga. "The victim was born in Guatemala and came into the United

States legally. He'd worked two years for the homeowner, was married and sent money home to his family in Guatemala. And while one can't say Mr. Prather intended the death of Mr. Cardona, it was the predictable outcome of his actions."

Cardona, 39, was a father of two who lived in Manassas Park and worked as a handyman and gardener. His employer owned several check-cashing stores in Northern Virginia.

According to the statement of facts filed Feb. 22 with Prather's plea agreement, Prather conspired with two unnamed people to rob the homeowner at gunpoint at his 9,000-square-foot mansion on Compton Road, where they believed cash from the stores was

SEE MAN SENTENCED, PAGE 4

Safety Check: 'They're Saving Lives Today'

Officers check commercial
trucks for violations.

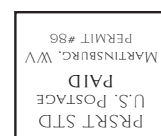
BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

At first glance, it looked like a big-rig parade, with large commercial trucks lined up one behind the other in a parking lot off Route 28 in

Chantilly. But they were there for safety inspections.

For four hours last Thursday, May 31, from 7 a.m.-1 p.m., Motor Carrier Safety (MCS) Officers from jurisdictions across Northern

SEE SAVING LIVES, PAGE 3



FOCUS



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NEWS

Chantilly event raises money for American Cancer Society.

Readying for Relay for Life

BY BONNIE HOBBS
CENTRE VIEW

Bill Hamm was 10,500 feet up, elk hunting in the Colorado Rocky Mountains in 2006, when he discovered a lump on his throat. He'd thought he was healthy; but the lump was a swollen lymph node and, six months later, he was diagnosed with stage IV throat cancer.

"I hadn't smoked in 16 years when this happened, but the damage was done," he said. "I went through

surgery, chemo and radiation and was a pretty sick puppy for awhile."

The good news is that Hamm, of Centreville's Green Trails community, survived. And this Saturday, June 9, at noon, he'll be the keynote speaker at the opening ceremonies of the Relay for Life at the nZone, 14550 Lee Road in Chantilly.

The event raises money for the American Cancer Society (ACS) for research, plus patient services and programs. Chantilly's relay currently has 221 par

SEE RELAY, PAGE 11

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ROUNDUPS

Walney Road Bridge Meeting

VDOT plans to replace the Walney Road Bridge over Flatlick Branch, and it's holding an informational meeting about the project. It's set for Thursday, June 7, from 5-8 p.m. – with a brief presentation at 6 p.m. – at the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. VDOT staff will be there to answer questions.

Review project information at www.virginiadot.org, at the meeting or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-259-1940, 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available.

Written comments may be submitted by June 17 to Nicholas Roper, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or e-mailed to meeting_comments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Reference "Walney Road Bridge" in the subject line.

Encore Presents 'Dancin' Fool'

Encore Theatrical Art Project will perform its spring show, "Dancin' Fool," this Saturday, June 9, at 4 and 8 p.m.; and Sunday, June 10, at 1 and 4 p.m. Singing and dancing will be students from high schools including Centreville, Chantilly and Westfield. They'll entertain in the Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center on NOVA's Annandale Campus, 8333 Little River Turnpike. Tickets are \$20-\$22 at www.encore-tap.org.

Women's Self-Defense Course

A free, two-day, self-defense course for women of all ages will be held Tuesday, June 12, and Thursday, June 14, from 6-9 p.m., at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy, 14601 Lee Road in Chantilly. It's sponsored by the Fairfax County Police Department, the Fairfax Police Law Enforcement Foundation and C & J Security Corp.

This comprehensive safety course is taught by trained experts with years of experience and will help prepare women to fend off attackers. They'll learn risk awareness and reduction, crime-prevention strategies and defensive concepts, while receiving hands-on training in defensive tactics.

Women will test their newly-learned skills in realistic, controlled environments and will experience what it's like to be suddenly grabbed in a stairwell, a parking lot or an elevator. The course is open to women 13 years and older; however mothers (or female guardians) must attend with their teens. Men are not allowed to attend. For more information or to register, e-mail wsd@fairfaxfoundation.org or call 703-246-7806. Seating is limited.

Park Authority to Meet

The Fairfax County Park Authority will meet Wednesday, June 13, at 7:30 p.m., in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 900 in Fairfax. Call Judy Pedersen at 703-324-8662.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, June 14 and 28, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

However, because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Meals on Wheels Volunteers

Fairfax County needs Meals on Wheels drivers in Chantilly and group Meals on Wheels coordinators in both Chantilly and Fairfax. Contact Volunteer Solutions at 703-324-5406, TTY 711,

SEE ROUNDUPS, PAGE 5

NEWS



Officer Ben Maplethorpe (left) and his colleague Officer Mik Laird of the Arlington Police Department work with Virginia State Trooper John Wolford at a joint vehicle inspection effort at E. C. Lawrence Park involving nine local law enforcement agencies on May 31. During the effort, 110 trucks were inspected, 288 infractions were found putting 40 out of service.

'They're Saving Lives Today'

FROM PAGE 1

Virginia joined Fairfax County's MCS officers to inspect potentially unsafe vehicles. And if a violation was serious enough, that truck was taken off the road until it was repaired.

"We're checking the brakes and weight," said Lt. Justin Palenscar, who supervises Fairfax County's MCS unit. "For example, we put a trash truck out of service because it was overweight on one of its axles. We also make sure drivers have the proper license to transport certain things like nitrogen or propane. And if explosives come through Fairfax County, they need to notify the fire department ahead of time."

"One driver today had alcohol on his breath," added police spokeswoman Lucy Caldwell. "And that's not allowed with any commercial vehicle."

Besides Fairfax County, participating in the mass inspection were officers from the Virginia State Police, City of Fairfax, Arlington, Prince William and Loudoun counties, the Town of Herndon, Fort Belvoir, and the Department of Motor Vehicles. They pulled over trucks traveling mainly on Routes 28 and 50 and had them divert to E.C. Lawrence Park so they could be examined.

Last year, officers removed from the road one-third of the trucks they inspected in a similar safety check. They inspected 61 trucks and placed 22 out of service for serious violations involving brakes, licensing, lighting, steering components and other infractions.

This time, by 10:45 a.m., they'd inspected 60 trucks and taken 19 of them out of service. By noon, those numbers had jumped to 80 trucks inspected and 27 removed from the road. And when they'd finished, they'd checked 110 trucks and found 288 infractions — 107 qualifying as out-of-service violations. As a result, they placed 40 trucks out of service.

"I took a 40,000-pound dump truck out of service because the driver didn't even have a commercial driver's license," said Fairfax County MPO Michael Gibbons. "If he's out there driving, untrained, it's kind of scary."



PFC David Pierce, an Officer with the Fairfax County Police Motor Carrier Safety Unit speaks with a truck driver about air loss in his brake chamber during a massive joint truck inspection.

Palenscar said the inspection was "also a way of telling people we're concerned about safety. And then maybe drivers will not get behind the wheel of a truck that shouldn't be operated, hasn't been maintained or isn't in working order."

Also on the scene were members of the Fairfax County Fire Marshal's Office doing hazmat checks. "If we got trucks carrying oxygen cylinders, gasoline or home heating oil, we'd still check for faulty brakes and broken springs on the frame," said Lt. Jevon Wilson, assistant fire marshal. "But we'd also check for the proper paperwork, making sure they're certified to transport it, that it's properly secured and that

SEE OFFICERS CHECK, PAGE 4

Officers Check Commercial Trucks for Violations

FROM PAGE 1

it's what the paperwork says it is."

PFC D.L. Pierce, with Fairfax County's Motor Squad, was inspecting a seven-axle dump truck carrying 50,000 pounds of stone. "It's not overweight, but we found one tire below pressure," he said. "If it's below 50 percent of its pressure rating, it's taken out of service. This one was at 40 PSI [pounds per square inch] and should be at 120 PSI. That's only a third below, so the driver's filling it up with air to see if it holds or if he has a leak."

Earlier that day, Pierce had taken a truck hauling a heavy wood-chipper off the road. "The chipper wasn't properly connected to the truck," he said. "So if it had become detached, it would have run off the road and killed people — literally."

As the day progressed and word of the inspection spread from one trucker to another, some drivers traveling along I-66 pulled over to the shoulder and stopped, rather than risk a surprise inspection

their vehicles might not pass. Others, though, were happy to cooperate and saw the value in the undertaking.

Driving the dump truck with the low tire pressure was Luis Lopez, who worked for his father's company, Lopez S. Trucking Inc. of Sterling. He was hauling gravel from Lopez Stone on Route 29 in Fairfax to the Dulles Toll Road for the road construction there.

He said he didn't mind waiting while his vehicle was inspected. "It's good that they do it because they keep the trucks in good condition," said Lopez. "It's so we won't have an accident."

Driver Ben Ortega of the Manassas-based Brothers Paving Co. also saw the need for the inspection. He was driving a roll-off truck carrying a bobcat from Chantilly to a construction site in Manassas when the officers flagged him down.

"They looked at the brakes, steering wheel and all the lights — turn, brake and tail lights," said Ortega. "The brakes need to be adjusted, but they're not bad enough to have the truck taken out



MCS officers check that nothing's caught underneath the wheels of this truck belonging to J.C.V. Enterprises of Springfield. The week of June 4 is national Commercial Vehicle Safety Week.

of service. I'll have to have them adjusted, though. They didn't give me a ticket, just a warning."

He was glad to have the vehicle inspected because "many times you don't know what's happened underneath the truck with the

brakes. And if it wasn't checked, something could happen on the road and it could be dangerous."

Deputy Craig Foster with the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office said the truck inspections save lives. "We recently had a trailer that

got away from a truck, crossed over the Route 50 median in Chantilly/South Riding and hit a car head-on. A lady was driving and, the last I heard, she had brain damage."

"The driver's break-away protection had failed," continued Foster. "The coupling wasn't hooked up correctly, and I ask myself what would have happened if we'd been able to get to that truck before then and inspect it so he could have fixed it."

Det. C.C. Snyder with Fairfax County's Crash Reconstruction Unit said her department works hand-in-hand with MCS. "With serious crashes, we rely on these guys," she said. "So what they're doing today will make it safer. With all the road construction in the area, there are so many trucks on the road here; and chances are, if they're involved in a crash, it'll be really serious."

Snyder said the Crash Reconstruction Unit is called out on the fatal and major-injury crashes. "Hopefully, these inspections will prevent these trucks from being in the wrecks we'll have to come out and investigate," she said. "They're saving lives today, I'm convinced."

Man Sentenced in Killing of Handyman

FROM PAGE 1

kept. For his participation, Prather, 23, of Oxon Hill, Md., was to have received \$50,000 from the heist.

But on the morning of May 17, 2010, things went very wrong.

Prather and a co-conspirator drove from Prince George's County, Md., to a shopping center in Virginia. During the drive, authorities say, that person enlisted Prather's help in the plan to rob the homeowner.

He also "gave Prather a duffel bag containing a loaded, semiautomatic pistol," the document states. "Prather knew that [co-conspirator] also was armed with a semiautomatic pistol." A third co-conspirator then picked them both up at the shopping center and dropped them off in the vicinity of their target's residence.

The two, armed men then walked to the Centreville house and saw the homeowner leave. He left one of the garage doors open, so the intruders entered the garage to wait for him to return. According to the court document, the co-conspirator allegedly told Prather "his role in the robbery was to restrain [the homeowner's] sons upstairs in the residence, and he would take care of [the homeowner] upon his return."

But around 10 a.m., before the homeowner got back, the intruders were

discovered by Cardona and one of the sons.

"The four paired off in a struggle: Prather and the son and [the other man] and Cardona," the document states. "While so involved, Prather heard a shot fired and saw Cardona lying dead on the driveway in front of the garage." Within minutes, he and the other man fled on foot through a wooded area next to the home.

According to the document, an autopsy on Cardona's body revealed that a 9-mm bullet "passed through his left hand and entered through his left eye into his brain. A magazine containing seven live rounds of .45-caliber ammunition was found on the driveway near where Cardona was shot."

In an Oct. 18, 2011 affidavit, Fairfax County police homicide Det. Stephen Needels, wrote that, according to the homeowner's son, "At one point, Cardona gained possession of the handgun carried by the man he was struggling with. Moments later, however, he was fatally shot by one of the two intruders."

Prather was arrested Oct. 25, 2011 and has been in custody since then. On Feb. 22, in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, he pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit robbery and using a firearm in the commission of that crime.

He returned last Friday, June 1, for sentencing, while his friends and rela-

tives watched tearfully. Earlier, they had submitted letters on his behalf to Judge Trenga. Prather — who's married and has a 3-year-old child — had done likewise, so he didn't speak in court before learning his punishment.

Trenga reiterated the facts of the case and noted Prather's past convictions. "The defendant has a significant, criminal history," said the judge. "In 2009, he was convicted of carrying a handgun and served nine months in prison. He was on probation from that offense when he committed this one."

Trenga then sentenced Prather to 20 years in prison for the robbery offense. The firearm charge carries a mandatory minimum penalty of 10 years behind bars, and the judge imposed that sentence, as well, running both consecutively, for a total of 30 years. He also placed Prather on three years supervised release after his time has been served.

Meanwhile, police would still like to arrest the other suspects involved in this case. They believe the men fled the murder scene in a white pickup truck, but none of their other leads have panned out.

So they're asking anyone with any information to contact Crime solvers at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org, text "TIP187" plus a message to CRIMES/274637 or call police at 703-691-2131.

ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 3

VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm.

WFCM Seeks Food, Volunteers

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' (WFCM) food pantry urgently needs donations of oil (48 oz. or smaller); flour (2-5 lb. bag); sugar (2-5 lb. bag); rice (2 lb. bags); canned meats; salad dressing, jelly; jam; spaghetti sauce, Ramen Noodles, canned fruit; canned beets, spinach, greens, and mixed vegetables; canned garbanzo, lima, butter and northern beans; pancake mix and syrup; hot cereal and coffee. Also needed are laundry detergent, toothpaste, shampoo, toilet paper and baby wipes. WFCM clients are also in great need of gasoline cards.

Bring all items to WFCM's food pantry at 13981 Metrotech Drive (near Backyard Grill and Bar) in Chantilly. Volunteers are also needed:

Thrift store: Volunteers needed Mondays and Fridays, for two or three hours between 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Volunteers needed Tuesdays and Thursdays, for two or three hours between 1-6 p.m., as well as Saturdays, from 2-5 p.m. For more information, contact Volunteer Manager Annette Bosley at 703-988-9656.

Food pantry: Volunteers are needed Mondays and Wednesdays, from 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Furniture ministry: One person is needed to help move furniture that will be given to clients in need.

PEOPLE

Chorney Graduates from Air Force Academy

On May 23, Christopher Chorney graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo. He received his commission as second lieutenant in the United States Air Force and earned a bachelor of science degree in computer engineering. He will begin pilot training later this summer.



Cadet Christopher Chorney

During his four-year military training and academic program, he completed freefall parachute training, soaring (glider) training, earned the German Armed Forces Gold Proficiency Badge and passed the NCEES Fundamentals of Engineering exam in electrical engineering.

While at USAFA, Chorney completed two operational summer tours. His first was in Alaska

where he observed Red Flag flying exercises and operations in the Alaskan frontier and deployed in his second tour to Southwest Asia where he experienced air base operations in support of the war in Afghanistan. He also participated in an exchange program to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point for an academic semester and in a foreign language immersion program to Hamburg, Germany.

Chorney participated in the Cycling Team and the Marathon Club. With the Marathon Club he competed in several 26.2-mile marathons and half marathons. This past year, he finished 77th in the US Marine Corps Marathon with a 6:27 minute mile pace



President Obama congratulates Christopher Chorney at the May 23 Graduation ceremony at the USAF Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

with a total time of 2:48:53. The USAFA Team finished 2nd Place Overall for the Military division (beating all other service academies amongst other teams).

Chorney is a 2008 graduate from Centreville High School and an Eagle Scout from Troop 717, St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church. He is the son of Lt. Col. Michael (USAF, Ret.) and Sandy Chorney.

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OPINION

Primary Voting

Statewide primary on
Tuesday, June 12.

On Tuesday, June 12, Virginia will hold a statewide Republican primary for U.S. Senate, plus numerous more local primaries for U.S. House of Representatives and localities.

In the City of Alexandria, there is a critical and hotly contested contest for City Council, which has been chronicled by Alexandria Gazette Packet reporter Mike Pope. You can read the coverage online here: <http://www.alexandriagazette.com/news/Election/Alexandria>

Alexandria, Arlington and parts of Fairfax County are affected by the Democratic primary for the 8th district of U.S. House of Representatives, with U.S. Rep. Jim Moran facing former Navy pilot Bruce Shuttlesworth. The winner will face Republican Patrick Murray of Arlington in November.

Reston and some other parts of Fairfax County, represented by Moran for the past 10 years, will now be in District 11; incumbent Gerry Connolly will face the winner of next week's Republican primary in November. Voters in the Republican primary in district 11 will choose between Ken Vaughn and Chris Perkins.

There is no primary for either party in the 10th Congressional District. U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R) will face Democrat Kristin Cabral in November.

Mount Vernon, Lorton and Mason Neck voters who were previously in District 11 (Connolly) are now in District 8 (Moran).

For maps that show the old and new congressional district boundaries:

District 8: <http://www.vpap.org/elections/district/31>
District 11: <http://www.vpap.org/elections/district/43>
District 10: <http://www.vpap.org/elections/district/39>

In the U.S. Senate Republican Primary, George Allen faces Bob Marshall, Jaime Radtke and E.W. Jackson. The winner will face Democrat Tim Kaine in November.

Connection coverage of the Senate and Congressional races so far is available at <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/Election/National/>

Upcoming Elections and Voter Information

- ❖ Virginia State Board of Elections website at www.sbe.virginia.gov/
- ❖ Fairfax County Office of Elections website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections or contact the Office of Elections at 703-222-0776, TTY 711.
- ❖ Arlington County Office of Voter Registration, 2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 320, Arlington, 703.228.3456, TTY 703.228.4611. <http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/voterregistration/voterregistrationmain.aspx>
- ❖ Alexandria Board of Elections, 132 North Royal Street, Alexandria; 703.746.4050. <http://alexandriava.gov/Elections>.

EDITORIAL

Saluting Students' Academic Achievement

FROM PAGE 1

all areas of academics is a wonderful accomplishment and serves as a role model for all students. Each of you should be very proud of your achievements."

Smith told the students, "You deserve special recognition because you made the choice to do what it takes to be successful at school. At a time when educa-



Celeste Peterson

tors and policy makers across the country are discussing and debating how to close the achievement gap, you are already doing it."

At Saturday's ceremony, Chantilly High Assistant Principal Shawn Frank encouraged the students to become life-

long learners and said he's working on his own doctorate at Virginia Tech. "Have a passion to al-

ways push yourselves to do better," he told them. "You've already taken the first step by being here today."

Also speaking was FCPS Deputy Superintendent Richard Moniuszko. "I commend you for all your hard work," he said. "This program shows that you students are supported — and no one gets through school, or life, without the support of others. Congratulations on your work thus far and best wishes for your future success."

"What a gem CPMSAC is," said At-Large School Board member Ted Velkoff. "Students, you're all here because you value the importance of academic achievement. Your moms and dads are so proud

of you and love you very much; and after this program, you should tell them you love them, too. We know what a journey it's been for you to get here and, on behalf of the Fairfax County School Board, I thank all the parents and congratulate all the students."

Coffin told parents to always be the advocate for their children in school. "It does make a difference, and then the schools and teachers will know how much you care about your child's education," he said. "And it's so important that you provide a home environment that's conducive to academic learning and success."

SEE ACHIEVEMENT, PAGE 13

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/CENTRE VIEW



After receiving her award, Chantilly High senior Natalia Rodriguez is escorted from the stage by CPMSAC co-founder Johnny Nelson.



CPMSAC's Chuck Coffin (at podium) calls another student to the stage while the first award-recipients line up in front.

CENTREVIEW

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ENTERTAINMENT

To have community events listed in Centre View, e-mail to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos welcome. Deadline is Thursday at 2 p.m.

JUNE 8 TO JUNE 10

Celebrate Fairfax! Festival. At the grounds of the Fairfax County Government Center. Featuring 25 acres of concerts, family programs, science and green living, thrilling carnival rides and nightly fireworks. Among the festival's highlights are the more than 90 concerts and performances on eight stages, with a line-up of national, regional and local artists. Highlights are Pat Benatar and Neil Giraldo, the Legwarmers and Legends of Hip-Hop. Visit www.celebratefairfax.com.

FRIDAY/JUNE 8

Swing Dancing. 9 p.m. to midnight. Admission is \$15. With the band, Hang-Over Royale. Drop-in beginner swing lesson from 8:30 to 9 p.m.; dancing from 9 p.m. to midnight. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon.

The Movie, "Up." 7:30 p.m. Will be showing as part of "Screen on the Green." Tickets are \$3. At Chantilly High School, Stringfellow Road,

Chantilly.

SATURDAY/JUNE 9

Car Show. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Proceeds benefit the Friends of the Wounded Veterans Foundation. Featuring street rods, street machines, exotics, customs, antiques, muscle cars, classics, motorcycles, etc. First 100 cars and motorcycles receive an event plaque. Cost of \$20 registration includes an event T-shirt or hat. At Velocity Five Sports Restaurant, 5825 Trinity Pkwy., Centreville. Visit www.fotwv.org. For show and vendor information, contact help@email.com

SUNDAY/JUNE 10

N Gauge Display. 1 to 4 p.m. The Northern Virginia NTRACK members will have a display and N gauge trains running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum. At 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Cost is \$3 for adults; \$1 for children. Visit www.fairfax-station.org; phone 703-425-9225.

THURSDAY/JUNE 14

Erin Peterson Golf Tournament. 7 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. This event will help provide grants and scholarships to deserving students via the Erin

Peterson Fund. At Westfields Golf Club, 13940 Balmoral Greens Ave., Clifton. Visit www.erinpeterfund.org or contact Celeste Peterson at 703-830-3795.

Richmond Update. 6:30 p.m. Del. Jim LeMunyon will visit LRWC as a guest speaker to share information regarding events and updates on legislation in Richmond. At the IHOP — International House of Pancakes in Centreville. Arrive early in order to get in line to pay for food. Call 703-378-4190.

Fun with Dad. Begin Father's Day weekend with a hike, campfire and s'mores at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park. Learn about some of nature's best fathers during a campfire program from 7-8 p.m. The cost is \$5 per person. Register online or call 703-222-4664. Call 703-631-0013.

FRIDAY/JUNE 15

Daryl Davis Band. At the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. 8:30-9 p.m. drop-in beginner swing lesson; 9 p.m.-midnight dance. \$15.

JUNE 16 AND JUNE 17

N Gauge Trains. The Northern Virginia NTRAK group will have a display and N gauge trains running at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum

for a special two-day Father's Day weekend show on Saturday, June 16 from 12-5 p.m. and on Sunday, June 17 from 1-4 p.m. The Museum is located at 11200 Fairfax Station Road in Fairfax Station. Cost is \$3 for adults, \$1 for children. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or 703-425-9225.

Renew You Spa and Beauty Expo. Tickets \$20. Will offer everything from anti-aging products and health treatment options to day spa services, fitness products, hair care, weight loss options. Will feature "mini-treatments" of 10- to 15-minute sessions that include facials, manicures, pedicures, massages, and skin treatments for as low as \$10/treatment. At the Dulles Expo Center in Chantilly. Visit www.renewyouexpo.com.

SUNDAY/JUNE 17

Celebrate Father's Day at Sully Historic Site's Annual Antique Car Show featuring more than 400 antique and classic vehicles from 10a.m. to 3:30 p.m. A tour of the first floor of the 1794 house is included in the fee: \$10/adult, \$8/senior, and \$6/child. Call 703-437-1794.

JUNE 18 TO AUG. 31

MOBC Summer Camp. For ages 3 to

rising 9th graders. Teen Camp for rising 10th graders to rising 12th graders. At Mount Olive Baptist Church, 6600 Old Centreville Road, Centreville.

SATURDAY/JUNE 23

Pink Day. Meadows Farms will be hosting a fundraiser for the Breast Cancer Research foundation at all locations. They will be selling "Invincible Spirit" Hydrangeas, chosen to represent the cause by Proven Winners, which is donating \$1 for each of the signature hydrangeas sold. Visit www.meadowsfarms.com.

SATURDAY/JULY 7

The Great Zucchini. 10 a.m. Free. Children's show at E.C. Lawrence Park Amphitheater, Centreville.

SATURDAY/JULY 14

Obon Festival. 5:30 p.m. Ekoji Buddhist Temple is celebrating its 31st Obon Festival with a full-evening of activities including traditional Japanese folk dancing, a memorial candle ceremony, children's games and a taiko performance by Nen Daiko. On Sunday, July 15, a joint service will be held at 11 a.m. and will be

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Youth Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM
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Holy Communion (Third Sunday) 10:00 AM
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WELLBEING



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/CENTRE VIEW

Reiki Masters Christine Mosley, of Springfield, and Marion Werner, of Chevy Chase, perform a Reiki treatment.

The Power of Touch

Reiki masters credit the practice with promoting healing.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
CENTRE VIEW

"May I touch you?" asks Marion Werner, a willowy woman with shoulder-length blonde hair. Her hands descend lightly on her patient's chest.

This is Reiki, a decades-old, Japanese mind-body technique used for relaxation and stress relief that is gaining acceptance in the United States. During a session, a client lies on a massage table, fully clothed. Practitioners rest their hands on or just above the client's body, palms down. They use a set of eight to 12 hand positions, each held for about two to five minutes.

While some healthcare professionals dismiss the practice as quackery, major medical centers including those at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and George Washington Hospital's Center for Integrative Medicine now offer it to patients, and medical schools have integrated mind-body courses into their curriculum.

Reiki is credited with promoting healing and addressing a host of ailments from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression and anxiety to infertili-

ty, heart disease and the side effects of cancer treatment.

"A relaxed body and mind gives us a foundation for healing," said Springfield, resident Christine Mosley, a Reiki master who also practices in Fairfax Station.

However, practitioners don't claim to be healers. "It's like when you get a cut, the body responds and heals the cut. You might get stitches to help the healing, but your body is actually doing the healing," said Werner, a Reiki master in Chevy Chase. "It is a capacity that we're all born with but, stress can make it difficult for the natural healing process to work. Reiki treatment encourages relaxation and balance in the system."

SOME PRACTITIONERS believe that Reiki is a mechanism for tapping into a universal energy that supports the body's natural ability to heal itself, but this notion is not commonly accepted among physicians in the United States.

"In China and Japan they know it works and they don't care how it works," said Dr. David Rosenthal, medical director of the Leonard P. Zakim Center for Integrative Therapies at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston and a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. "In this country we have to show not only that it works, but how it works. ... I think the evidence is getting there, but I don't think it is totally there yet."

Reiki can be given to those who are dying and to

"A relaxed body and mind gives us a foundation for healing."
— Christine Mosley

SEE REIKI MASTERS, PAGE 9

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WELLBEING

Reiki Masters Emphasize Healing

FROM PAGE 8

their families. "It can help impart a sense of peace and acceptance," said Naning Sugeng, a practitioner in Potomac, who, along with Werner and Mosley, offers free services to cancer patients and wounded veterans.

Comfort for America's Uniformed Services (CAUSE), a non-profit organization that offers respite to wounded members of the military, provides free Reiki treatments to battle-weary soldiers and their family members and caretakers. "It is so gentle that it can be used on shrapnel wounds and recent amputations to improve wound healing and relieve phantom pain," said Mosley who is also the coordinator for CAUSE's Reiki program at Fort Belvoir in Virginia.

PRIVATE SESSIONS with a Reiki master can cost between \$75 and \$100 an hour. The profession is not regulated, but traditional Reiki training and certification has three levels of expertise. While classes for the first two levels can be completed in two-day classes, preparation for the third, or master, level can take years.

Locally, Reiki treatments are offered at the Pain and Palliative Care Service at the NIH Clinical Center in Bethesda, Inova Loudoun Hospital's Life with Cancer program and the Center for Integrative Medicine at George Washington University Hospital in Washington, D.C.

Still, doctors say more large-scale studies are needed before Reiki becomes a mainstream practice. "Not only is there not enough research, but a lot of the Reiki research has been criticized for not being rigorous enough compared to the standards that are in place to study other medical interventions," said Dr. John Pan, founder of the Center for Integrative Medicine at the George Washington University Medical Center in Washington and a faculty member at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Researchers at George Mason University conducted a study of patients in Inova's Life with Cancer program to determine whether yoga, Reiki, or meditation would help alleviate symptoms of chemotherapy-induced peripheral neuropathy (CIPN).

"At the conclusion of the study, each group, with the exception of the control group, showed [improvement], but the results were not statistically significant," said Paul G. Clark, PhD, LCSW, assistant professor of social work. "What we did learn was that these therapies are worth studying on a larger scale."

In 2011, Rosenthal co-authored a study of 18 men with prostate cancer and found that Reiki helped ease their anxiety. "It does relax people, it does decrease

stress acutely," he said, adding that Reiki can be an alternative for patients who have an aversion to relaxation techniques such as massage or acupuncture. "There are some people who do not like their bodies being rubbed and do not like needles being put into their skin."

Reiki is also credited with calming jittery preoperative patients. Kate Snipes, a 41-year-old wife and mother of two, received Reiki treatments before and after a prophylactic double mastectomy. She recalls feeling tranquil post-treatment, void of the anxiety that had gripped her before the procedure.

"I felt more at peace with [the surgery]," said Snipes. "I felt pain relief, and I felt more comfortable and relaxed in the parts of my body that were kind of tense."

REIKI IS GENERALLY SAFE and NIH's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine says that that no serious side effects have been reported.

"It won't cause harm, but some people may not respond to it," said Pan. "It is an individualized process. What works for one patient may not work for another."



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/CENTRE VIEW

Reiki Master Naning Sugeng of Potomac, performs a Reiki self-treatments.



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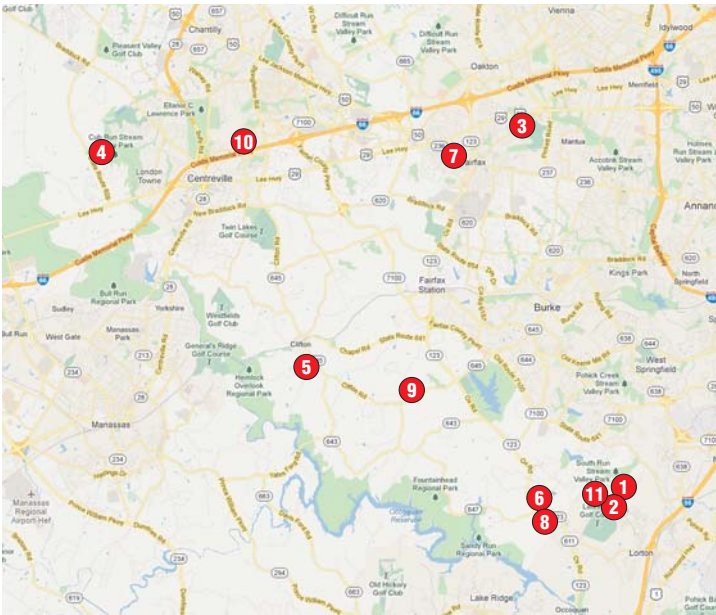
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Relay

FROM PAGE 2

ticipants on 23 teams, but people may also sign up Saturday on site and join the effort. The cost is \$10, and each walker receives a T-shirt and may join a team or walk by themselves.

The course is a quarter-mile loop inside the nZone sports facility, and participants will take turns walking. Some 50 survivors will walk the first lap at 12:30 p.m., followed by caregivers doing the second lap. Then all the teams will start.

One of the most moving parts of the event is the 9 p.m. luminaria ceremony. The names of all the people written on candlelit luminaria bags will be read and cancer survivor Lisa Jones will speak.

Yet although it has a serious purpose, the event is actually a fun-filled day for the whole family. There'll be live music, food concessions, dance and more. In addition, a children's area will have games, moonbounces, movies and snacks. It's \$5 for the whole day and all the food the children can eat. All proceeds from the children's area, child care, concessions and massages will go to the ACS.

There'll also be on-site fund-raising via sales of craft items and baked goods. Since it's an overnight event, movies will be shown at 12:30 a.m. and 4:30 a.m. The closing ceremony will be Sunday, June 10, at 5 a.m.

Hamm is captain of a team of about 15 cancer survivors. It's his third year participating in the relay and his second year on this team, appropriately called, "Still Alive & Kickin'." And he's especially looking forward to both the survivor and caregiver laps.

"It's a rough road and you can't do it by yourself — caregivers are a big deal," he said. "You're worried about dying, so you need someone to be with you and help guide you through. I'd just gotten engaged when I found the lump, and we got married sooner because of it."

Three years ago, Hamm was invited to walk in the relay's survivors' lap. "I'd never done the relay before, and I was touched and impressed by it, the way people all came together. I liked their passion and hearing everyone's stories, and it's a good way to give back. I figure the reason I went through all this was to give back."

He said everyone on his team has either had cancer or knows someone who has, and many of them have been caregivers. "So we're excited that this year they'll



From left: Michael Segovia, Bill Hamm and Jackie Katounas are three of the more than 200 people who'll be walking in Saturday's Relay for Life fundraiser at the nZone in Chantilly.

be recognized by a lap at the relay," said Hamm. "Sometimes, they suffer as much or more than the people going through the treatment."

Since his own cancer battle, he's become a born-again Christian, participates in support groups and counsels people. "I try to be an inspiration," he said. "That's my purpose in life — to help other people."

Also participating in her third relay is Jackie Katounas of Centreville's Confederate Ridge II community. On Christmas Eve 2008, her husband Mike was diagnosed with stage III testicular cancer. He underwent a year of treatment, plus several surgeries, before being declared cancer-free.

So they began walking in the relay in 2010. "It was our turn to do something in return," said Jackie Katounas. "We felt lucky, and it's what drives me to do more and more every year. The relay brings together the survivors, caregivers and everybody involved. And it lets us share how grateful and hopeful we are that someday a cure will be found and people won't have to go through what we did."

Their 12-member team, comprised of family and friends, is called, "Sometimes You Feel Like a Nut," and has already raised more than \$10,000. "We're now

trying to get people to buy luminarias in memory of loved ones and in honor of caregivers," said Jackie Katounas. To do so, go to www.centrevillrelay.org; contributions may be made there, too.

"The luminarias are a huge part of the event," said Jackie Katounas. "They light up the whole night, and it makes for a beautiful moment." In the past, this relay has been held outdoor on Centreville High's football field. This time, it'll be indoors so, said Jackie Katounas, "We won't have to worry about the weather. Every day, we're

touched by stories of someone with cancer. So we're excited to be part of something bigger than us, and trying to make a difference feels really good."

Michael Segovia works for Quest Diagnostics Nichols Institute in Chantilly's Westfields Corporate Center, and his company encourages its employees to raise funds for charity and help their communities. The ACS is also Quest's national charity, and this will be Segovia's fifth or sixth relay.

"We have 35 people on our Team Chantilly so far and hope to have more," said Segovia. "The company pledged a \$20,000 donation and we've already raised an additional \$5,000 through an international food tasting, bake sales, a chili contest and team T-shirt sales."

But, he said, "I'm really doing this because it's a fantastic opportunity to support this worthy cause. The relay's a chance to not only focus on the disease, itself, but also to raise awareness and money for research and a cure."

Besides that, said Segovia, "It's a really fun event and I like the energy all the adults, teens and kids bring to it. It's amazing that they all have this same focus of charity. And I know this is only a small percentage of the people who can and do give, so it's very heartwarming."

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When you visit one of these Open Houses, tell the Realtor you saw it in this Connection Newspaper. For more real estate listings and open houses, visit www.ConnectionNewspapers.com and click on the "This Week in Real Estate" link. **Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times**

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5153 Woodfield Dr.....\$369,900..Sun 1-4.....	Rich Triplett...Samson Props..703-217-1348
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12406 Shari Hunt Grove...\$1,050,000..Sun 1-4.....	Carol Hermendorfer.... Long & Foster..703-503-1812
12610 Clifton Hunt Ln.....\$829,900..Sun 1-4.....	Ann Grainger.... Long & Foster..703-819-5300
13206 Kilby Landing Ct.....\$795,000..Sun 1-4.....	Ed Duggan.....Century 21..703-989-7735
6601 Newman Rd.....\$899,990..Sun 2-4.....	Pat Fales.....RE/MAX..703-503-4365
Fairfax	
10454 Courtney Dr.....\$599,900..Sun 1-4.....	Ed Urbamiak.....Weichert..703-217-9063
5544 Ashleigh Rd.....\$572,777..Sun 1-4.....	Bev Tull.....RE/MAX..703-963-0163
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10817 Windermere Ln.....\$1,398,000..Sun 1-4.....	Carol Hermendorfer.... Long & Foster..703-503-1812
11125 Henderson Rd.....\$850,000..Sun 2-4.....	Pat Fales.....RE/MAX..703-503-4365
6008 Stonecrest Ln.....\$899,999..Sun 1-4.....	Marsha Wolber.... Long & Foster..703-618-4397
7809 South Valley Dr.....\$775,000..Sun 1-4.....	Barb White Adkins.....RE/MAX..703-609-8950
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5972 Norham Dr.....\$519,950..Sun 1-4.....	Tom & Cindy & Assoc.... Long & Foster..703-822-0207
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All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.



Jake Dercole had one of his team's three hits — a second inning single into right center field — against Lake Braddock pitcher Thomas Rogers.



Bulldog reliever Bryan Drager pitched the final three innings against the Bruins.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/CENTRE VIEW

Westfield Baseball Season Ends at Region Semifinals

Bulldogs have no answer for Lake Braddock southpaw Thomas Rogers.

BY RICH SANDERS
CENTRE VIEW

Westfield High baseball's strong postseason showing at the 16-team Northern Region tournament concluded one victory shy of an appearance in the finals and an automatic seeding for this week's state tournament when the Bulldogs lost to Lake Braddock and ace left-handed pitcher Thomas Rogers, 8-0, last Wednesday afternoon at James Madison High School in Vienna.

With the season-ending, region semifinals playoff loss, Westfield finished the spring with an impressive 17-7 record. The Bulldogs enjoyed a successful postseason in which they reached the Concorde District tournament finals (losing to Robinson in the title game), then won their first two games at regionals — wins over Marshall and Yorktown — to advance to the semifinals. Overall, Westfield finished 3-2 in postseason play.

Lake Braddock, following the win over Westfield, lost in the region championship game to fellow Patriot District opponent West Springfield, 3-2, on Saturday, June 2 at Madison. Even so, the Bruins (23-3), by reaching the finals, automatically qualified for this week's Virginia State AAA tournament. They were scheduled to play a state quarterfinals round game at Cosby High (Midlothian) on Tuesday, June 5.

Rogers, a senior and the Lake Braddock pitching ace, had pitched 2-2/3 scoreless innings and earned the win in the Bruins' dramatic 6-5 extra innings region quarterfinals win over McLean on Memorial Day afternoon. And two days later, Bru-

ins head coach Jody Rutherford started the southpaw against Westfield.

The Bulldogs, under head coach Chuck Welch, simply could not generate enough offense against Rogers, who tossed a complete game (seven innings) three-hit shut-out. He struck out nine Westfield batters and walked one. At one point early on, Rogers fanned seven of eight hitters he faced from the first through third innings.

Westfield's best scoring threats were in the top of the first and fourth innings. In the first, senior shortstop Kyle Corwin, with one out, sent a deep fly ball into right center field for a double. Rogers retired the next two Bulldog batters to end that threat. In the fourth, junior second baseman Ryan Wittman knocked a two-out double down the left field line. But Rogers got the final out off a fly ball to center field off the bat of Jake Dercole, who had singled off Rogers two innings earlier.

LAKE BRADDOCK, meanwhile, gave Rogers early support by scoring three runs in the bottom of the first inning and two more in the second to take a 5-0 lead and gain a stronghold on the game.

It was a tough outing for Westfield's left-handed starting pitcher Wade Arduini (three innings), a First Team All-Concorde District first baseman this spring. The senior gave his team three innings in taking the loss. Following the Bruins' five runs over their first two innings, Arduini worked a scoreless bottom of the third inning. Westfield catcher Patrick McLaughlin had the defensive highlight of that half inning, throwing out a Lake Braddock base runner attempting to steal second.

Westfield senior Bryan Drager pitched the

final three innings (innings four through six) in relief, allowing three runs (2 earned) and four hits. He struck out one.

The game's best defensive play — and one of the better plays one will ever see — came from Westfield right fielder Matt Pisarcik in the bottom of the fifth inning. With one out, Lake Braddock's Matt Spruill sent a scorching, opposite field rope towards the right center field gap. Pisarcik immediately bolted towards his right at full speed. The ball looked as if it would split the outfielders and go to the fence. But Pisarcik made an all-out, fully-extended dive and snagged the liner.

The play had no bearing on the game's outcome and, in fact, the Bruins went on to score two runs in the inning. But if the Northern Region put out a season top 10 web gems list, it would be number one.

Westfield displayed some more excellent fielding in the seventh when Arduini, playing at first base, made a diving stop to his right off a hard grounder off the bat of Alex Lewis. He got up and stepped on the bag for the second out that inning.

All in all, the day belonged to Lake Braddock. But for Westfield, the playoff loss will hardly diminish another winning season with tons of good moments.

SPORTS NOTES

Westfield High will host the upcoming **Virginia High School League (VHSL) State AAA Spring Sports Jubilee** from Tuesday, June 5 through Saturday, June 9. The Spring Jubilee will determine state AAA champions in baseball, softball, boys' and girls' tennis, soccer, and lacrosse. Westfield High is located at 4700 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly.

Baseball and softball competitions will be held at Westfield High with semifinals games set for Friday, June 8, and finals games scheduled for Saturday, June 9.

Tennis matches for boys and girls will be played at Jefferson District Park (7900 Lee Highway, Falls Church) on Thursday, June 7; Friday, June 8, and Saturday, June 9.

Girls' and boys' soccer semifinals are scheduled for Friday, June 8. The finals games will be held on Saturday, June 9. Both semifinals and finals contests will take place at Westfield.

Also at Westfield will be the boys' and girls' lacrosse semifinals, scheduled for Tuesday, June 5 (girls' semifinals) and Wednesday, June 6 (boys' semifinals). Finals are set for Saturday, June 9.

The **Girls Basketball Summer Camps**, sponsored by the Westfield High Athletic Booster Club is now accepting registration.

Session 1 is designed for the serious athlete who is planning on or is currently playing varsity basketball (June 19-June 22, noon to 4 p.m. for rising seventh through 12th graders). Session 2 (July 2-6 — no camp July 4, 9 a.m. to 3

p.m., ages 8-15) and Session 3 (July 16-20, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., ages 8-15) are designed to help players learn more about the game of basketball and to have fun while doing so.

Tuition is \$85 for Session 1, \$130 for Session 2, and \$150 for Session 3. For multiple family members, there is a \$15 discount for each child. There is also a \$15 discount for multiple sessions. The first 120 players to register receive a camp basketball, in addition to the camp t-shirt. Contact Pat Deegan at pgdeegan@fcps.edu or 703-488-6363, ext. 7201.

McLean High School has announced the hiring of its new head football coach, **Dennis Worek**. Coach Worek has successful past experience as a head coach in the Northern Region, having been at the helm of both the Langley and Madison High programs in past years.

Worek led the Madison Warhawks to a region championship and state runner-up finish in the fall of 1996. He has been honored as District Coach of the Year three times, as well as Northern Region Coach of the Year in 1996.

Worek has spent the past two years as the defensive coordinator at Thomas Jefferson High School. In 1998, he left coaching to serve as an assistant principal at Chantilly, for 10 years.

In recent years, the McLean High football team has been under the direction of Jim Patrick, who led the Highlanders to the Div. 5 region playoffs in each of the past two years. Patrick currently serves as the McLean High Director of Student Activities.

Saluting Academic Achievement

FROM PAGE 6

Celeste Peterson, mother of Westfield grad and Virginia Tech victim Erin Peterson, was the key-note speaker. She and her husband established the Erin Peterson Fund in memory of their daughter and, since 2007, it's awarded \$85,000 in scholarships and grants. Peterson also co-founded Westfield High's Boys Leadership Group for at-risk male students, helping them change their lives for the better.

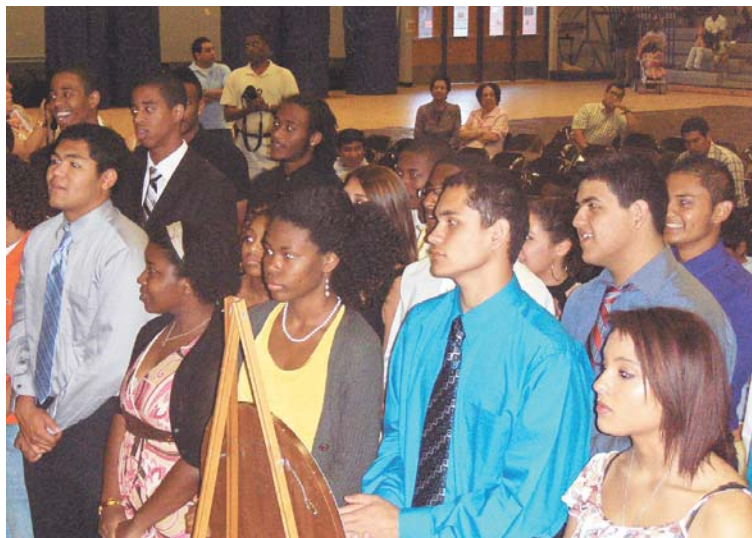
"I was really good at being a mother," she said. "Erin was a really good kid and I was so proud of her and of the legacy she left behind. She was a gift given to me by God, and I was thankful to be her mother. She lived every day and appreciated everything."

Encouraging the students to think about what they want to do with their lives, Peterson shared with them some advice she'd originally given to her daughter.

"It's important that you're not just a good student in school, but a good student at life," she said. "And it's your responsibility to learn. Once you get a good education, no one can take it away from you."

"Take care of your body and stay active," she continued. "Teamwork is important: You're not in this world by yourself and you'll always have to be accountable to someone. Recognize how blessed you are; you have gifts and talents that make you uniquely you, and they should be shared with others through volunteering. Sometimes, just the gift of your time can be so valuable to others."

Peterson further urged the students to take the time to renew their spirit. "Doing so keeps me



Some of the students watching and enjoying Saturday's awards ceremony.



Students relax after getting their awards for academic excellence.

humble, appreciative and strong," she said. "And think about your legacy – how do you want to be remembered? What did you do to

enhance someone else's life that no one else knows about? All these things will help you to be the best that you can be."



Some of the students lining up to receive their scholastic-achievement awards.

PHOTOS BY
BONNIE HOBBS/
CENTRE VIEW

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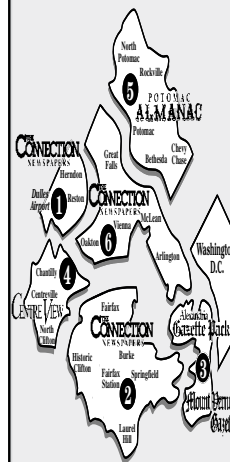
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Haven't I Learned Anything?



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I'm not going to beat myself up too badly; after all, I do have terminal cancer. However, I am disappointed in my behavior of late, especially as it relates to my status as a still-active (thank God!) cancer patient/survivor undergoing treatment. Here I thought I was "Mr. Experience," a three-years-plus cancer survivor having endured all the ups and downs associated with the diagnosis, prognosis, chemotherapy, diagnostic scans, appointments with my oncologist, lab work, etc., so that blips in any or all of the aforementioned categories wouldn't faze me, understanding that there's no future in overreacting to any of it; taking it all in stride and maintaining an even keel as the key to surviving the unrelenting pressure.

And yet, I've overreacted; anticipated a negative outcome and worried about a result that has not been confirmed; heck, it hasn't even been tested for. It's not even time for it to be tested. Moreover, there are not even indications that when tested, the problem will arise. Still, I'm planning for a negative result and trying to circumvent its treatment and financial impact. In summary, I'm trying to control the uncontrollable (cancer) and in so doing I am making myself miserable. Rather than deal with the consequences as they present themselves, I am attempting to solve them in advance – before they are actual consequences. Part of me feels this is prudent, given my underlying diagnosis, and part of me (I am a Libra) feels that I am putting the cart before the horse, as they say, and creating a problem where as yet one doesn't exist.

If a problem with my lab work does present itself, it will be bad/complicated enough then. It doesn't need to be bad/complicated before it actually happens, does it? I'm supposed to be able to deal with the punches. I've been punched – so to speak – for over three years now; this is nothing new. Sure, the drug is new, and its potential complication is new, but it's really just more of the same stuff: cancer, only different. So why am I struggling emotionally? I have been there and I have been doing it. What's changed?

I would have thought that year one, especially the first few weeks and months of treatment, entering the unknown world of heavy-duty chemotherapy, would have generated more anxiety and deeper emotional troughs than year four: less heavy-duty chemotherapy, more experience being a cancer patient. But that has not been the case. Perhaps the unexpected change in treatment – for better or worse (to be determined) is causing this reaction. Though I'm not in any pain as a result, I do sense a change in momentum, sort of. I imagine I'll get over it, but I shouldn't have to "get over it." I should never have gotten under it. I should have recognized the signs/circumstances and not allowed myself to fall victim to its emotional tentacles. Having been diagnosed with terminal cancer at age 54 is bad enough on its own. I don't need to make it any worse.

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



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