

Returning to South Lakes

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Kim Retzer, a South Lakes High School graduate and former teacher and assistant principal, has been named principal.

A Decision Time for Silver Line

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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 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 and click on FY 2013 Budget.

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



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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.



PHOTO BY
CHUCK SAMUELSON/
DULLES CORRIDOR
METRORAIL 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 Airport 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 spendthrift 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 constituents on June 7 setting out her concerns. She said although the line’s extension was considered for years, the “prior boards merely en-

dorsed 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 business.”

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

SEE BOARD, PAGE 5



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.



PHOTO BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Kim Retzer, new principal of South Lakes High School, member of the Class of 1989, and former assistant principal and Special Education teacher.

Retzer Takes Reins at South Lakes

Kim Retzer, South Lakes Class of 1989, named principal.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

As a member of South Lakes High School's Class of 1989 Kim Retzer (nee Brophy) planned on going to law school, majoring in Government and Politics at George Mason. But she began substitute teaching during college, leading to a long term substitute position while a teacher was on maternity leave.

"I found myself developing such a connection with the students that I knew it was something I had to pursue," she said.

More than two decades after graduating, Retzer has been named Principal of South Lakes High School, after a career that includes two previous stops at her alma mater. She began her career as a Special Education teacher at South Lakes, and later served as an assistant principal.

"Growing up in Reston there was a real sense of inclusiveness that shaped who I am."

— Kim Retzer

"Growing up in Reston there was a real sense of inclusiveness that shaped who I am," she said. "That's the approach I plan to take as principal, engaging the students, parents, staff and families as much as possible. This isn't something I can do alone, and I'm looking forward to being a part of the group that leads South Lakes into the future."

She said one of her priorities this summer will be to continue and strengthen the school's Positive Behavior Support program, which emphasizes respect, readiness and responsibility among both students and faculty.

"Our job is to train students in 21st century skills. Things change so much faster these days than when I was in school," she said. "And it's



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

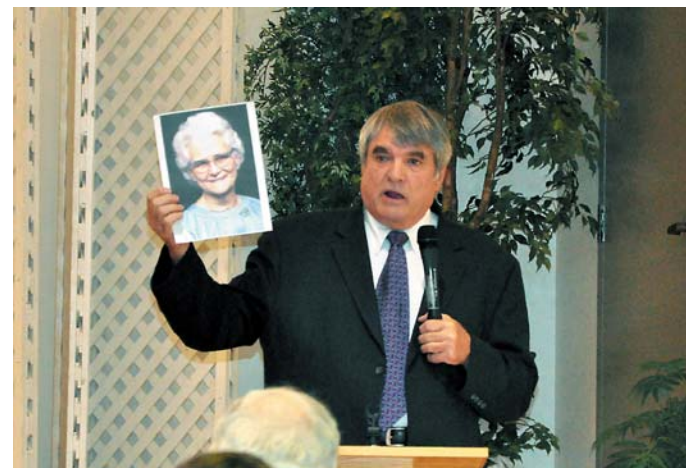
Kim Retzer with long-time SLHS Admin Assistant and proud mom, Sharon Brophy.

important for faculty and staff to stay a step ahead, because it's our responsibility to use technology to teach effectively and to enhance learning."

Among her strongest memories while a student at South Lakes were Homecoming Week festivities, where she said she loved to watch the classes compete throughout the week, only to come together at the end as a united school community.

"Something that always sticks out in my mind is seeing students walk across the stage at graduation and knowing that they had a lot stacked against them, but they made it," she said. "Those are the moments when you can feel good about what you do."

Retzer is the second South Lakes Alumni to be named principal of a local school recently. Lindsay Trout, former assistant principal at South Lakes and member of the Class of 1991, was named principal of Terraset Elementary School in April.



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH/THE CONNECTION

Bill Pelke, co-founder and president of Journey to Hope, an anti-capital punishment organization, holds a picture of his grandmother, who was murdered in 1985. Pelke and other speakers that have been affected by the death penalty spoke at St. John Neumann Catholic Church Monday, June 25.

Fighting Capital Punishment

Anti-death penalty advocates speak at St. John Neumann.

BY ALEX McVEIGH
THE CONNECTION

more personal manner.

For most people, the death penalty is a concept that occasionally intersects their lives in the form of news reports about people from across the country. But for others, it is something that has taken someone away from them, or threatens to. St. John Neumann Catholic Church hosted a panel discussion of members of Journey to Hope, a group consisting of families of murder victims, as well as others who have been touched by the death penalty in America.

Charity Lee's life has been marked by death, starting from a young age. In 1980, when she was 6, her father was shot to death in their Georgia home. Later her mother was arrested and charged for hiring someone to kill her father and faced the death penalty but was later acquitted.

"The state of Georgia was supposedly looking for justice for the victim, well, I was the victim. I lost my father," Lee said. "And they wanted to take my mother from me too. If she's guilty, fine, lock her up, but if you kill her, I'm an orphan."

Lee said she spent the next two decades sorting out her feelings toward her mother, unsure of her guilt or innocence and is now convinced that her mother was guilty. Meanwhile, she had two children, a son Paris and daughter Ella. But tragedy was to strike her again, in an even

IN FEBRUARY 2004, she was living in Texas, her son was 13, her daughter 4, and Lee was a graduate student studying gifted education. While she was working her shift waiting tables, her son convinced their babysitter to go home early.

"The next thing I know, the police are at my door telling me my daughter is dead, which makes me faint. As soon as I revive, they tell me my son is the murderer, which makes me faint again," she said. "I stood outside the front of my house for six hours, knowing that inside is my daughter's dead body and somewhere in the police station is my son."

Lee went on to describe the surreal circumstances of the next few months, going between choosing a funeral home for Ella and a defense attorney for Paris. After one meeting with a lawyer, a bombshell was dropped on her.

"The first thing the attorney says to me is 'You know Texas is going to kill your son right?' I fainted again," she said. "When I woke up, the only thing I kept saying is that he's only 13. And the attorney looked at me and grabbed another law book and said 'Oh, well aren't you lucky, the Supreme Court outlawed child execution. But for those few minutes, I thought that my son was going to be murdered too."

SEE JOURNEY, PAGE 7

NEWS

Board to Vote on Silver Line

FROM PAGE 3

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.

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 Herry 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.

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



Northern Virginia
Regional Park Authority



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 • E-mail: parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov

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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 document they can without any

EDITORIAL

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,

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COMMENTARY

High Density Without Infrastructure Not a Problem

BY JOHN LOVAAS
RESTON IMPACT PRODUCER/HOST

I was reminded recently that here in Reston we still have citizens with the courage to speak up for the community to government that seems unresponsive, incompetent or worse. The context was a key meeting of Fairfax Supervisor Hudgins’ Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force (affectionately, the RMPSTF). The name alone suggests they have something to hide.

This august body of twenty-some developers and assorted others is in year three of a two-part study. When established, the study was to be completed in one year, yielding recommendations to the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for a new master plan for future development of Reston. On June 12, the Task Force convened to receive a vital transportation analysis (due 18 months earlier). The analysis was to be a framework for part one of the Task Force’s work within which to shape future land uses and limits for the areas around three new rail stations. Instead, it was presented in a preliminary, incomplete state well after the Task Force has formulated, but still not adopted, high density land-use plans for the Dulles Corridor/rail line area. It is



INDEPENDENT PROGRESSIVE

a classic case of building a cart—sort of—to precede a horse with two bad legs.

The fundamental conclusions of the half-baked analysis are that if all of the transportation infrastructure conceived of by planners were in fact completely built and ready to go within the 20-year time horizon of a new Master Plan with visions of high density sugar plums, it would be insufficient to support the massive new construction. That is, traffic would be congested at levels the staff could not adequately express. And there’s another catch! As the transportation and planning staffs of the county were forced to admit, the bulk of the infrastructure is not likely to be even approved for

funding much less built within the planning horizon. The infrastructure envisioned but not likely within 20 years includes four more crossings of the Dulles Access Road/rail line at South Lakes Drive, Soapstone Drive, Town Center, and Rock Hill Road.

The best planner in the room, Lake Anne’s own John Carter, asked the obvious question: Will the land use plan the Task Force is contemplating be in balance with the infrastructure expected within the timeframe? The answer was clearly no, but no one on the county staff was willing to say. Jerry Volloy, former chief staffer at Reston Association, put it more bluntly. He said that Tysons Corner is already dysfunctional. What is being proposed will make Reston dysfunctional just like Tysons. Terry Maynard, of RCA’s Reston 2020 Committee, pointed out flaws in the transportation data and glaring inconsistencies with the Task Force’s preliminary findings. Task Force member Judith Pew added common sense suggestions to the mix.

Through it all, County staff and those sympathetic to developer interests refused to accept the implications of conflict between too much construction and too little infrastructure. Since the negative context for public investment such

as transport infrastructure is unlikely to change in conservative Virginia any time soon, the only way to bring land use and infrastructure into some semblance of equilibrium is to reduce the densities commensurate with realistic expectations for infrastructure. The County’s refusal to listen to concerned citizens or confront the obvious reinforces my own view that we are unlikely to get it right for Reston’s future until we can make these choices for ourselves. Surely we can do better. Think town or city!

— MORE OPINION,
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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.

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Journey to Hope Presented in Reston

FROM PAGE 4

No mother should have to hear what I heard, even knowing that my son is guilty. How is losing both of my children justice?"

Lee eventually started the ELLA foundation in memory of her daughter. The letters stand for empathy, love, lessons and action, which she says is what her daughter taught her. She is also on a one-year tour with Journey to Hope, speaking about her anti-death penalty stance.

Terri Steinberg of Fairfax has also had her life touched by the death penalty. In 2001, her son Justin Wolfe was implicated in a murder-for-hire charge and has spent the last 10 years on death row. Though his conviction was recently overturned, the state of Virginia is appealing that decision.

"I always knew we had a death penalty in this country. I hated it, but being a busy mom I did nothing about it. I didn't talk about it, I didn't take any action against it," she said. "What I couldn't understand is how we'd take a person who had been locked up and rendered helpless, walk them down the hall, strap them to a gurney and fill them with poison. It made no sense to me."

AFTER A MARCH 2001 SLAYING the shooter, Owen Barber, went on the run, and eventually implicated Wolfe. He avoided capital punishment by accepting a plea bar-

gain that included testifying that Wolfe hired him to commit the murder. Barber admitted in 2007 in a sworn affidavit that he fabricated his testimony.

Steinberg remembers her son calling her to tell her that he planned on turning himself in, saying it would be sorted out in a matter of days.

"He turned himself into the system that he trusted and believed if he told the truth he would be set free," she said.

Steinberg described not leaving her house for weeks after the verdict, then when she did, she went to different churches and grocery stores, so not to be recognized. Eventually she joined the anti-death penalty cause, speaking about her son's story.

"I realized I had to do something positive and fight for my son's life and try and make a difference," she said.

Since he has been on death row, Wolfe has seen 18 fellow inmates get executed and has received two stays of execution.

Randy Gardner has already lost a family member to capital punishment. His brother Ronnie Lee Gardner was executed in Utah by firing squad in 2010 for the murder of a bartender during a robbery and the murder of an attorney during an escape attempt.

"The process they went through to execute my brother made me stop and think, what the heck are they doing in this world?"

he said. "We felt like someone murdered our family member. Although we don't condone what my brother did, we don't condone the premeditated murder that was done to him."

Gardner has since started the Back to Basics Farm, where he teaches people about farming and his philosophies on life.

Journey to Hope president and co-founder Bill Pelke has been on the other end of the spectrum, though he shares Lee, Steinberg and Gardner's opposition to the death penalty.

His grandmother, a bible teacher in Gary Ind., was murdered by four teenagers who wanted to rob her in May 1985. One girl, Paula Cooper, who was named the ringleader, was sentenced to die, and at 15, was the youngest person sentenced to die in America.

"I knew we had a death penalty in this country, and I felt if they didn't give the death penalty to the person who killed Nana, they were telling us that she wasn't an important enough person that her killer be put to death," he said. "And I felt she was a very important to me, so I was OK with the verdict."

A few months later, in November 1986, while working a night shift he began to reflect on his grandmother's life.

"I thought of a picture of Nana that was taken a few weeks before her death, and I

began to think I'd feel guilty if I couldn't come up with some love and compassion, and I didn't want to feel guilty when I thought of Nana, so I prayed for love and compassion," he said. "I eventually realized I didn't have to see somebody else die to take away the pain of my grandmother's death."

Pelke called the death penalty a "matter of revenge," but pointed out that nothing will bring back the dead, and the possibility for reform always exists.

"Paula Cooper will be getting out of prison later this year. I visited her, and it was the first time I've seen her in 14 years, and she's developed into a wonderful Christian young lady," he said. "And when she is released from prison, I will be at the gates of the prison to meet her, and I will help her re-adjust back into society."

ALSO PART OF THE DISCUSSION was a photographic exhibit from artist Scott Langley called "Execution Timeline." It featured photos of a prison, narrowing its focus from the prison building to death row cells, to the table where prisoners have their last meal, then to the gurney where they are strapped down to receive their lethal injection and ending with a photo of a death certificate and a gravestone.

More information on Journey to Hope can be found at www.journeytohope.org.



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PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION

Special Olympics Virginia Athlete Rose Pleskow of Reston is relaxed and smiling as she descends 100 feet down the side of the Crystal City Hilton in Arlington on June 22. She is participating in the Special Olympics Virginia fundraiser 'Over the Edge' during which 68 people rappelled down the Crystal City Hilton raising \$60,000.



Special Olympics Virginia Athlete Rose Pleskow of Reston looks down at her cheering section as she descends 100 feet down the side of the Crystal City Hilton in Arlington on June 22. She is participating in the Special Olympics Virginia fundraiser 'Over the Edge' during which 68 people rappelled down the Crystal City Hilton raising \$60,000.

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.



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.

cial 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 or follow Special Olympics of Virginia on Twitter at @overtheedgeva.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 27

Open Mic Night. 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Jimmy's Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Every Wednesday. Register your band at BluesSlide@aol.com or 703-593-5206. www.jimmystavern.com.

Busia Bear's Sensational Summer Films. 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Join Busia for an hour of family fun films. All ages. Sign up each child and adult separately. 703-689-2700.

THURSDAY/JUNE 28

"Flowers for Algernon." 8 p.m. Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. After experimental surgery to dramatically increase his IQ, a man's life is changed forever. \$20. www.eldenstreetplayers.org.

Culkin School of Traditional Irish Dance. 10:30 a.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Young dancers accompanied by Celtic music.

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.

Larnell Starkey and the Spiritual Seven. 7:30 p.m. Frying Pan Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. African-American gospel. Free. 703-324-7469.

Rocknocos Presents: Colonel Purple Turtle. 2:30 p.m. Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center St., Herndon. Join Coach Cotton, Williebob and Boogie Woogie for a rockin' good time. All ages. Sign up each child and adult separately. 703-437-8855.

Take a Break Concert Series: Satyr Hill. 7-9 p.m. Lake Anne Plaza. Live music with friends and neighbors. Free. 703-476-4500.

FRIDAY/JUNE 29

"Flowers for Algernon." 8 p.m. Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. After experimental surgery to dramatically increase his IQ, a man's life is changed forever. \$20. www.eldenstreetplayers.org.

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.

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.

King Teddy. 8:30-9 p.m. drop-in beginner swing lesson; 9 p.m.-12 a.m. dance. Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Road, Herndon. At the intersection of swing, rockabilly and jump blues is where you'll find King Teddy, happily hanging out and humming Beatles tunes. \$15.

SATURDAY/JUNE 30

Family Fun Entertainment Series: Mark Lohr's Classic Comedy Show. 10-10:45 a.m. Reston Town Square Park, Corner of Market Street and Explorer Street. A fast-paced, side-splitting family vaudeville show filled with audience participation and circus skills with a sprinkling of magic. Free. 703-476-4500.

"Flowers for Algernon." 8 p.m. Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. After experimental surgery to dramatically increase his IQ, a man's life is changed forever. \$20. www.eldenstreetplayers.org.

"Fairy Tale Courtroom" by Dana Proulx. 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. The audience is the judge and jury for the Wolf and the Witch in this interactive comedy. \$8. www.eldenstreetplayers.org.

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.

Pirate Jack. 10 a.m. Lake Fairfax Park Amphitheater, 1400 Lake Fairfax Drive, Reston. Musical sea voyage of pirate ports and lifestyles. Free. 703-324-7469.

Jazz Legends. 7:30 p.m. Reston Town Center Pavilion, Market St., Reston. Concert with Byron Stripling. www.restontowncenter.com.

Meet the Author/Book Signing. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 1629 Washington Plaza, Lake Anne Village Center, Reston. Clare Grosgebauer, author of the award-winning "Snickerdoodle" books for children, will sign copies of "Snickerdoodle's Star-Spangled Fourth of July". Free. 703-437-7730.

"Mas Allas De Las Cavernas (Beyond the Caves)." Post Gallery ArtSpace Herndon-750 Center Street, Herndon. A special exhibit featuring acclaimed Bolivian artist Fabricio Lara. Free and open to the public. 703-956-6590 www.artspaceherndon.org.

GRACE, Artwork from Participating

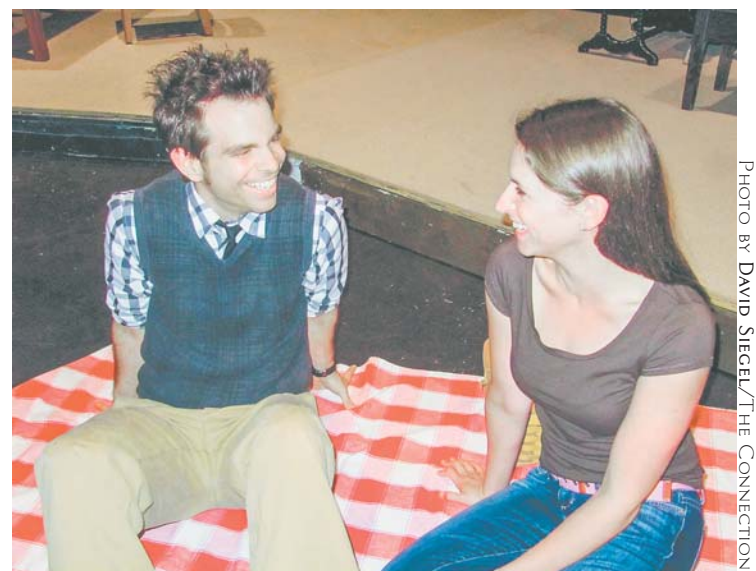


PHOTO BY DAVID SIEGEL/THE CONNECTION

Matt Baughman as Charle Gordon and Lauren Kiesling as Alice Kinnian in the Elden Street Players production of "Flowers for Algernon," which runs through June 30 at the Industrial Strength Theater.

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

Schools. 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. 12001 Market Street, Suite 103, Reston.
www.restonarts.org/exhibitions

SUNDAY/JULY 1

"Fairy Tale Courtroom" by Dana Proulx. 2 p.m. Industrial Strength Theatre, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. The audience is the judge and jury for the Wolf and the Witch in this interactive comedy. \$8.
www.eldenstreetplayers.org.

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.

TUESDAY/JULY 3

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.

THURSDAY/JULY 5

Elizabeth Mitchell. 10:30 a.m. Filene Center, 1551 Trap Road, Vienna. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings artist. \$8-\$10 at 1-877-WOLFTRAP or 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.

Butterfly Class: An Introduction. 7 - 8:30 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Discover the lives of Reston's "flying flowers." The class will focus on the basic identification and life cycles of local butterflies. Through a combination of field guides, handouts and a presentation, learn how to identify Reston's common butterflies, and get a basic introduction to their life history. This class is a great way to prepare for the Reston Butterfly Count. RSVP by July 2. Fee: \$5/person (free for count participants). Adults. naturecenter@reston.org



GRACE Art, work from participating schools in the area at 12001 Market Street, Suite 103, Reston. Gallery Hours: Tuesdays - Saturdays, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Exhibit is ending this Saturday, June 30.

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SUMMER FUN 2012

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Tennis Opportunities for All Ages

Reston-Herndon area provides opportunities for children, more experienced players.

BY GABRIEL LARSEN
THE CONNECTION

Looking for open-air fun for the family this summer? The Reston Association provides a range of activities to soak up all of a family's free time, including pools and tennis courts for guests and locals with the appropriate passes. Many half-sized tennis courts have opened around the Reston-Herndon area providing a non-competitive environment for children to ply their tennis arm while parents join in the fun, or take lessons from any one of the friendly coaches available for practicing drills and techniques.

Signing children up for tennis is just a matter of visiting the Association online at www.reston.org, and looking up tennis programs in the Parks, Recreation & Events section of the website. Instructors are available during spring, summer, and early fall, with classes ranging from 45 minutes to an hour, once or twice a week or on weekends. Children as young as 3 can get involved in classes that cater to their age



Players take over the training courts.

group, while parents seeking a commitment to lessons for children 10 and under can register for the Quickstart tennis program, a step-by-step approach to teaching tennis to peers at similar skill levels over the course of three to six weeks.

Whether you're a beginner or a pro, a variety of tennis programs are available for the family no matter the age, skill, or time constraints at play, and summer 2012 is stocked with events, leagues, and ladder tournaments for all those seeking time on the courts. Sign up early as courses get booked quickly after becoming available for the summer. For questions and registration information contact Tennis@Reston.org or call 703-435-6502.



Women players in action.

VIEWPOINTS

What Do You Like Most About Tennis in Our Area and What Can Be Done to Create More Opportunities?

— GABRIEL LARSEN



Loewen-Schmidt family portrait.

The Loewen-Schmidt family recently moved to Reston and are enjoying the variety of outdoor activities provided by the Reston Association. So far, they prefer the half-sized courts as suitable recreation spaces for their children, and are glad to have plenty of great coaches available. Shawna and Chad both work at local schools, and they've brought their two daughters to one of many half-sized courts for some casual tennis over the weekend. They appreciate the availability of these courts to all those that have come to Reston for its family-friendly environment, and having lived here for just under a year are looking forward to child-rearing in a neat and diverse community that they say is much like "living on a cruise."

Donovan Arizmendi commutes to the Madeira School in McLean, but frequents local tennis courts for spending quality time with her boys. While sometimes it can be a struggle to keep them engaged in a few volleys, Donovan relishes the chance to get her kids out into open spaces to enjoy the sunshine. The community and the "pleasant people that [she] meets out in the courts," stand out when asked what she likes most about tennis in Reston. She says her biggest challenge is simply making time in her schedule to get out more often, but there's nearly always a court open to her and her sons for a quick bout of tennis when she can.



Donovan Arizmendi.

More Information

MAIN OFFICE OF THE RESTON ASSOCIATION

12001 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, VA 20191 - 3404
E-mail: tennis@reston.org
Phone: 703 435-6502
On Facebook: www.facebook.com/restontennisnews
To register for leagues, lessons, and tournaments, visit Shop RA on the Reston Association Website.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS:

\$20 Adults 18 years & older
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\$35 Season Long Guest Pass for Members Only

REQUIREMENTS:

Reston Association members may purchase passes for themselves, one household member over the age of 22, two household members between 18 and 22, and immediate family members under 18 online or at RA Member Services.

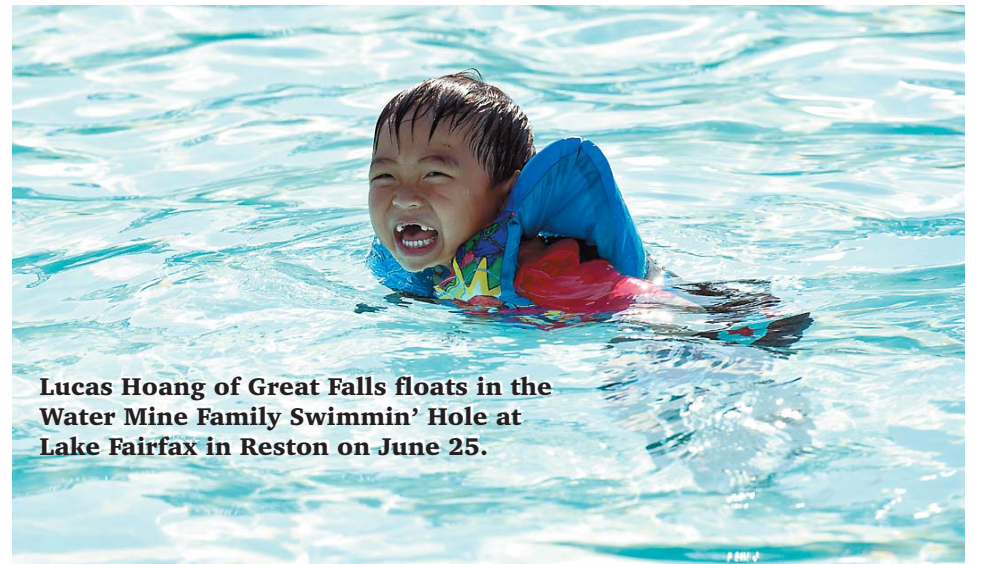
Must be 18 years or older, with a current photo I.D. or proof of owning or occupying a Reston residence where the RA Annual Assessment account is current.

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SUMMER FUN 2012



The Acevedo family enjoys the lazy river at the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole at Lake Fairfax in Reston on June 25. In addition to the lazy river, the park offers more than an acre of slides, flumes, sprays, showers, floatables, play structures and dumping buckets. Pictured from left: Sul Acevedo, Vladimir Acevedo, Sul Acevedo and Delmy Acevedo.



Lucas Hoang of Great Falls floats in the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole at Lake Fairfax in Reston on June 25.

PHOTOS BY DEB COBB/THE CONNECTION



Luis Rivera of Sterling attempts to cross the floating bridge at the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole at Lake Fairfax in Reston on June 25. This obstacle is one of the many in the waterpark.



Delcile Philippe of Herndon gets splashed as she rides the lazy river at the Water Mine Family Swimmin' Hole at Lake Fairfax in Reston under a waterfall on June 25.

Great Stories for a Great Cause

Better Said Than Done, a community of professional storytellers based in Northern Virginia, hosted a night of storytelling for a cause. In "Our Bodies, Our Selves," storytellers shared personal tales of tattoos, dealing with Alzheimers, marathon running and other crazy things we do and have done with our bodies. The event was a fundraiser for Friends of Reston.

Katie Shaw, from Friends of Reston, said "This was the third storytelling event hosted by Friends of Reston and Better Said Than Done at Nature House, and the best attended. We look forward to a fourth! The storytellers represent the diverse community that the Reston area is home to. With their broad range of experiences, their stories connect with different segments of the audience in meaningful ways, evoking everything from laughter to tears, fond remembrances and eye opening revelations. This event was a great kickstart to the summer fundraising season. The nearly \$1,000 raised will be used to send Reston children from low income families to Reston Association Camps."

Despite living in one of the wealthiest counties in the U.S., childhood poverty rates are actually increasing in Fairfax

County. Twenty-eight percent of all children attending Reston's eight elementary schools qualify for free and reduced-priced meals, a nationally recognized benchmark for poverty.

If you'd like to contribute to the Friends of Reston's Camp Scholarship fund, please send your check to ATTN: Katie Shaw, Friends of Reston, 12001 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston VA 20191 and write "Camp Scholarship" in the memo section.

Better Said Than Done's next show is bringing the fireworks. Join storytellers for "Independence Day - stories of freedom, declarations, and fireworks!" on Saturday, June 30 at Epicure Café, 11213 Lee Highway, Fairfax at 6 p.m. \$10 tickets at door.

The performance will feature entertaining performances of true, explosive stories. Storytellers include: Geraldine Buckley, Lisa Kays, Jessica Piscitelli, Mojdeh Rezaeipour, Adam Ruben, Ellouise Schoettler, John Tong and Michael Zhuang.

A full dinner menu and full bar are available during the show. Seating is available on a first-come, first-served basis. The show is intended for an adult audience.

For additional information or to see videos of past shows, visit www.betersaidthandone.com.



PHOTO BY JAMIE WINDON/BLONDE PHOTO

Better Said than Done's Jessica Piscitelli.



PHOTOS/COURTESY OF RSTA

**North Hills' Emily Deker goes all out in the girls 15-18, 50-meter butterfly event.****Focused and ready for her event is North Hills' 8-and-under Alison Wan as she prepares for takeoff.**

After the Storm RSTA Swimmers Rumble

Sun-drenched day produces more records.

Friday night, June 22 brought some very bad weather to Northern Virginia. Torrential downpours, flooding and high winds were prevalent through much of the area. It made those associated with Reston Swim Team Association (RSTA) wonder about the possibility of a postponement of the following day's meets. Those concerns ended up being without merit as the sun came out the following morning and the third week of the RSTA season commenced without issue. And the meets went forth with gusto as seven more pool records were set.

The two preeminent female swimmers in the 11-12 age group continue to be Joanne Fu of Lake Anne and Emily Landeryou of Glade. Their head to head rivalry continued on Saturday with both girls setting new pool records. In the girls 50-meter freestyle, Joanne lowered her own mark (set the prior week) of 30.79 to 30.44. And in the girls 50-butterfly she broke her old record (also set the week before) with a new time of 32.68. Emily's record-breaking day included a time of 29.81 in the girls 50-freestyle which bettered the mark of 30.24 that was set back in 2001 by Mei Christensen. And in the girls 50-butterfly, Emily broke her own record of 31.55 set on June 9th of this year with a new time of 31.44. But the record-breaking performances didn't stop there.

In the girls 13-14, 50-freestyle, Emily Meilus of Lake Anne broke a pool record that was set back in 1996. Her time of 28.81 shattered the old mark of 30.41 which was set by Julia Fox on August 1 of that year. Philip Pan of Hunters Woods also continued his record setting ways. His time of 16.68 in the boys 9-10, 25-butterfly broke the old pool record of 16.97 that was set back in 2002 by Nicholas Hazelton.

And Tyler Ellis of Glade broke a record that had stood for 30 years! In the boys 11-12, 50-freestyle, his time of 29.93 bested the old mark of 30.03 set by Chris Hines back in 1982.

Scores and highlights from last Saturday's meets' follow:

**North Hills' Landan Grange, boys 8-and-under, gets ready to hit the water in his event while competing against Hunters Woods.**

Lake Newport Lightning 540, Autumnwood Piranhas 414: For Lake Newport, triple event winners were Jack Edgemon, Anna Redican, Casey Storch, Katie Storch, Nathan Williams and Alan Yu. Double event winners were Kathleen Boyce, Matt Colturi, Nash Hemrajani, Alana Hull, Lindsey Jacobson, William Kohn, Mary Grace Long, Meghna Sharma, Zach Wang and Omar Zaki. For Autumnwood, double event winners were Paolo Arbid, Joanie Belo, Ava Godfrey, Griffin Harrington, Delaney Kirr, Mikayla Kirr, Sarah Overton, David Robertson, Andrey Smiryagin and Kathleen Wilson.

Lake Anne Stingrays 573, Glade Gators 477: For Lake Anne, triple event winners were Patrick Dealey, Patrick Fouse, Emily Meilus and Tope Oladimeji. Double event winners were Evan Daughtry, Victor Espinoza, Emily Fouse, Bryan Marquet, Maxwell Mescall, Peyton Raphael and Sophia Young. For Glade, triple event winners were Kathryn Danaher, Hunter Ellis, Tyler Ellis, Andrew Huang, Emily Landeryou, Sophia Landeryou and Yangian Xu. Double event winners were Meghan Benedetto, Lainie Davison, Andrew Draganov, Mackenzie Evans, Dean Hartke, Srikar Kuppa, Clara Landeryou, Monica Lannen, Kellie McCrea and Reagan Tobias.

Lake Audubon Barracudas 600, Ridge

Heights Sharks 464: For Lake Audubon, triple event winners were Natalie Abbey, Dean Huber, John Hughes and Julia Sofia Nassau. Double event winners were Olivia Abbey, Max Daum, Winston Evans, Matthew Fritz, Sabrina Groves, Spencer Harris, Matthew Hughes, Nathan Ide, Conor McBride, Michael McDermott, Julia Nielsen, Jeremiah Noser-Munoz, Bryce Onozuka, Aidan Scanlan and Griffin Scanlan. For Ridge Heights, triple event winners were Mac Sogandares, Paige Sogandares and Hailey Wang. Double event winners were Elodie Decker, Tessa Hawley, Kati Imel, Samantha Lowe, Charlie Moore, Julia Thomas and Maggie With.

Hunters Woods Blue Marlins 554, North Hills Hurricanes 487: For Hunters Woods, triple event winners were Matthew Beach, Alex Li, Philip Pan and Shine Peng. Double event winners were Mary Byron, John Evans, William Harvey, Mallari Jender, Allen Lee, Richard Song, Eric Tang, Ashley Thai, Gloria Wang, Chris Yang and William Yao. For North Hills, triple event winners were Lindsey Hill, Rachel Swarts and Miles Yang. Double event winners were Ellen Barker, Ilayda Boucher, Katie Cazenias, Devan Fink, Nicole Flint, Ishan Ganjoo, Aveesh Kachroo, Joseph Livaudais, Samantha Sciortino, Emma Tierney and Alison Wan.

SPORTS NOTES

All-District Baseball: The following Herndon High and South Lakes High baseball players earned All-District accolades this past 2012 spring season. From South Lakes (Liberty District), Billy McLaughlin earned First Team recognition at first base, and Ryan Forrest notched Second Team honors as an outfielder. From Herndon (Concorde District), Austin Schnarrs was named Second Team at catcher position; Tyler Reif made Second Team in the outfield; and both Addison Wright and Zach Wallace were named Second Team Pitchers.

From Oakton High (Concorde), First Team selections were Dale Good (Third Base); Brian Burns (Outfield); and Matt Gregor (Pitcher). Cougars named to the Second Team were Mason Hauser (Outfield); Joey Bartosic (Utility); and RJ Garcia (Pitcher).

Herndon High School announced on June 4 that the legendary Gary Hall has returned as head coach of the boys' basketball team. Hall, a 1979 graduate of Herndon, was head coach of the Hornets for 18 years (1990-2007), leading the varsity program to 319 wins, six district titles, a Northern Regional Championship, and an appearance at the 2006 Virginia State AAA Tournament Finals. With his return to the helm, Coach Hall and the Herndon Hornets look to continue the tradition of excellence that is Herndon basketball.

The Fairfax County Women's Sports Awards Committee sponsors several awards that honor outstanding female athletes, coaches, and supporters. They include the Donna de Varona Spirit of Sport Award, the High School Sports-woman of the Year Award, Coach of the Year Award, and Sports Journalist of the Year Award. Each school recognizes winners at the local level and submits nominations in each of the categories for the countywide awards as well. Congratulations to the following Herndon High nominees: Coach Phyllis Pearce (Coach of the Year), Carina Peter (Spirit Award), and Jenna Van Camp (Sportswoman of the Year). All three Hornets were honorees at the recent Women in Sports Banquet, which was held at Oakton High School.

OPINION

Couple of Bad Weeks for Virginia

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

The Commonwealth that has been reeling all year from a spate of bad publicity from the legislative session found itself in the national spotlight again as the president of its nationally premiere university was forced out in a behind-the-scenes maneuver by a couple of members of the Board of Visitors without a formal vote. More than 2,000 protesters showed up on the historic lawn of the University to protest the ouster of President Teresa Sullivan who was obviously immensely popular with the students, faculty, and community even though she had been in the position for less than two years. President Sullivan's statement to the Board of Visitors when she was finally allowed to speak demonstrated clearly why she was chosen for the position in the first place and how she brought such practical knowledge and visionary leadership to the position.

As background to the story has started to emerge, documents secured through the Freedom of Information Act reveal that the Rector and Vice Rector, both graduates of the University's McIntyre School of Business, had worked themselves into a swivet over articles they had read about the success that the University of Phoenix and other schools had with on-line education. They apparently wanted UVA to plunge into on-line courses at a faster pace than did President Sullivan who described herself as an "incrementalist" and who warned of "unintended consequences of jumping into new approaches without



appropriate planning." Both Rector Helen Dragas and Vice Rector Mark T. Kington have created a legacy for themselves at the McIntyre School that is famous for its case study approach for they will be forever used as a case study on how not to apply leadership. Kington has already resigned. I and hundreds of others have written to Governor McDonnell asking him to not reappoint Dragas whose term expires at the end of this month.

Interestingly, the McDonnell administration that has become known for its attempts to micromanage Northern Virginia affairs decided it did not want to micromanage one of the Commonwealth's greatest assets in its world-renowned University of Virginia and indirectly its university system. They have kept their heads down when even one of the University's top professors resigned over the situation and others are thought to be following his example.

It may be that the administration was preoccupied with its own created flap over giving the Washington Redskins four million dollars to keep its offices in Virginia. Spending four million on the third wealthiest sports franchise in the world at a time when the Commonwealth has been cutting monies for education, health, and other essentials did not set well with the public and with legislators who had indicated their opposition in advance to administration officials.

The year has started off with a bang for the Commonwealth. Hopefully things will slow down for a while. Happy Summer, everyone!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

National Priorities 'Completely Skewed'

To the Editor:

It doesn't seem possible that our national priorities—the relative importance of how we spend our tax dollars—could be so completely skewed. Tens of millions of our people are hungry, are ill-housed and are without adequate health care. It is not as though we do not collect enough tax dollars to feed, house and care for all our people. We most certainly do. All we must do is transfer funds from those dedicated to those defense and space projects, that serve no purpose other than to reward the contractors engaged in such projects, to serve our needy people.

Our Defense Department spends billions, if not trillions, of dollars fighting previous wars instead of today's wars and preserving a ridiculously oversized atomic arsenal. President Eisenhower's warning against the industrial-military complex was never more pertinent than today. The extreme is when, fairly recently, Congress mandated purchase of aircraft engines that the military didn't need or want. The norm has been Defense investing in aircraft carriers, tanks, rockets that bear little relevance in de-

fending against terrorist attacks representative of warfare today.

Man in space is a program that contributes absolutely nothing to scientific knowledge or serious preparation for the future. The original landing on the moon, followed by the space station, demonstrated our capabilities but added nothing to the information provided by orbiting drones. The same can be said about a program to send a man to Mars. For the past three years we have had unmanned aircraft orbiting Mars. They have provided maps of the surface and analyses of the subsurface of this planet. What in the world can a human being add to this after having landed from a space ship and delivered the pithy sentence prepared for him by prestigious PR firms to report his arrival? The invaluable scientific outfall said to have been gathered from man to the moon could just as well have been gathered by unmanned aircraft circling the moon.

We pride ourselves on being a "Christian nation." How can we reconcile the continuing needy condition of so many millions of our people with our spending the money that would alleviate their condition on unnecessary defense and space projects?

Robert Simon
Reston

Lives at Risk

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.

Morgan O'Neil
Environment Virginia

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COMMUNITY

William Mueller Engaged to Ramona Layne

Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mueller of Clifton are happy to announce the engagement of their son, LCDR William Kenneth Mueller, USNR to Ramona Ruth Layne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Layne, Jr of San Antonio, Texas.

Will graduated from the University of Virginia in 2000 with a Bachelor's Degree in Finance and received his Master's Degree in National Security Policy from the Naval War College in Newport, RI. Will is currently stationed in Norfolk, Va. working as a Training Officer.

Ramona graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 2000 with a Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations and is currently employed with AgustaWestland North America in Reston, Va. She is the Senior Manager of Communications.

An October 13, 2012 wedding has been planned at the Fort Belvoir Officer's Club in Virginia.



Will and Ramona



PHOTO BY ELVIRA WASHBURN

Reston Lions Club Installs New Officers

Vice District Governor James Ryan, fifth from right above, and a member of the Reston Lions Club, inducted officers of the Reston Lions Club at the club's installation banquet held at Mamma Lucia Restaurant in Reston on June 20. The new president is Sue Beffel, ninth from the left. Steve Reber, eighth from the left is the retiring president. Others in the picture are officers of the club.

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to herndon@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

WEDNESDAY/JUNE 27

Evolution of Fairfax Series. 7:30 p.m. The Mason Inn and Conference Center, George Mason University, Fairfax. Last of a three part series on where we were, where we are, and where we want to be. Presented by Chairman Sharon Bulova in partnership with the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce and Fairfax County Federation of Citizens Associations. Free and open to the public. Reserve at 703-324-2321 or chairman@fairfaxcounty.gov.

THURSDAY/JUNE 28

Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon. 11:30 a.m. Hyatt Regency Reston, 1800 Presidents St., Reston. Presentation of Annual Awards for Chamber Excellence (ACE Awards) to the member companies that have demonstrated excellence, innovation and

community involvement over the past year and transition of Chamber board leadership from Tim Sargeant of Dominion to Michael Ferraro of Training Solutions. With speaker Paul Hewitt, Head Coach of George Mason University's Men's Basketball team. 703-707-9045 or communications@restonchamber.org.

The Early History of Reston - The Building of Lake Anne Village Center and Construction of the Dam at Lake Anne. 7 p.m. - 9 p.m. Reston Community Center, Lake Anne, 1609 Washington Plaza, Reston.

SUNDAY/JULY 22

Cat Adoption. 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 11860 Spectrum Center, Reston. Every Sunday. Sponsored by Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation. www.lostdogrescue.org.

SUNDAY/AUG. 26

Cat Adoption. 1-4 p.m. PetSmart, 11860 Spectrum Center, Reston. Every Sunday. Sponsored by Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation. www.lostdogrescue.org.

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21 Announcements

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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/I 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 manger 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 an 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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