

# Enjoying Summer in McLean

NEWS, PAGE 14

Guests at Langley High School watch the annual fireworks show, hosted by the McLean Community Center.

## 'Ode to Joy' in McLean

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## A Decision Time for Silver Line

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Crews continue to use a huge bright yellow horizontal crane to build the bridges for rail from Route 7 to the median of the Dulles International Airport Access Highway/Dulles Toll Road. This work is expected to be completed in July.



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CHUCK SAMUELSON/  
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METRO RAIL PROJECT

## A Decision Time for Silver Line

**Deadline approaches for Loudoun County Board vote on extending the rail into county.**

BY NICHOLAS M. HORROCK  
THE CONNECTION

Whoever coined the quip “like herding cats,” must have had in mind the financing of the Dulles Rail Project. It requires getting consensus from two county boards of supervisors, Fairfax and Loudoun, the Federal government, the Virginia government and therefore the governor and state legislature and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

The project’s course, so far, brings to mind another quip; “the perils of Pauline.” From an argument over a tunnel under Tysons Corner to disputes about underground facilities at Dulles Airport, the project has slipped from one crisis to another. Even if the rail project’s second phase were to go smoothly from here on out, it will take as long to build the 23 mile metro line as it took to build the Transcontinental Railroad.

However, the word “smoothly” does not seem applicable since the most recent “peril” is the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors.

In the 2011 elections, Republican candidates won every seat on the board in a voter rejection of the spend-thrift actions of their predecessors.

**THE NEW BOARD** has approached the funding question with suspicion, but must make a decision to opt in or out of the project by July 4. If the board supports the project, the county will have to pay some \$270 million in construction costs and \$11 million a year to help finance Metro’s operating costs.

The members have met several times over the past few months trying, without success, to find methods to fund the county’s share.

The board has set one more meeting before the fourth.

Vice Chairman Janet Clark (R-Blue Ridge) wrote a letter to her constitu-

ents on June 7 setting out her concerns. She said although the line’s extension was considered for years, the “prior boards merely endorsed the concept of rail to Loudoun, they did nothing to establish a means for paying for it.”

She said the original concept was that the rail line would be paid for by federal dollars and state funds, but now there are no federal dollars and Virginia’s one time contribution of \$150 million will only be enough to “buy down the Dulles Toll Road/267 tolls for two years,” she said. Some 54 percent of the funding must now come from Dulles Toll Road revenue, she said. The tolls, which will grow astronomically as the costs of the rail grow, are considered a tax on the people of Loudoun. There is a lawsuit in federal court that may threaten the tolls as a funding source for the metro. The class action suit challenged MWAA’s authority to level taxes under Virginia law and may be decided later this year.

Clark writes the Silver Line Metro won’t be running until 2017 so the county will have to build the stations before the revenue from station parking begins.

Clark warned her constituents that there could be tax districts formed in the rail areas and “possibly a county-wide tax on commercial and industrial properties.” In some incorporated towns, she said, there could be three levels of tax, a development “that could put some of our small businesses out of busi-

SEE LOUDOUN BOARD, PAGE 7



**Tysons Corner Station.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia Bobby Mathieson, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force Ray Colgan, Congressman Frank Wolf, Falls Church City Police Chief Harry Reitze, Leesburg Police Chief Joseph Price, FBI Special Agent in Charge Ronald Hosko, and U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia Neil MacBride attended the ceremony June 22, in which a check for \$850,000 was presented to the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force from the Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund.**

## Gang Task Force Receives \$850,000

The fight against gang activity in Northern Virginia received a financial boost last week in the form of an \$850,000 check from the Department of Justice Assets Forfeiture Fund. U.S. Marshal for the Eastern District of Virginia Bobby Mathieson presented the check to Ray Colgan, executive director of the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force. The raid of an illegal gambling operation in Falls Church in August 2011 led to criminal asset forfeiture of more than \$1 million.

The Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force is a multi-jurisdictional partnership of local, state and federal law enforcement agencies that address gang activity in Northern Virginia through dedicated officers and resources, thereby making the region inhospitable to gang activity.

The funds received last week will be used for expenses such as a tattoo removal program, car leases, police overtime, equipment and training.

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) attended the presentation and spoke about his appreciation for the hard work of law

enforcement officers on the task force and how their efforts have made the community a much safer place.

The Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program encompasses the seizure and forfeiture of assets that represent the proceeds of, or were used to facilitate, federal crimes. The primary mission of the program is to employ asset forfeiture powers in a manner that enhances public safety and security. This is accomplished by removing the proceeds of crime and other assets relied upon by criminals and their associates to perpetuate their criminal activity against society. Asset forfeiture has the power to disrupt or dismantle criminal organizations that would continue to function if we only convicted and incarcerated specific individuals.

Law enforcement equitable sharing payments, such as the one made to the task force last week, are paid to state and local law enforcement agencies for assistance in forfeiture cases. Equitable sharing payments are calculated using the degree of direct participation in law enforcement efforts resulting in forfeiture.

# Vinson Hall Breaks Ground for Expansion Project

Despite the dreary weather on Monday, May 14, more than 200 people, including U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) and Supervisor John Foust (D-Drainsville), braved the elements to celebrate and show their support as Vinson Hall Retirement Community broke ground to begin construction on a large expansion project.

This project represents a culmination of more than four years of planning to expand Vinson Hall Retirement Community's facilities to meet the needs of veterans, seniors and members of the local community.

For more than forty years Vinson Hall Retirement Community has been home to commissioned military officers and their immediate family members. Now also open to employees of equal rank from select federal agencies, the community is expanding to meet growing housing and rehabilitation needs in the McLean area.

Over the next three years the community's independent living residence, Vinson Hall, will add a new building housing 75 new



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Vinson Hall Retirement Community broke ground to begin construction on a large expansion project on May 14.**

apartment homes, ranging in size from 1,200 to 2,100 square feet, and featuring underground parking.

Also planned for the property is a new community center, which will feature a grill-style bistro, a library, a large auditorium that will be available for select public use, and

a state-of-the-art rehabilitation center that will serve the needs of seniors, veterans and the local community.

As Vinson Hall Retirement Community moves forward with this expansion, it has committed to renovating several apartments to serve as transitional housing for wounded

warriors, who stand to benefit from a supportive environment close to the nation's capital that can accommodate their unique needs. Donations to the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization that raises funds to support the mission and vision of Vinson Hall Retirement Community, can be made in support of the Wounded Warrior Transitional Housing Project at [www.nmcgrf.org](http://www.nmcgrf.org).

Vinson Hall Retirement Community is no stranger to expansion. Opened in 1969, its independent living residence was originally intended to provide affordable housing for sea services officers' widows who were not left sufficient funds to live in dignity when their husbands passed away. Then in 1987, Arleigh Burke Pavilion, an assisted living and healthcare residence, was added, and in 1996, The Sylvestery, a secure assisted living residence serving those with memory loss was opened. Military affiliation is not required for residency at Arleigh Burke Pavilion or The Sylvestery.

## Jones Strives to Personalize Patient Care

Concierge Principal Medical Group celebrates one year in McLean.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Working in a hospital, Dr. David Jones was able to see firsthand the delays and inconveniences of many current medical practices. So he decided to go, in his words, "back to the way medicine was 30, 40 years ago," and started a concierge practice in McLean a year ago. On Thursday, June 7, Jones celebrated one year in business with the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce at his Beverly Road Office.

"Concierge medicine allows better access to a doctor, I often can see my patients the same day, and they have my cell phone and email, which can even eliminate a lot of the need to come into the office," he said. "I had a patient that was floored by the idea, he said he didn't know this was the way medicine operated."

Jones says his practice allows him to create a strong referral network for his patients, connecting them to specialists as needed with expedited appointment times.

"I had a patient who was suffering from testicular pain and was told it would be a three and a half week wait for an appointment with his urologist," he said. "I was able to get in touch with a satellite office and get him in much sooner."

Appointments with Jones are



PHOTO BY  
ALEX McVEIGH/  
THE CONNECTION

longer than the five to 10 minutes with other doctors, and the increased time allows him to get to know patients more and do more research into potential or actual problems, sometimes without having to refer them out to specialists.

Jones acknowledges that concierge medicine isn't for everybody, but that his patients so far seem to be pleased. And with a small staff of two other people, Jones said he can even be found answering the phones during the day, which he says shocks his patients.

"I think people are happy to know they can get a hold of me whenever they need to," he said. "I like to get to know not only the patient, but their spouse, their children and even see them at Giant. It's rewarding to be part of a community like this."

**Dr. David Jones of the Principal Medical Group and Marcia Twomey, president of the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce, at the one-year anniversary reception of Jones's McLean office Thursday, June 7.**

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### THURSDAY/JUNE 28

**Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce LeadShare Meeting.** 7:30 a.m. Chesterbrook Residences, 2030 Westmoreland St., Falls Church. LeadShare events will be held the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month. Register at 267-346-1885.

**Sierra Club/Great Falls Group Activist Night.** 7-9 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. If you are concerned about the environment, consider committing two hours a month to working with staff and volunteers on current Sierra Club campaigns at Activist Nights. Free. 703-352-2410.

#### SATURDAY/JUNE 30

**Federal Job Application Workshop.** 10 a.m.-12 p.m. The Women's Center, 127 Park St., NE, Vienna. In this workshop a federal expert with over 25 years of experience in the federal sector will guide you. Registration Fee \$35, Members \$25.

#### SUNDAY/JULY 1

**Dog and Cat Adoptions.** 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 8204 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. Every Sunday. Sponsored by Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation. [www.lostdogrescue.org](http://www.lostdogrescue.org).

#### MONDAY/JULY 2

**Week-long Chess Camp.** Vienna Community Center, 120 Cherry St. S.E., Vienna. Learn from Silver Knights chess coaches: basic rules to advanced tournament strategies. All chess supplies provided. 703-255-6360 or [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov).

## Nursing Pioneer Abdellah Inducted in ANA Hall of Fame

**O**n Friday, June 15, Rear Admiral Faye Glenn Abdellah EdD, RN, FAAN has been inducted into the American Nurses Association's (ANA) Hall of Fame.

This award, which was created to recognize the lifelong commitment of individual nurses to the field of nursing and their impact on the health and/or social history of the United States, is fitting for a woman who dedicated her life

to nursing and, as a researcher and educator, helped change the profession's focus from a disease-centered approach to a patient-centered approach. Her Patient Assessment of Care Evaluation method to evaluate health care is now the standard for the nation.

Born in 1919, Abdellah served for 40 years in the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps, a branch of the military, and was the first nurse officer

to achieve the rank of two-star rear admiral. In 1981 U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop named Abdellah Deputy Surgeon General, making her the first nurse and the first woman to hold the position.

As a public health nurse, she focused much of her attention on care of the elderly. She was one of the first to conduct research in gerontological nursing, and to influence public policy regarding nursing homes.

Abdellah continued to work as a leader in the nursing profession into her eighties. She has been recognized with 77 professional and academic honors and was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 2000.

Abdellah now sees her work in action on a daily basis, as she has resided in Arleigh Burke Pavilion, a skilled nursing and assisted living residence in McLean, for more than four years.



Faye Glenn Abdellah

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**Matthew Ryan, MA, LPC, NCC**

ADD / ADHD & Anxiety Specialist

Matthew is a Licensed Professional Counselor and a National Certified Counselor. As a native of McLean, Virginia, Matthew Ryan provides counseling for adults and adolescents, specializing in results-oriented Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Crisis Intervention.



# Scholarship Promotes Knowledge of History, Government

**W**ith a seven minute speech about the importance of history and knowledge of government, U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) presented the National Heritage Scholarship at Oakton High School in May to kick-off the school's annual award night.

The Scholarship awards \$5,000 each to seniors at three Northern Virginia schools (Chantilly, Oakton, and Westfield). The winners were: Josh Oswalt (Chantilly High), Hayley Anderson (Westfield High), Garrett Allen (Oakton High). Started by Chantilly resident, Rick Dansey and his son, Jake, the educational initiative is designed to reward excellence in U.S. History and Government. The Dansey Foundation's mission is to educate and encourage

the next generation to understand both the operation of government and the history of that government.

Examples from the award winners' resumes include being an intern for a Virginia state senator, supporting a campaign for a Virginia state delegate, being a Boy's State attendee, and serving as Secretary-General of a Model United Nation's team, along with multiple history and leadership awards. More information on these students can be found at [www.t2fund.org](http://www.t2fund.org).

The scholarship will continue at Chantilly, Oakton, and Westfield High Schools with the intent of eventually expanding its impact throughout the area.

Contact Rick Dansey, [rick@t2fund.org](mailto:rick@t2fund.org), if you are interested in getting your high school involved the program.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Award winner, Garrett Allen - of Oakton High - with Rick Dansey (left) and U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf.**

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# Loudoun Board to Vote on Silver Line

FROM PAGE 3

ness.”

On Tuesday Clarke and two other board members said they wanted an extension of the deadline until December, but BOS chairman Scott York (R-At large) said there would be no extension and the decision must be made on July 4.

At this juncture, people who followed the debate believe that there are four members of the nine member board in favor of the Silver Line and four members against. Board member Suzanne Volpe of the Algonkian District, a Republican, is reportedly uncommitted. Volpe is a resident of Sterling, Va. The vote is so unclear, however, that nobody wanted to be quoted guessing the outcome.

**AS THE DEADLINE NEARS**, there is growing ire on either side of the debate. Right wing groups have attacked the Silver Line project as a tax. According to the Washington Post, a group funded by the Koch brothers, a pair of conservative Kansas billionaires, have conducted robo calls in the county saying that funding the Silver Line will mean a “bailout for developers.”

Clark and other opponents claim they have faced “strong-arming and veiled threats by some developers and elected officials.”

Stephen S. Fuller, the director of the George Mason University’s Center for Regional Analysis, prepared a report in March which warned, if Loudoun does not go along with the Silver Line, “the county’s economy will grow more slowly, driven by gains in

lower value added employment and imported income earned by residents commuting to jobs located outside the county.” He saw a loss of \$11.2 billion in foregone economic activity in 2030 and \$25.6 billion lower gross county product in 2040 “than had Metrorail been extended to the county as planned.”

Throughout there has been major criticism by Republicans of the MWAA’s unwillingness answer to any level of government. MWAA was forced to abandon an extensive underground welcoming facility at Dulles and late last week agreed to cancel a labor rule that favored organized labor under pressure from the governor and Rep. Frank Wolf, (R-10). Wolf has urged a federal inspector general be appointed to oversee MWAA’s finances.

But Wolf said earlier this month that he firmly supports the Silver Line serving Loudoun County. He called it the most important project since the original Metro system.

Fairfax BOS chairman Sharon Bulova has called upon Fairfax’s federal representatives to work harder to reopen the question of federal funds for Phase 2. Some \$900 million in federal money contributed to Phase 1 of Dulles Rail which runs through Wiehle Avenue in Reston and will be completed in 2013.

She quoted Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood saying that Metro is “America’s system providing millions of riders to the nation’s Capital” and the federal government needs to find money in its 2013 and 2014 budgets to complete the project.

Jack Potter, president and the chief executive officer of MWAA, has said that even if Loudoun opts out of the project the Silver Line will be built.

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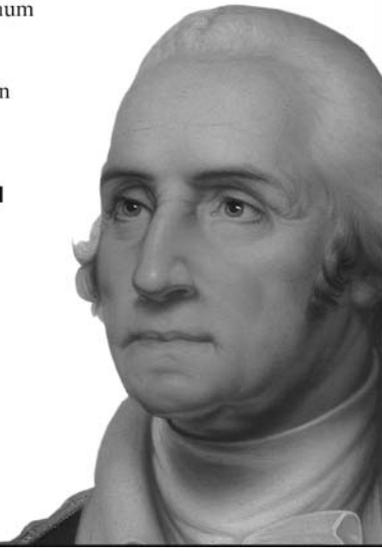
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# OPINION

## Case Closed. Why the Secrecy?

No reason for police to exercise “blanket” approach, shielding every document in every case.

Connection readers know that we respect and appreciate our public safety professionals. Members of local police and fire and rescue departments are motivated by their deep commitment to serve and protect our local communities. We honor those with our coverage of valor awards, features on police efforts to curb drunk driving and distracted driving, and tragically sometimes a death in the line of duty.

While police earn and deserve a special consideration, police departments in Northern Virginia should let go of their relentless pursuit of secrecy. Police departments all over the country routinely allow access to police reports, incident reports and many other documents without harm, documents that police here refuse to allow the public to see.

The first paragraph of Virginia Freedom of Information Act, passed by the General Assembly in 1968, states that all public records “shall be presumed open.” But the legislation includes an exception that allows police to withhold “complaints, memoranda, correspondence,

case files or reports, witness statements and evidence.”

Police officials in Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any docu-

### EDITORIAL

ment they can without any analysis of whether they should. Police chiefs and prosecutors from across the commonwealth have spoken out against any effort to undermine their broad power of exemption.

Senate Bill 711, originally introduced in 2010 by state Sen. John Edwards (D-21) and up for discussion again this week, would limit the blanket withholding of information to ongoing investigations. This could allow for the public release of documents in closed cases such as the one conducted by the Arlington Police Department about the death of Hailu Brook. In December, 2008, Fairfax County police officers chased 19-year-old Hailu Brook across the county line into Arlington and shot him

dead. Brook, a senior at Yorktown High School, had reportedly robbed a BB&T in McLean.

The autopsy report, one of the few documents his parents were able to obtain, shows that the teen was shot 20-25 times by three officers with large caliber handguns. Baffled by what happened to their son, the parents sought access to police reports and documents, but even now that the case is closed, their requests have been denied.

Police wield power unlike any other entity — the power to detain and question, the power to arrest, the power to respond with force when necessary, sometimes deadly force.

With that power, comes responsibility — the responsibility to operate openly and with transparency, the responsibility to make available the greatest possible amount of information, especially the responsibility to provide the public with a full picture of what happened when something goes wrong.

Somewhere along the way, police leaders in Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax have gone astray in their control of information.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Getting the Full Picture

To the Editor:

This week's mail delivered the most recent Comstock Connection, the newsletter our Delegate, Barbara Comstock, uses to keep her constituents informed of her activities down in Richmond.

In her opening statement, Ms. Comstock wisely notes, “Many bills we pass never make the headlines, but they do impact our everyday lives.” I agree completely. We are aware of the bills

that made news during the last legislative session, however, it is just as enlightening to find out about the bills that didn't receive

as much publicity, and I just wish that the newsletter had gone further to give a true picture of her positions on issues important to the voters in her district.

For example: The newsletter highlights Ms. Comstock's support of legislation that would ensure that our tax dollars are being spent on transportation solutions for our local traffic woes. But the fact is, Ms. Comstock also supported several bills that take away local control of comprehensive transportation planning. If there is no local control, the state can continue to use Northern Virginia's economic success as a cash cow for the rest of the state. This seems at odds with the successes Ms. Comstock touts in her newsletter.

Ms. Comstock claims that she supports legislation that cracks down on crime. In fact, bills supported by Ms. Comstock may make Virginia a much more dangerous state. Legislation she supported would now allow concealed firearms to be carried in cars, and into bars and restaurants serving liquor. In addition, she supported a bill that lifted the limit on the number of firearms that can be purchased in a 30-day period. Does this make you feel safer?

Finally, another area Ms. Comstock highlights as an achievement is in the area of women's health. While it is true that she co-sponsored a bill mandating disclosure of the health risks posed

by dense breast tissue, it is a stretch for Ms. Comstock to say she “supports” women's health. She has consistently voted to defund organizations devoted to providing health services to poor

and at risk women. During this last session, she supported a bill prohibiting the use of Medicaid benefits to pay for abortions even in the cases of fetuses that a physician certifies would be born with a “totally incapacitating” physical deformity or mental deficiency.

Ms. Comstock is our Delegate, and she is supposed to be representing our values. Even though she is not up for re-election this November, it is important to know where she stands, and how she votes, on all of the issues, and to make our opinions of her actions known.

As Ms. Comstock urges, look beyond the headlines, but get the full picture. You may be surprised at what you see.

Jeff Cosby  
McLean

## Siding with Polluters

To the Editor:

On June 20, Senators Warner and Webb sided with polluters instead of standing up for Virginians' health when they voted for a bill to block much-needed mercury pollution standards for power

plants.

Mercury exposure can lead to learning disabilities and developmental disorders in children, and already one in ten American women of childbearing age has mercury levels in her blood high enough to put her baby at risk. Knowing that I fall into the category of childbearing age, it frightens me to know Senators Warner and Webb were willing to risk a child's health by voting “yes” for the bill.

Thankfully the Obama administration recently finalized a standard to clean up mercury pollution from power plants. The new standard will cut mercury pollution from power plants by 90 percent.

But on June 20, the U.S. Senate voted on a bill to block the new standard. Thankfully, despite Senators Warner and Webb's votes, the Senate rejected this bill, which would have put up to 11,000 American lives at risk every year—and potentially caused health defects in children who have yet to experience life.

Environment Virginia urges Senators Warner and Webb to stand up for Virginians' health and our environment in the future by supporting these commonsense measures to protect our kids' health.

Morgan O'Neil  
Environment Virginia

McLean  
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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

**Trisha Hamilton**  
Display Advertising  
703-778-9419  
trisha@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

## Write

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

Letters to the Editor  
The Connection  
1606 King St.  
Alexandria VA 22314  
Call: 703-917-6444.  
By e-mail:  
mclean@connectionnewspapers.com

# SCHOOLS

## Finding Treasure in Trash

After many months of hard work creating an environmental studies banner, with Debra Maes, Environmental Studies Coordinator, Churchill Road 6th grade artists Emma Higbee, Maggie Bujor and Linsey Wenk saw their project to fruition. With the assistance of Churchill Road teachers Jenny Whiteman and Jordan Craig-Kuhn, the 10 foot long and 5 foot wide banner now hangs at Churchill Road for all to see. With the motto, "In trash we find treasure," the mural embodies the key element of the school's recycling efforts.

PHOTOS BY KIM MORAN



Churchill Road sixth graders Emma Higbee and Maggie Bujor work on the initial design for the school's environmental studies banner. (Not pictured Linsey Wenk).



On June 1, Churchill Road sixth grade artists Emma Higbee and Linsey Wenk look on as art teacher Jenny Whiteman, technology teacher Jordan Craig-Kuhn and environmental studies coordinator Debra Maes (on ladder) hang the environmental studies banner they created. (Not pictured is Maggie Bujor who also helped create the banner).

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**THE CONNECTION**  
NEWSPAPERS



**Beth and David Sansbury of Great Falls, authors of the book "52 Perfect Day Trips."**

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

## Exploring Local Day Trips

**Beth and David Sansbury chronicle '52 Perfect Day Trips.'**

BY ALEX MCVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

Great Falls residents Beth and David Sansbury are no strangers to travel. The two of them count 67 countries they've visited. But after long careers in the CIA, they had enough of being cooped up in an office. So after retirement, they began spending their days outdoors pursuing their true passions: hiking, biking, kayaking and touring local attractions.

"Soon we made it into a pretty serious thing, we'd set aside a day whenever we could and make a trip," Beth Sansbury said. "We started writing down the trips we would take, then we began telling our friends about it and soon it became a much more formal thing."

For the Sansburys, making a formal thing resulted in their book "52 Perfect Day Trips for Fit Adults in the Greater Washington Area." In the book, the two outline 52 separate full day trips that consist of a hike, bike or kayak trip for half a day, then a half day at a local attraction.

"We're high energy people, so that's what we wrote about in the book and why we say 'for fit adults,'" she said.

The book is three years in the making, as the Sansburys began documenting their day trips, not sure where it might lead.

"Once we got about 30 trips in we got a lot more structured about where we would visit and took a more systematic approach to make sure we were covering all the areas north, south east and west," David Sansbury said.

**THE BOOK** covers an area no longer than a one-and-a-half hour drive from the D.C. area, and goes as far north as Frederick, Md., south to Orange County, Va., east to Chestertown, Md. And west to the Shenandoah.

"Having lived here since college, I was amazed when we started seeing how many great places were so close," Beth Sansbury said. "One of the most interesting places we saw was only about five

miles from where we live along the George Washington Parkway. There's a path with all these waterfalls, all between the Chain Bridge down to Georgetown, and they were beautiful. I drove along that road every day for years and never knew they were there."

Each trip is meant to be a full day's journey there and back, and includes a lunch recommendation for a local eatery. David said he is still amazed at the range of experiences.

"There's geographic diversity, places of incredible historical significance, homes that presidents have lived in," he said. "We discovered places filled with history, beautiful architecture, stunning gardens and secret trails."

Some trips can be made year-round, others are meant to be taken advantage of in certain weather. All the trips include directions, why the destination is worthwhile and details of what visitors can expect to see.

"Hopefully the book can act as a timesaver," David Sansbury said. "We spent a lot of time working out the places to visit, the places to eat and writing down directions, so it's all there."

One trip advises travelers to take a section of the Billy Goat Trail (located on the Maryland side of Great Falls) to the Glen Echo house of Clara Barton (who brought the International Red Cross to America). Another advises a trip to Fountainhead Regional Park's Occoquan Reservoir for a boating trip, lunch at the Haveabite Eatery in Fairfax and finishing at the Fairfax Museum.

**THE COUPLE** make a good pair, with David tending more toward the research side of things and Beth more of a natural writer when it came to organizing their thoughts and findings.

"To be honest, we did the research beforehand, so we didn't make too many trips that were left on the cutting room floor," Beth Sansbury said. "But through David's research, we have huge packets of information about locations, probably enough for a second book."

Their book, "52 Perfect Day Trips," is available as a hard copy at Amazon, and as a color e-book at [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). The book includes pictures of most trips.

## ENTERTAINMENT

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

### THURSDAY/JUNE 28

**Daylily Exhibit, Sale and Tour.** 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Court, Vienna. The Northern Virginia Daylily Society will exhibit a variety of daylily blooms. Bare-root plants offered for sale. Daylily walking tour at 10 a.m. Free. 703-255-3631.

**The Skatalites and Murphy's Kids.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Wolf Trap Opera Company: Vocal Colors.** 6:30 p.m. Wolf Trap Center for the Performing Arts, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Filene Young Artists perform. Preshow talk one hour before performance. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Ted Garber.** 7:30 p.m. Nottoway Park, 9537 Courthouse Road, Vienna. Blues, Americana and rock. Free. 703-324-7469.

**Reptiles Alive.** 2:30 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. See a giant python, an alligator and other reptiles from around the world. Age 6-12. 703-356-0770.

**Sierra Club/Great Falls Group Activist Night.** 7-9 p.m. Oakton Library, 10304 Lynnhaven Place, Oakton. If you are concerned about the environment, consider committing two hours a month to working with staff and volunteers on current Sierra Club campaigns at Activist Nights. Free. 703-352-2410.

### FRIDAY/JUNE 29

**Marah.** 8 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. East, Vienna. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Eric Brace and Peter Cooper.** 10:30 a.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Country melodies and lyrics. \$8-\$10 at 1-877-WOLFTRAP or [www.wolftrap.org/TITW](http://www.wolftrap.org/TITW).

**Wolf Trap Opera Company: Don Giovanni.** 8 p.m. Wolf Trap Center for the Performing Arts, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Preshow talk one hour before performance. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

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

**"The Prince and the Troubadour."** 8 p.m. 1st Stage Theater, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. All tickets are for general admission seating. \$10. 703-854-1856 or email [boxoffice@1ststagearts.org](mailto:boxoffice@1ststagearts.org).

### SATURDAY/JUNE 30

**Children's Shows: The Smithsonian and Jammin Java present Billy Jonas.** 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**John Wesley Harding.** 7 p.m. Jammin' Java, 227 Maple Ave. E., Vienna. [www.jamminjava.com](http://www.jamminjava.com).

**Eric Brace and Peter Cooper.** 10:30 a.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Country melodies and lyrics. \$8-\$10 at 1-877-WOLFTRAP or [www.wolftrap.org/TITW](http://www.wolftrap.org/TITW).

**Author Martha D. Peterson.** 2 p.m. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. "The Widow Spy: My CIA Journey From the Jungles of Laos to Prison in Moscow." Book signing to follow. Adults. 703-356-0770.

**"The Prince and the Troubadour."** 2 p.m. 1st Stage Theater, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. All tickets are for general admission seating. \$10. 703-



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 1ST STAGE

**Doug Wilder and Rex Daugherty in the original production of "The Prince and the Troubadour," playing at the 1st Stage Theater [see listings for Friday, Saturday, Sunday].**

854-1856 or email [boxoffice@1ststagearts.org](mailto:boxoffice@1ststagearts.org).

### SUNDAY/JULY 1

**Wolf Trap Opera Company: Don Giovanni.** 3 p.m. Wolf Trap Center for the Performing Arts, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Preshow talk one hour before performance. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

**Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Adoption Event.** 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 8204 Leesburg Pike, Tysons Corner. Adoption events every Sunday. <http://lostdogrescue.org/> and click on Adoptions.

**25th Annual International Holy Convocation of the New Born Lighthouse Church of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.** Services at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. The Sheraton Premiere at Tyson's Corner, 8661 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. [www.nbchurch.org](http://www.nbchurch.org) or 301-499-2105.

**Summer Sunday Concerts in the Park.** 5 p.m. McLean Central Park, 1468 Dolley Madison Blvd, McLean. Take a trip around the world with Summer 2012's multicultural music concerts. [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

**"The Prince and the Troubadour."** 2 p.m. 1st Stage Theater, 1524 Spring Hill Road, McLean. All tickets are for general admission seating. \$10. 703-854-1856 or email [boxoffice@1ststagearts.org](mailto:boxoffice@1ststagearts.org).

### TUESDAY/JULY 3

**Dance Every Tuesday.** 7:15 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Introductory dance lesson 7:15 p.m., dancing 8-10:30 p.m. Swing, Latin, waltz, country and more. \$10 per person, includes lesson and snacks. No partner necessary. [colvinrun.org](http://colvinrun.org) or [Ed.Cottrell@macp.org](mailto:Ed.Cottrell@macp.org).

**DinoRock.** 10:30 a.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Giant

colorful puppets created by the Emmy Award-winning puppet designer Ingrid Crepeau offer songs, skits and dances. \$8-\$10 at 1-877-WOLFTRAP or [www.wolftrap.org/TITW](http://www.wolftrap.org/TITW).

**25th Annual International Holy Convocation of the New Born Lighthouse Church of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.** Services at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. The Sheraton Premiere at Tyson's Corner, 8661 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. [www.nbchurch.org](http://www.nbchurch.org) or 301-499-2105.

**Crosby, Stills & Nash.** 8 p.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. \$30-\$45. [www.wolftrap.org](http://www.wolftrap.org).

### WEDNESDAY/JULY 4

**4th of July Fireworks Celebration.** 8 p.m. Langley High School, 6520 Georgetown Pike, McLean. See Northern Virginia's best fireworks display to honor our nation's 236th birthday. Receive an American flag from McLean American Legion Post 270. Shuttle buses available from St. John's Lutheran Church on Douglass St. and Georgetown Pike and the McLean Community Center. [sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:sabrina.anwah@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**25th Annual International Holy Convocation of the New Born Lighthouse Church of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.** Services at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. The Sheraton Premiere at Tyson's Corner, 8661 Leesburg Pike, Vienna. [www.nbchurch.org](http://www.nbchurch.org) or 301-499-2105.

**Town of Vienna Celebrates July 4th.** 5 p.m. Southside Park, 1315 Ross Drive SW, Vienna. Activities from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. will include food and drink for sale, games and rides, arts and crafts vendors, community organization booths, antique cars, a chili cook-off and music. Fireworks show will begin at 9:15 p.m. Spectator seating areas open at 5 p.m. [www.viennava.gov](http://www.viennava.gov).



PHOTO BY DEAN CORAB/THE CONNECTION

**Fairfax County Police Chief David Rohrer is at ease as he rappels down the side of the Crystal City Hilton in Arlington on June 22. He's not practicing with the SWAT team, he's rappelling 100 feet to raise money for Special Olympics Virginia.**

## Over the Edge

**Rappellers raise \$60,000 for Special Olympics.**

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE CONNECTION

Rose Pleskow is not one to shy away from a challenge. The 23-year-old Reston resident competed in the Special Olympics World Summer Games in Athens, Greece, last summer, earned multiple medals in the 2012 Virginia Special Olympic Summer Games and recently competed in an 800-meter race in the waters around the Cayman Islands. But on June 22, she did something most people wouldn't dare: rappelling down the side of a 15-story building.

"Being in this event means a lot to me as a Special Olympics athlete and Global Messenger," said Pleskow, who participated in the first Northern Virginia "Over the Edge" fundraiser in Arlington.

Pleskow joined local celebrities like DC 101 morning show DJ Elliot Segal, of "Elliot in the Morning" fame, ABC 7's Steve Chenevey and Fairfax County Chief of Police David Rohrer in dangling 250-feet from the side of the Hilton Crystal City in an effort to raise awareness and funds for Special Olympics of Virginia.

"Nonprofits are facing a lot of challenges these days," said Paul Griffith, who started Over the Edge in 2004 as a one-time fundraising event in his native Halifax, Nova Scotia. "There are only so many walks or runs you can do. Rappelling is something different and a more exciting way to bring awareness to an organization like Special Olympics."

Participants had to raise a minimum of \$1,000 for the "privilege" to go Over the Edge. Pleskow exceeded her goal, raising \$1,125 through a website for the event and \$4,105 to date for Special Olympics.

"Special Olympics has taught me to be very proud of myself for who I am and to be more independent," said Pleskow, who travels across the state as a global messenger for Special Olympics. "This was an amazing opportunity."

Sixty-eight rappellers participated in the event, raising more than \$60,000. For more information on Over the Edge or how to participate next year, visit [www.OverTheEdgeVA.com](http://www.OverTheEdgeVA.com) or follow Special Olympics of Virginia on Twitter at [@overtheadgeva](http://@overtheadgeva).

## Public Meeting Set to Present 2012 Park Bond

The Fairfax County Park Authority and the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority will hold a joint public comment meeting on Monday, July 9, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. in Rooms 106/107 of the Herrity Building located at 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA. This meeting will provide an opportunity for residents to learn about plans for a bond referendum this fall and to comment on the bond program highlights.

In May, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors authorized a \$75 million Park Bond referendum as part of the Fiscal Year 2013 through 2017 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This referendum, if approved by voters this fall, would provide \$12 million for the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority and \$63 million for the Fairfax County Park Authority.

The Fairfax County Park Authority has worked hard to create a balanced approach to capital improvements. Using the Needs Assessment 10-year capital plan, facility condition assessments, park master plans and stakeholder input as tools for project selection, the allocation of park bonds would fall into three categories: stewardship and land acquisition, facility renovations, and park development. The project list balances priority needs, reinvestment in aging facilities, advancement of phased projects and improving the park experience.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority utilizes a similar approach to allocating park bond funds, taking into account user needs, the capital improvement program, the strategic plan and existing facility conditions.

At the July meeting, staff will present the categorical highlights of the bond and will take public comment. Individuals and groups are welcome to speak. Individuals may speak for three minutes and representatives from groups may testify for five minutes. To sign up to speak in advance or for more information, contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662. You may also sign up to speak at the meeting. The public may also submit written comments to the Park Authority at 12055 Government Center Parkway, Suite 927 Fairfax, VA 22035-1118 or at [parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov).

To submit comments to the Regional Park Authority write to 5400 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, VA 22039 or [pladev@nvrpa.org](mailto:pladev@nvrpa.org). All comments will be taken until August 10, 2012.



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563, at least ten working days in advance of the registration deadline or event. TTY (703) 803-3354 703-324-8700 • ONLINE : [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks) • E-mail: [parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov)



# Fairfax County Public Schools FY 2013 Budget and New Schools Opening

## New School Buildings Opening in September

Students in three Fairfax County communities are eagerly anticipating the first day of school on September 4. Two new schools, Mason Crest Elementary School in Annandale and South County Middle School in Lorton, will open their doors for the first time. Graham Road Elementary School will move students from the old school location to a redesigned building previously used as an administrative building. All three projects were funded by bonds approved by Fairfax County voters.

### Mason Crest Elementary School

Mason Crest Elementary is located at the site of the old Lacey Instructional Center at 3705 Crest Drive in Annandale. Members of the community participated in naming the school which combines the name of the old Masonville school and the Broyhill Crest neighborhood.

"We are excited to already be working with our parents and our community," said Brian Butler, principal at Mason Crest. "Our mission is to ensure high levels of learning for all our students and it will take all of us, parents, teachers, and the community, working together to honor every student."

More than 470 students in grades K-5 are expected to attend Mason Crest. The school will

host programs and services including a Family and Early Childhood Education Program (FECEP/Headstart), advanced academic local level IV services, special education preschool and School-Aged Child Care (SACC).

The two-story building was designed with sustainable and environmentally friendly features including a ground source heat pump, the first one installed in a Fairfax County Public School. The heat pump uses 96 geothermal wells buried 400 feet under the ground to exchange heat to or from water in pipes as it travels to and from the building. Electricity helps move the heat back and forth, but the pump does not burn fossil fuel. This process helps reduce the school's carbon footprint because there are no harmful emissions to the environment.

### South County Middle School

South County Middle School was built in one of the fastest growing areas of Fairfax County. It sits on 40 acres of land located at 8700 Laurel Crest Drive in Lorton and was constructed on property obtained from Fairfax County Park Authority.

Many of the students attending the new middle school previously attended South County Secondary School (SCSS), which is adjacent to

the new school property.

"We look forward to keeping many of our SCSS traditions as we create a new identity as a separate middle school," said Marsha Manning, principal of South County Middle School.

The middle school is a two-story building with more than 176,000 square feet. It will have 40 general education classrooms and additional elective rooms for students in grades 7 and 8. By obtaining land from the park authority and using the same design as was used for Glasgow Middle School, FCPS was able to achieve cost savings for the development and design of the project.

The new middle school will be home to state-of-the-art technology and facilities and host an Advanced Academic Level IV Center Program and a program for intellectually disabled students.

"We're thrilled to move into a new building that we will make into our home," said Manning. "We will strive to make every student feel capable, connected, and a contributor at South County Middle School."

### Graham Road Elementary School

Graham Road Elementary is moving to a new location that will increase the school's capacity for more students and provide improved athletic fields and playground facilities. The new location will be at 2831 Graham Road in Falls Church.

In 2008, the Fairfax County School Board decided it would be less disruptive to renovate the administrative center than to renovate the elementary school since students would not be on the campus during the renovation. The new site also offered less traffic congestion, better traffic flow, and an opportunity to keep the Head Start-Family and Early Childhood Education Program (FECEP) together with the K-6 students in one building.

"The opening of our new school building is very exciting for our students, parents, and staff," said Terry Dade, principal at Graham Road. "We are eagerly anticipating the day when the doors officially open and the students' faces light up as they enter a building that is bright and inviting and provides the latest technology and resources to enhance their learning. We sincerely appreciate the community support during this process and we're really looking forward to the first day of school in September."

The renovated building has been transformed with all new interior and exterior finishes, energy efficient windows, and a new roof. In addition, a new HVAC system has been installed along with a new fire alarm and other life safety systems.



## Getting To Know Us

### IT Operations Cathy Sells

As you watch a building being constructed over time, you notice the concrete being poured, the roof being built, and the windows installed. Each person working on the school building plays a significant role in the process and is relied upon by the whole team.

Opening a new school building requires coordination by a team of skilled professionals, from the areas of design and construction, transportation, food service, human resources, information technology, safety and security, instructional services, special services and many others.

Behind the scenes there is much going on that may not be visible or noticeable. Cathy Sells, director of operations for information technology (IT) at FCPS, works with the entire IT department to ensure that the technology required for a school building is available when and where it is needed.

"Technologies such as network connectivity, voice services, wireless access, data storage, computer equipment, printers, and copiers ensure a contemporary learning environment for 21st century instruction," said Sells.

"Our IT team works very closely with the school principal on the technology plan for the school. Our mission is to provide technology leadership and services to ensure a safe and secure environment for 24/7 learning.

"It is really fascinating to see the coordination of the people involved when we build a new school," she said. "Everyone works together to ensure that the new site will be the best possible place for the students and staff in that community. We all rely on each other and it's one of the best things we do as an organization."



## Fairfax County School Board Adopts FY 2013 Approved Budget

The Fairfax County School Board has adopted the Fairfax County Public Schools 2012-13 school year (FY 2013) Approved Budget of \$2.4 billion that includes:

- compensation increases for employees.
- the elimination of student athletic fees.
- more than 700 new positions to address enrollment growth.
- extended learning time for at-risk students.
- the expansion of the World Languages program in elementary schools.
- a phase in of mandated employee contributions to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS).

The FY 2013 Approved Budget is an 8.2 percent increase over the FY 2012 Approved Budget. For more information visit [www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu) and click on FY 2013 Budget.

This year's State of Schools Report courtesy of Apple Federal Credit Union



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# POETRY CORNER

## Listen

BY HAZEL SHELL/MCLEAN

I always thought, when I was young,  
The way to converse was to wag my tongue;  
But as I grew older, I began to learn  
To stop my talking and give others a turn.  
Now I have learned, and I know it is true,  
That if I keep talking I'll learn nothing new;  
So I close my mouth and open my ears,  
And grow ever smarter through the years!

## Goodbye Summer

BY KATHERINE ROHLOFF/LANGLEY HIGH

Seagulls scatter as they see me run towards the ocean  
Over the hot sand covered with broken shells, but I never break my motion

I sail past the castles and holes  
Past the scuttling crabs and the fishing poles  
And splash into the cold ocean waves  
I look out towards the horizon and I gaze  
The sky is a beautiful painting of fiery colors  
With shades of pinks, yellows, and oranges that are like no other  
As the sun continues to set, the brilliant colors quickly fade  
But I will never forget the impression that they made  
I will remember it in my mind until summer returns  
Back to my beloved Chincoteague- ponies, biking, and sunburns.

## FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to [mclean@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mclean@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

**Redeemer Lutheran Church,** 1545 Chain Bridge Road, McLean, offers a 9 a.m. traditional service and a 10:30 a.m. contemporary service on Sundays. Also offers two services during the summer – both of which will include children's sermons. 703-356-3346.

**St. Francis Episcopal Church,** 9220 Georgetown Pike in Great Falls, offers three Sunday services and a host of musical, educational, outreach, and fellowship ministries to enrich spiritual growth. 7:45 a.m. Worship Service without music; 9 a.m. Worship Service, Children's Chapel and Children's Choirs; 10 a.m. Sunday School and Adult Forum; and 11 a.m. Worship Service with Adult Choir. 703-759-2082.

**Trinity United Methodist Church,** 1205 Dolley Madison Blvd., McLean, Sunday worship services are at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for adults is at 9:30 a.m. and for children during the 10:30 a.m. worship service. Youth Group for grades 7-12 meets Sundays at 6 p.m. A 20-minute service of Holy Communion is held each Wednesday at 12 p.m. 703-356-3312 or [umtrinity.org](http://umtrinity.org).

**The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA)** offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. [www.jssa.org/growth-learning](http://www.jssa.org/growth-learning).

**HAVEN of Northern Virginia** offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. Contact 703-941-7000 or [www.havenofnova.org](http://www.havenofnova.org) for schedules and registration information.

**McLean Bible Church Fitness Class** at Body & Soul Fitness. Balance is key, energy is renewed and strength is gained. 9:45 a.m. Mondays and Fridays. Free childcare for registered

s t u d e n t s .  
[bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org](mailto:bodyandsoul@mcleanbible.org).

**Vajrayogini Buddhist Center** offers ongoing classes on meditation and Buddhist philosophy, Mondays at 7 p.m. at Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. \$10 per class. 202-331-2122 or [www.meditation-dc.org](http://www.meditation-dc.org).

**St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church,** 1830 Kirby Road in McLean. The third Sunday service every month at 10:15 a.m. allows children to play active roles in the music and as greeters and ushers. Traditional services are every Sunday at 8:15 and 10:15 a.m.

**Vienna Assembly of God** has a ministry to children on Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m. at the corner of Center N and Ayr Hill Avenue, N.E. Children's Church on Sundays also available. 703-938-7736 or [www.ViennaAG.com](http://www.ViennaAG.com).

**Vienna Christian Healing Rooms,** every Saturday, 1-5 p.m., at 8200 Bell Lane. A team of Christians is available to anyone requesting prayer. Free and open to the public. 703-698-9779 or [www.viennachristianhealingrooms.com](http://www.viennachristianhealingrooms.com).

**Chesterbrook United Methodist Church** is at 1711 Kirby Road, McLean. Worship service is at 11 a.m. Sunday school is at 9:30 a.m. for adults and children. Rev. Kathleene Card, Pastor. 703-356-7100 or [www.ChesterbrookUMC.org](http://www.ChesterbrookUMC.org).

**A Centering Prayer Group** meets Fridays, 9:30 a.m. at Andrew Chapel United Methodist Church, 1301 Trap Road, Vienna. The hour includes a brief reading related to Centering Prayer, followed by a 20-minute prayer period. E-mail Martha Thomas at [mmthomas211@hotmail.com](mailto:mmthomas211@hotmail.com) or call the church at 703-759-3509.



I geek worms

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## Visit These Houses of Worship

Join A Club, Make New Friends, or Expand Your Horizons...

<p><b>Assemblies of God</b> Arlington Assembly of God...703-524-1667 Calvary Gospel Church...703-525-6636</p> <p><b>Baptist</b> Bon Air Baptist Church...703-525-8079 McLean Baptist Church...703-356-8080 Memorial Baptist Church...703-538-7000</p> <p><b>Buddhism</b> The Vajrayogini Buddhist Center 202-331-2122</p> <p><b>Churches- Catholic</b> St. Agnes Catholic Church...703-525-1166 Cathedral of St Thomas More...703-525-1300 Holy Transfiguration Melkite Greek Catholic Church...703-734-9566 Our Lady of Lourdes...703-684-9261 Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic 703-979-5580 St Ann Catholic Church...703-528-6276 St. Charles Catholic Church...703-527-5500</p> <p><b>Vatican II Catholic Community</b> NOVA Catholic Community...703-852-7907</p>	<p><b>Church of Christ</b> Arlington Church of Christ...703-528-0535</p> <p><b>Church of God- Anderson, Indiana</b> Church of God...703-671-6726</p> <p><b>Churches-Episcopal</b> St Andrew Episcopal Church...703-522-1600 St George Episcopal Church...703-525-8286 St Johns Episcopal Church...703-671-6834 St Mary Episcopal Church...703-527-6800 St Michael S Episcopal Church ...703-241-2474 St Paul Episcopal Church...703-820-2625 St Peter's Episcopal Church...703-536-6606 St Thomas Episcopal Church...703-442-0330 Trinity Episcopal Church...703-920-7077</p> <p><b>Churches Lutheran(ELCA)</b> Advent Lutheran Church...703-521-7010 Faith Lutheran Church...703-525-9283 German Lutheran Church...703-276-8952 Lutheran Church of The Redeemer ...703-356-3346</p>	<p>Resurrection Lutheran Church...703-532-5991</p> <p><b>Churches Lutheran(Missouri, Synod)</b> Our Savior Lutheran Church...703-892-4846</p> <p><b>Churches-Nazarene</b> Arlington First Church of the Nazarene ...703-525-2516</p> <p><b>Church- Brethren</b> Church of The Brethren...703-524-4100</p> <p><b>Churches-Baptist</b> Arlington Baptist Church...703-979-7344 Cherrydale Baptist Church...703-525-8210 First Baptist of Ballston...703-525-7824 Mt. Zion Baptist Church...703-979-7411</p> <p><b>Churches -Baptist-Free Will</b> Bloss Memorial Free Will Baptist Church...703-527-7040</p> <p><b>Churches -Christian Science</b> McLean-First Church of Christ, Scientist ...703-356-1391 First Church of Christ, Scientist, Arlington... 703-534-0020</p> <p><b>Churches- Presbyterian</b> Arlington Presbyterian Church...703-920-5660 Church of Covenant ...703-524-4115 Clarendon Presbyterian Church 703-527-9513 Little Falls Presbyterian Church 703-538-5230 Trinity Presbyterian Church... 703-536-5600 Westminster Presbyterian ... 703-549-4766</p> <p><b>Churches- Unitarian Universalist</b> Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington 703-892-2565</p>	<p><b>Churches-United Methodist</b> Arlington United Methodist Church ...703-979-7527 Trinity United Methodist Church of McLean...703-356-3312 Charles Wesley United Methodist...703-356-6336 Calvary United Methodist...703-892-5185 Cherrydale United Methodist...703-527-2621 Chesterbrook United Methodist ...703-356-7100 Clarendon United Methodist...703-527-8574 Community United Methodist...703-527-1085 Mt. Olivet United Methodist...703-527-3934 Walker Chapel United Methodist ...703-538-5200</p> <p><b>Churches- United Church of Christ</b> Bethel United Church of Christ...703-528-0937 Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ...703-538-4886</p> <p><b>Non-Denominational</b> New Life Christian Church - McLean Campus ...571-294-8306 Celebration Center for Spiritual Living ...703-560-2030</p> <p><b>Metaphysical</b> Arlington Metaphysical Chapel ...703-276-8738</p> <p><b>Presbyterian Church in America Churches</b> Christ Church of Arlington...703-527-0420</p> <p><b>Synagogues - Conservative</b> Congregation Etz Hayim...703-979-4466</p> <p><b>Synagogues - Orthodox</b> Fort Myer Minyan...703-863-4520 Chabad Luvavitch of Alexandria-Arlington ...703-370-2774</p> <p><b>Synagogue - Reconstructionist</b> Kol Ami, the North Virginia Reconstructionist Community ...571-271-8387</p>
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**Saint Ann Catholic Church**

**SUNDAY LITURGY SCHEDULE:**  
Saturday Vigil: 5:30 PM  
Sunday: 8:00, 9:30, 11:00 AM  
1:30 PM Spanish Liturgy  
5312 North 10th Street  
Arlington Virginia 22205  
Parish Office: (703) 528-6276

**DAILY EUCHARIST:**  
Weekdays  
Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM & 8:30 AM  
Saturday, 8:30 AM

**All Are Welcome!**

**PARISH WEBSITE:**  
[www.rc.net/arlington/stann](http://www.rc.net/arlington/stann)

To highlight your Faith Community call Karen at 703-778-9422

# SUMMER FUN 2012

Local residents gather at Langley High School for the annual McLean Community Center fireworks show. Gates will open at this year's event at 8 p.m. July 4.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/  
THE CONNECTION

**“The fireworks at Langley are without question, my favorite summer activity in McLean, our family looks forward to it every year, the one year we tried to go into Washington, D.C. the kids wouldn't hear of it.”**

—Chad Arnold of McLean



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**McLean Symphony Festival Singers Director Felicia Kessel Crawley and baritone William Powers at The McLean Symphony's Season Finale Concert, June 2.**

## ‘Ode to Joy’ in McLean

In its 2011–2012 Season Finale concert on Saturday, June 2, The McLean Symphony (TMS) premiered a new composition, presented a suite of much-loved arias, and performed Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, 4th movement known as the “Choral,” recognized for its powerful “Ode to Joy” theme. This concert marked completion of a year-long celebration of 40 consecutive years of making music in the greater DC area under the baton of music director Dingwall Fleary. Already looking toward another decade, Maestro Fleary and the Symphony have performed throughout the greater DC area in addition to the regular concert series in McLean.

In a program recognizing the human voice as “The First Instrument,” the concert included more than fifty voices with the McLean Symphony Festival Singers, prepared by Felicia Kessel Crawley. In addition to the Festival Singers, The McLean Symphony was joined by four professional soloists, each of whom has previously performed with the orchestra and Maestro Fleary. Soprano Joyce Lundy, mezzo soprano Valerie Kehembe Eichelberger, tenor Antonio Giuliano and baritone William Powers sang the key soloist roles of the “Ode to Joy,” in addition to each being featured in a much-loved operatic aria by Puccini, Mozart or Bizet. The concert was introduced by television journalist Roger Mudd, a long-time friend of The McLean Symphony.

For the season's crowning work, The McLean Symphony members swelled to more than 70 instrumentalists. Together with the McLean Symphony Festival Singers and the four featured solo artists, they brought Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 “Choral” (“Ode to Joy”) to the McLean area. This is only the second time in 40 years that Maestro Fleary has presented the “Ode to Joy” in this area; the first time was the celebration of 20 years of conducting classical music in McLean.

More information about The McLean Symphony is at the website, [www.mclean-symphony.org](http://www.mclean-symphony.org), and at the Symphony's blogsite, <http://mclean-symphony.blogspot.com>. For additional information, write to [mail@mclean-symphony.org](mailto:mail@mclean-symphony.org).

# Enjoying Summer in McLean

## Fourth of July, revamped Block Party highlight summer events.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION

This summer in McLean will start off with an annual celebration and conclude with a revamped version of one of the community's signature youth events. The annual Fourth of July fireworks show will take place Wednesday, July 4 at Langley High School, with grounds opening up at 8 p.m.

“The fireworks at Langley are without question, my favorite summer activity in McLean, our family looks forward to it every year, the one year we tried to go into Washington, D.C. the kids wouldn't hear of it,” said Chad Arnold of McLean. “It's just a perfect setup, you can spread a blanket on the lawn, or sit in the bleachers for a more panoramic view, it's a great choice to have.”

The annual celebration will be hosted by the McLean Community Center, and members of the American Legion will be present handing out American flags to those in attendance. The Naval District of Washington's Naval Color Guard will present the colors prior to the event.

Fireworks will start at 9:15 p.m. Smoking, pets, sparklers, alcohol and outside fireworks are prohibited. More information is available at [www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org).

The McLean Community Center



**Grand Revival members, from left, Alex Obolensky and Nate Wilkinson perform at last year's Old Firehouse Teen Center Block Party. This year's will take place in August, and will be more of an evening event, which will include the McLean Teens Got Talent competition.**

### CONCERTS IN THE PARK

The McLean Community Center will host Concerts in the Park, a series of musical events featuring a variety of international acts every Sunday in McLean Central Park, starting at 5 p.m.

#### JULY 1

Russia, Washington Balalaika Society Chamber Orchestra

#### JULY 8

Hawaii, the Aloha Boys

#### JULY 15

Klezmer Music, Alexandria Klezmet

#### JULY 22

Germany, Alte Kameraden

#### JULY 29

Uganda/Africa, Kinobe

will also host a revamped version of its annual Block Party Aug. 25 from 4 to 10 p.m. While many elements, such as the McLean Teens Got Talent exhibition will be the same, there will be some new additions.

“We moved it to August and into the evening hours to make it more of a signature event that everyone can come out and enjoy,” said Ryan Brookes of the OFTC. “We're working on getting a big headlining band to play the show, and we're hoping the event serves to raise awareness of the place.”

The Block Party traditionally takes place in October, but Brookes said the earlier date will allow the event to take advantage of later sunlight, as well as give them a better chance for good weather.

“We're hoping it will be a little warmer, because although we've had good luck before, it can be hit or miss,” he said. “It will be a little warmer for the dunk tank, which is good for me, because it got a little cold in the tank last year. Plus we'll be able to light the stage and make it a true nighttime concert event.”

# SUMMER FUN 2012

The Schmid family, mom Abbie, kids Addison, Caden and Caleigh splash around in the Atlantis Waterpark, located at Bull Run Regional Park on June 20. In addition to the spacious wading area and a sand pit, the park has a large pool with an island of slides in the middle, a splash pad with water cannons, showers, sprinklers and a 500 gallon dumping bucket, and two large water slides.



## Cooling Off at Waterpark



PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/  
THE CONNECTION

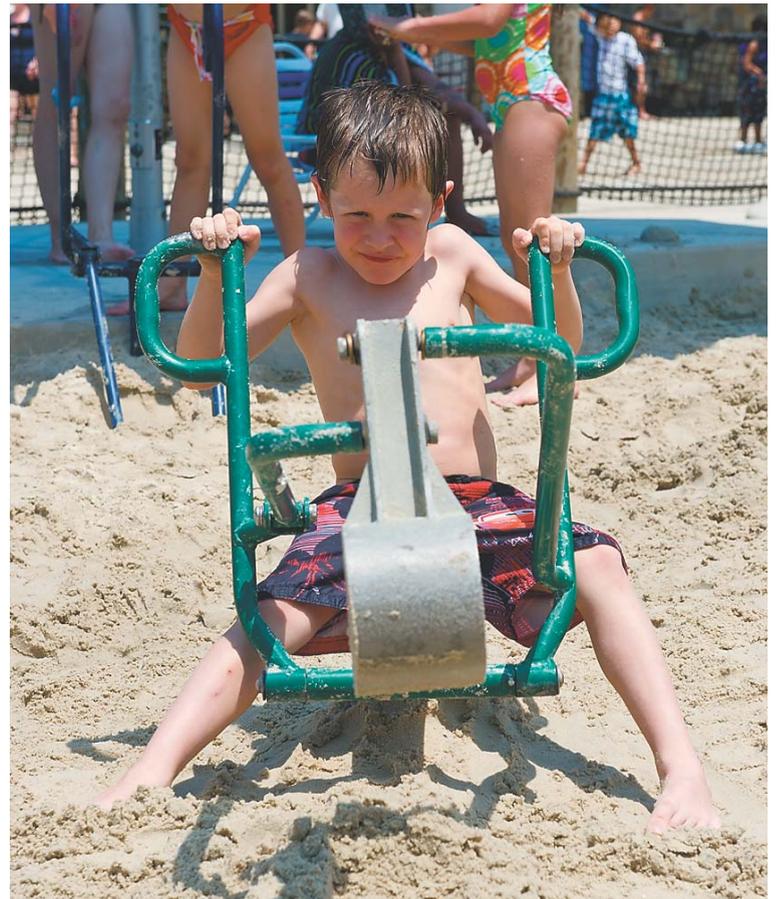
Trying to beat the heat, Austin Pacheco of Culpepper takes a ride down a slide in the center of the pool on June 20 at Atlantis Waterpark, located at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville. The waterpark boasts a 500 gallon dumping bucket, many slides and a sand pit.



Elias Gilman of Centreville is a busy builder on June 20 at the Atlantis Waterpark in Centreville. The park boasts a large pool with an island of slides in the middle, a splash pad with water cannons, showers, sprinklers and a 500 dumping bucket, a spacious wading pool and two large water slides.



The crowd at Atlantis Waterpark, located at Bull Run Regional Park in Centreville, hearing the dinging bell race to stand underneath the 500 gallon dumping bucket on June 20, one of the many exciting features of the waterpark. The splash pad offers water cannons, showers, sprinklers, buckets and more. In addition the pool has a 230-foot open slide and a 170 ride in an enclosed slide as well as a large wading pool and sand pit. More information at [www.atlantisbullrun.com](http://www.atlantisbullrun.com)



Bryce Gilman of Centreville digs away in the sand pit at the Atlantis Waterpark located at Bull Run Regional Park on June 20. The park boasts a large pool with an island of slides in the middle, a splash pad with water cannons, showers, sprinklers and a 500 gallon dumping bucket, a spacious wading pool and two large water slides.



PHOTO/COURTESY OF WILDTHINGS

The Langley Wildthings are under the direction this summer of head coach Mason Walsh (right) and assistants Sam Speers and Will Brumas.

## Langley Wildthings Victorious In Season-Opener Swim Meet

Locals are under new coaching staff; StingRays also open summer with a win.

The Langley Wildthings (1-0) won the opening meet of the 2012 season against Mansion House, 223-196, in an NVSL Div. 5 meet held last Saturday, June 23.

The Wildthings swept three races: boys 9-10, 50-meters breaststroke (Jack Hoeymans, Benjamin Scott, and Sean Mullery finishing first through third, respectively); girls 8-and-under 25 breaststroke (Liliana Schone, Helena Swaak, Natalie Schmanske); and boys 8-under, 25-butterfly (Luke Watson, Danny Quinn, Gardiner Tyler).

Two Langley individual records were broken: 13-year-old Jinwon Bailer in the boys 13-14, 50-butterfly (29.16); and Liliana Schone in the girls 8-and-under 25-butterfly (20.26). As a point of interest, the former 25 butterfly record of 20.32 was held by Liliana's older sister, Izzy!

One Langley Relay team record was broken - by the girls' 8-and-under 100-free team of Natalie Schmanske, Kate Walter, Helena Swaak and Liliana Schone. The foursome timed at 1:18:97, bettering the old record of 1:22:53.

Double winners for Langley were: Luke Watson, Vincent Watson, Jinwon Bailer, Emily Wallach, Jack Hoeymans, Elena Shklyar and Liliana Schone.

Single winners for Langley were: Maggie Bellaschi, Kate Walter, Zach Thompson, Nathan Johnson, Kelly Crittenberger, Audrey Wallach, Jack Reilly and Schuyler Bailer.

**THIS SUMMER'S** Langley Wildthings enter the swim season under the training of a new team of coaches, all local and former NVSL swimmers themselves.

Head coach Mason Walsh is assisted by Sam Speers and Will Brumas in working with the nearly 190-member Div. 5 team at The Langley Club in McLean.

All three coaches began swimming within the NVSL in early childhood. Walsh swam for the Herndon Hammerheads, starting at age five, while Brumas and Speers swam together for Hamlet Swim Club (McLean) for more than a decade.

Coach Walsh also swam collegiately for Virginia

Tech where she was an NCAA All-American. She placed 12th at the U.S. Olympic Time Trials in the 50-meters freestyle event.

While the Wildthings look forward to these credentials helping them to put marks in the win column this season, Coach Mason says her "biggest priority is having fun. That's what summer swimming is all about."

"Aside from being technically sound, team spirit is the second priority," added Mason. "That's what we all loved about NVSL swimming growing up."

Coaches Speers and Brumas concur. "The age range of summer swimmers, five to 18, gives you a unique set of relationships. Year-round swimmers can come back to summer swim and get that same excitement that you had when you were little. You get to grow into the team you started with. That makes swimming, which really is an individual sport, into a team sport."

The Langley Wildthings is an NVSL summer swim team offering a fun, team-oriented experience for youngsters ages five to 18. The goal of the team is to provide every member an opportunity to improve swimming skills and achieve success at his or her level of ability.

The RiverBend StingRays (Great Falls), in Dominion Country Club Swim League action this past Saturday, June 23, defeated Country Club of Fairfax, 402.5 to 113.5. RiverBend improved to 2-0 on the young season.

The 200-meters, 13-14 girls relay team of Maya Valcourt, Lauren Bell, Kate Hall and Micaela Grassi broke a team record with a time of 2:27.85. Micaela Grassi, meanwhile, broke two team records - in 50-fly (31.47) and 50-backstroke (33.76).

StingRay swimmers Will Koeppen, Carter Bennett, Ryan Windus, Katherine Allen, and Micaela Grassi each won four events in the meet. Also, Anna Takis, Pearce Bloom and Sarah Allen won three blue ribbons each, and Sara-Bailey Zeiller won two events.

Other first place winners included: Connor Smith, Taylor Maguire, Olivia Franke, Tommy Rogers, Colin O'Connor, Charlotte Bell, Matthew Dungan and Christopher Blankingship.

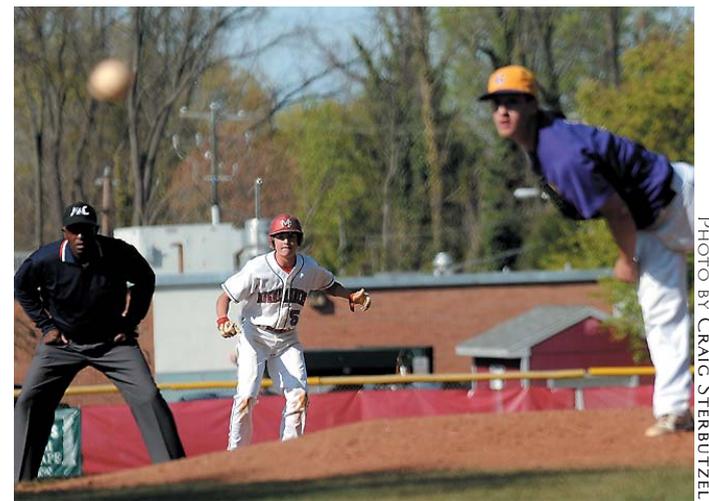


PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUITZEL

McLean High's Joey Sullivan, shown here as a base runner on third base, was named Second Team All-Liberty District this past baseball season.

### SPORTS ROUNDUPS

**All-District Baseball:** The following Langley High and McLean High baseball players earned All-District accolades this past 2012 spring season. From Langley (Liberty District), First Team All-District selections were Collin Cantwell (Outfield) and Matt Moser (Utility). Second Team Saxons were Brandon Bast (Shortstop); Cal Jadacki (Third Base); and Michael Byrne (Pitcher). From McLean High (Liberty District), First Team honors went to Josh Sborz (Pitcher); Brock Hunter (Pitcher); and Hardy Cox (DH). Sborz was named the District Player of the Year. The lone Highlander earning Second Team All-District accolades was Joey Sullivan (DH).

**McLean Youth Soccer (MYS) Premier Soccer Academy Camp**

began its weekly sessions this past Monday, June 25, for youngsters ages under-16 through under-17. The weekly camp sessions will run all summer through Aug. 31. Half day, full day and elite evening sessions are available. Players from all clubs are welcome. Sessions are directed by MYS' professional staff. Registration is online on the club's home page: [www.mcleansoccer.org](http://www.mcleansoccer.org). For more information, please email [admin@mcleansoccer.org](mailto:admin@mcleansoccer.org).

**Eric Reed of McLean** was honored as the 2011 US Youth Soccer Administrator of the Year award recipient earlier this year on Feb. 17 at the US Youth Soccer Awards Gala, held in Boston. More than 1,000 individuals were in attendance.

As treasurer of McLean Youth Soccer, Reed has played a piv-

otal role in bringing the club to a healthy financial position, enabling strategic investments in field improvements. Reed brought modern business and financial practice expertise to a club with more than 3,500 players from nearly 2,500 families and a budget of nearly \$2.5 million. Reed has also served on the McLean Youth Soccer Board of Directors for almost five years.

The recipient of the Administrator of the Year award is selected by the US Youth Soccer Board of Directors. The Administrator of the Year Award honors the extraordinary accomplishments in administration over a career.

**Stuart High School in Falls Church** will host its annual sports camps this summer.

The girls' combination Volleyball-Basketball camp will be held July 16-19 for grades kindergarten through fifth. Also, a girls' Volleyball-Basketball camp for youngsters sixth through 10th grades will take place July 23-26. The boys' basketball Camp will be held June 25 through June 29. For more information and to get registration forms, go to [raidersports.org](http://raidersports.org).

**Potomac Inline Hockey**

in Chantilly is offering free, year-round 'Learn to Skate, Learn to Play' lessons for youngsters interested in playing inline hockey. Lessons are held on Saturday mornings from 8-9 at The Box in Chantilly. Registration can be done online at [www.potomachockey.com](http://www.potomachockey.com). Contact [youth@potomachockey.com](mailto:youth@potomachockey.com) or call 703-961-8280 for full details.

## Woman's Club of McLean Installs New Officers

A ceremony was held May 30 to install the 2012-2013 officers of the Woman's Club of McLean. This will be the second consecutive year of service for each officer, which is a first for the club. From left: Member and parliamentarian Daisy Logan, president Virginia Sandahl, and officers Millie Thompson, Dawn Schulz, Susan Cooper Jordano, Joan Morton, Jeanette Calland, Joan Leonard, Phyllis Ainsworth and Joan Beard.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Nadene Wright, center, and her Art Extension Students.

## Displaying Artwork of the Year

On June 6 Cooper Middle School had their art show put on by Nadene Wright's Art Extensions class. Each student created and wore a t-shirt inspired by the artist that most inspires them and

displayed their top works of the year. The exhibit included paintings, drawings, collages, clay and wire sculptures. There was food, music and lots of young talent.

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send School Notes to [mclean@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mclean@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday.

**Julia Diamond** of McLean earned term honors for the 2011 fall semester at Skidmore College. She is the daughter of Robert Diamond and Amy Pullman.

**Hanna Sophia Longwell** of McLean has received the fall 2011 dean's award at Colgate University of Hamilton, N.Y. She is the daughter of George W. Longwell and Jacquelyn R. Longwell.

**Philip Deming Stout** of McLean has received the fall 2011 dean's award at Colgate University of Hamilton, N.Y. He is the son of Richard D. Stout and Elizabeth C. Stout.

McLean residents **Elizabeth McCune** (Poetry), **YouNa An** (Poetry), **Jordan Goodson** (Personal

Essay/Memoir), **Seon Kim** (Science Fiction/Fantasy), **Sung jin Kim** (Science Fiction/Fantasy), **Rishi Malhotra** (Dramatic Script), **Rebecca Oh** (Short Story), **Francesca O'Hop** (Dramatic Script) and **Madeline Reinsel** (Poetry) have won regional recognition in the 2012 Scholastic Writing Awards.

McLean residents **Kate Connelly**, **Jack Connelly** and **Bridget Connelly** have been named to the fall 2011 dean's list at The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass. They are the children of John and Margaret Connelly.

Army Spec. **William A. Haig** has graduated from Basic Combat Training at Fort Sill, Lawton, Okla., as an Honor Graduate and received a Letter of Com-

mendation. Haig achieved a score of 298 on the Army Physical Fitness Test; the highest score in his basic combat training class. He is the son of Wendy A. and Alexander P. Haig of Harithy Drive, Dunn Loring. The 2005 graduate of McLean High School earned a bachelor's degree in 2009 from Rice University, Houston, Texas.

**Stephan Mecklenburg** of McLean has been named to the fall 2011 dean's list at Susquehanna University of Selinsgrove, Pa. He is the son of Kathy Mecklenburg and the late Steve Mecklenburg.

**Beth A. Taylor** of McLean has received a master of science in international marketing management from Boston University of Boston, Mass.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Charlotte sharing a laugh with 3-year-old orphan "Wichian."

## Madeira Student Reaches Out to Orphans in Thailand

Charlotte Heffelmire, of Vienna, is a freshman at the Madeira School and spent her spring break in the tropics, but not to sunbathe and enjoy the beach. Instead, she presented several thousand dollars to the Pattaya Orphanage near the Gulf of Siam in Thailand. For the last several years Charlotte has been working and saving her money as well as collecting donations to help the orphans in Thailand.

Upon arrival at the orphanage, the director led her on a tour and explained that most of the orphans were abandoned by mothers with drug or other problems. After a tour of the facilities, Charlotte was able to see directly who her donation would affect. It was heartbreaking to see the children who grabbed at her legs, hands, shirt, and anything they could get a hand on - tugging for attention that they normally are not able to get. This sort of reaction from the children was not out of deliberate neglect by the caretakers, but it was clear the orphanage just did not have enough hands to go around and tried to do the best they could.

After spending some time with the children, Charlotte could not help but wonder if the little bit she was able to donate at the time would be enough for a lasting impact. It was very clear that the orphanage needed much more than just the occasional visit from a concerned visitor. It needed people who would care enough to donate their time as well as some of the basic needs like food and medicine to make sure these children had at least the essentials requirements.

Charlotte encourages everyone to visit Pattaya Orphanage's website at <http://www.thepattayaorphanage.org/> to learn more about the history of the orphanage, donate time, supplies or even sponsor a child. Charlotte was originally hesitant about donations because you can never be sure that they will help the ones that truly need it, but after visiting and seeing how her time and charity directly affects these children's lives, she hopes everyone can find it in their hearts to give just a little, because it truly does go a long way.

—ERIC HEFFELMIRE



Charlotte offers donation to orphanage director Khun Siriphen.

## A GAP In My Thinking



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Recently, due to circumstances beyond my control, I was forced to buy a new car (in this instance, "new" means different, not a current model year). Estimated repairs at 137,000 miles that could have escalated into the unknown – and unaffordable – thousands compelled me to fish so I wouldn't have my bait cut (and I don't even like to fish). As a result of this unexpected commitment, the light at the end of the financing tunnel has all but disappeared (I had one year left on our previous car). Where once I was nearly right-side up, I am now upside down, inside out and no longer counting the months until my final payment. Now, I am counting the days until my second month's payment (there's too many months remaining to count months). All that I had anticipated as being old is once again new: the bank/lien holder, the payment amount/terms and the inch-thick payment booklet. Seventy-two months can really stack up.

But I really didn't have a choice, unfortunately. In fact, I was dealing from a position of weakness (my car was undriveable). The dealership, after examining the car's engine, sort of knew that fixing my car, given its age and mileage, was probably unlikely, so they made me an offer – as a trade toward the purchase of one of their vehicles. It wasn't ideal by any means, but given the mechanical troubles, I didn't feel as if I had any practical options (I wasn't going to tow my car to various dealerships for offers, was I?) so I swallowed hard and tried not to bite the hand of the seller as the deal (and I use that term loosely) was presented to me. I accepted. And so the damage/mean deal was done. I wasn't happy about it, although I did receive fancy, and expensive, floor mats for free. However, I wasn't quite finished.

As any car-purchaser knows, the deal isn't really done until, as they say, the paperwork is finished. And "paperwork" means sitting down with the finance manager to sign and seal that "deal." Only after doing so will you know what your "new" car is actually going to cost (with miscellaneous "add-ons" like undercoating). For me, my monthly payment increased by nearly \$100: extended warranties, prepaid service contract and tire replacement insurance, all of which sounded like a good idea – and prudent, at the time. Now I'm not so sure, but what's done is done and the less said about it the better. I really do have other things to worry about, as you regular readers know.

One of the offers the finance manager made to me, which I had no regrets refusing, was GAP insurance. My understanding now is that GAP Insurance pays off the balance of the outstanding loan in the event an accident "totals" the car, far exceeding the settlement offered by standard coverage, often suggested/encouraged/required when a low down payment is made and the borrower is approved for a significant percentage of the cost of the vehicle. Given the other add-on commitments I had already made and my impatience at considering additional dollars, I passed and so we finalized the paperwork.

Maybe I was too hasty. Incorrectly, I thought GAP Insurance had more to do with the balance of the loan being paid off in the event of death and/or disability. Since I'm already disabled and have sufficient life insurance – and don't want to think about death, if possible, I declined. I never even gave the finance manager an opportunity to explain or to give me a quote. For all I know, the price might have been right. I should have at least listened since, as a cancer patient, still undergoing treatment, I'll never be able to buy insurance any other way. Had I listened, I would have learned of my misunderstanding, and considering what I now know to be the meaning/purpose of GAP Insurance, I might have considered it.

But it's too late; I called, and now I'll never know if the benefit was worth the cost. But that's what happens when you're terminal; there's only so much you can worry about. It's somewhere between picking your spots, being mentally overwhelmed and self-preservation. It's a regular three-ring circus – without the clowns. I hope I live to regret my decision – and never need to fill the gap caused by my "hasty" decision.

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

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