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Local Leaders Predict Hot Topics in 2013

We asked local movers and shakers to tell us what headlines they'd like to see in the New Year, what issues will dominate the political agenda, what their New Year's resolutions are, and their Express Lane experiences. If our prognosticators are correct, the top three issues that dominated the headlines last year will again dominate this year. In order of priority: transportation, transportation and transportation.

—VICTORIA ROSS

Del. Dave Albo (R-42), with wife Rita and 7-year-old son, was first elected to the Virginia House of Delegates in 1994. He is the most senior Northern Virginia majority party delegate in the state legislature. He grew up in West Springfield and attended Fairfax County Public Schools (Rolling Valley Elementary and West Springfield High School). Prior to being elected to the House of Delegates in 1993, he served as president of the West Springfield Civic Association, prosecutor for the City of Fairfax and a guardian for Abused and Neglected Children. Albo is presently chairman of the House Courts of Justice Committee.



Albo: Roads to Happiness

Q: What headline would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Washington Bypass Route Set by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. East Coast traffic to bypass Fairfax!"

Q: What are top legislative priorities this session?

A: "Build roads, pave residential roads, get more in-state students into Virginia colleges, get through yet another dismal economic year without raising taxes."

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community? How will you address it?

A: "In order to keep Virginia at the top of the Best Places for Business, and therefore having lots of jobs in NOVA, we need roads and rail. Virginia slipped from number one to number three almost entirely on the issue of lack of transportation improvements. This will cost a lot of money. I propose that we set our taxes on out-of-state busi-

nesses and visitors at the same rates they charge Virginians. For example, presently out-of-state corporations pay no corporate income tax on the money they earn for performing services in Virginia. Yet, if a Virginia company goes to Maryland to perform a service, it has to pay Maryland. Not only is it ludicrous to treat out-of-state corporations better than Virginia corporations, but it is a disincentive to locating a business here. Changing out corporate income tax system to the same system used by Georgia, Maryland, California and others would bring the state \$370,000,000 in new revenue, which we can use for roads and rail!"

Q: Express Lanes?

A: "Wonderful. Got to Tysons from Lorton in 35 minutes!"

Q: Any personal or professional New Year's resolutions?

A: "I am on a Led Zep kick these days. So I have vowed to learn 'Moby Dick' and 'Black Dog' on my Gibson Les Paul guitar. ('Heart-breaker' solo is too hard.)



Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova—aka "The Turkey Master"—pictured with her sous chefs: nephew Jesse Horneber (right) and brother-in-law Dave Koss (left). Bulova spent the holidays in Ocean City with 13 relatives. "I am the family Turkey Master. I love to cook but don't get enough chance to 'nurture' a big meal. Cooking turkey with my sausage & veggie dressing with gravy is hugely satisfying to me!"

Bulova: Silver Line Stations Top Priority List

Q: What headline would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Fairfax Board Adopts FY 2014 Budget; Amazing Balance is Achieved—Tax Bills Remain Affordable, Quality of Life Maintained Despite Difficult Economic Climate"

Q: What are—or should be—top priorities for our state legislators this session?

A: "To adopt new, sustainable funding for Virginia's current and long term transportation needs."

Q: What are some challenges/oppor-

tunities facing Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Top on my list for next year is the successful opening of four new Silver Line Metro Stations in Tysons Corner. I am working with stakeholders in the Tysons area to make sure employees and neighbors will be able to use the new stations through shared parking arrangements in commercial buildings near stations, as well as new bus service/routes and pedestrian access."

I'm also excited about new Express Connector Bus Service that will whisk travelers from VRE stations in Lorton, Burke and Springfield via the new Beltway Express (HOT) lanes into Tysons. The new service will be rolled out in January. Go to the following link for more in-

Cook: Transportation Funding Tops Wish List

Q: Headline for 2013?

A: "We would love to hear (not that we think we are going to hear): State passes major transportation funding plan."

Q: Top priorities for state?

A: "A new transportation funding plan, economic development in the face of federal government's cutbacks, funding group homes for people with disabilities including those leaving the Northern Virginia Training Center, education funding and Medicaid reform."

Q: Challenges & opportunities?

A: "Transportation funding, county budget gap, federal 'cliff' fallout, school funding, Community Services Board reform and funding."

Q: Top issue facing the community?

A: "Transportation. I will continue to push for Fairfax County to play a larger role in transportation."

Q: Express lanes?

A: "Fantastic experience. These are a gem. Try them!"

Q: New Year's resolution?

A: "Attend more Nationals games. There's nothing like a winner!"

formation: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/connector/routes/expresslanes/>.

Throughout the next year my colleagues and I will continue our focus on the former Lorton prison site. This South County area is transforming into an exciting mixed-use town center, including the wonderful Arts Workhouse. Since 2002, when the U.S. Congress transferred the 2,300 acres of property at Laurel Hill to Fairfax County, the county has worked with residents and task forces to develop plans for future uses of the area. The approved Master Plan for the Adaptive Reuse Site at Laurel Hill (east of Route 123 and south of Silverbrook Road) creates a hub of community residences, workplaces, shopping, and green space."



Supervisor John Cook with Burke United Methodist Church volunteer Barbara Nowak during the church's Hypothermia Prevention week on Dec. 21.

Corcoran: FBI on 'Most Wanted List'

Jim Corcoran is president and CEO of the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce. On Dec. 14, Corcoran (center) put on a pair of jeans to support Jeans Day 2012, an initiative to support the effort to prevent and end homelessness in Fairfax County. He is standing with Jeans Day supporters Michael O'Reilly, (left) chairman of Governing Board of Fairfax-Falls Church Community Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness and Dean Klein, Director, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH). For more information on the Fairfax Chamber, go to www.fairfaxchamber.org.



Q: What headline, or headlines, would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: ♦ "FBI Picks Fairfax"

♦ "Fiscal Cliff Averted"

♦ "<Insert company name> Selects Fairfax County for New Headquarters"

Q: What are—or should be—top priorities for our state legislators this session?

A: ♦ Sustainable transportation funding

♦ Education policies that support workforce development, particularly in the STEM fields.

Q: What are some challenges/oppor-

tunities facing Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Federal uncertainty, the 'fiscal cliff' and sequestration are posing critical challenges for Northern Virginia in the coming year. The Fairfax Chamber has been and will continue to advocate for elected leaders on both sides of the aisle to come together and compromise on sound policy for businesses and our nation. Incidentally, compromise is the same thing our elected leaders in Richmond need to do to fix the second biggest issue affecting Northern Virginia: transportation."

The biggest opportunity for Northern Virginia lies in our creative economy. Northern Virginia
SEE HOT TOPICS, PAGE 10

THE COUNTY LINE

Coming in From The Cold



PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Musa, Braddock Supervisor John Cook, and Bill Murray at the check-in area for the hypothermia prevention shelter provided by Burke United Methodist Church on Friday, Dec. 21.

A night at Burke United Methodist Church's hypothermia prevention shelter.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Musa L. gently draped a blanket over his wife, and promised her the new year would be better for both of them. She was sleeping on a foam pallet at the Burke United Methodist Church. Musa and his wife were among nearly 40 homeless adults seeking shelter from the frigid temperatures at the church on Friday, Dec. 21.

An immigrant from Senegal, Musa said he and his wife, who is originally from Florida, are homeless for the first time in their lives. He said both have jobs in Fairfax County, but they fled their apartment in November when a roommate threatened their safety. Since then, they have been staying at The Lamb Center during the day, a daytime drop-in center for the poor and homeless in central Fairfax County.

"We slept in our car the last few nights, but it was just too cold tonight," Musa said. "This church provides a wonderful service. We are able to get a meal and a safe, warm place to sleep. They also give you gift cards for food. They make you feel welcome, like you are still a person."

After his wife went to sleep, Musa

chatted with Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) who attends the church and helped organize its hypothermia prevention program.

"No one should have to sleep in the cold and risk hypothermia," Cook said.

EACH YEAR hundreds of individuals living on the streets, in cars, and abandoned buildings in Fairfax County search for shelter from the bitter winter weather, said Amanda Andere, executive director of FACETS, a local nonprofit organization coordinating the county's hypothermia prevention efforts.

Beginning in late November, FACETS works with more than 40 faith communities to offer safe places to sleep and nutritious meals to men and women who are homeless through its Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program. FACETS program is one of five operated across Fairfax and Falls Church in partnership with the Fairfax County government.

Barbara Nowak, a realtor with Long & Foster, was a key organizer of BUMC's program, which provided hypothermia relief from Dec. 16 to Dec. 23.

"I make a living helping people find homes, and I've done pretty well," Nowak said "This is not just about how much money is in your

account. This program has made me more aware of the lack of affordable housing, and the effects of foreclosures and short sales, and how people are suffering as a result of the downturn in the economy."

Nowak and her husband, Gerry Staudt, helped recruit more than 130 church members for the church's program and organized training sessions that helped volunteers learn more about FACETS and ways to help the homeless. "We want to make sure our guests are safe and feel welcomed," Nowak said.

During its program, the church opened its doors at 5:30 p.m., and provided transportation to and from Fair Oaks Mall in the morning and late afternoon. Several volunteers, as well as a FACETS staff person, checked guests in to the shelter, and helped them find bedding, clothes and other necessities, as well as serving a hot meal and dessert. Alcohol, drugs and weapons are prohibited and lights are out at 10 p.m.

Nowak, who has lived in Fairfax County since 1976, said she is grateful for the opportunity to help others. "During the first night, when all the volunteers were getting the church ready for our guests, I truly felt like God was giving us patience, kindness and gentleness... we were physically

How You Can Help

❖During the 2010-2011 winter season, approximately 1,025 residents sought shelter through Fairfax County's Hypothermia Prevention Program, in partnership with other agencies.

❖FACETS' Hypothermia Prevention Season is Nov. 21 through March 17. FACETS served more than 219 clients last season.

❖Volunteers of America Chesapeake (VOA) Baileys Crossroad's Hypothermia Program served more than 442 clients last season and an additional 84 clients in their other winter seasonal programs for a total of 526 clients.

❖Reston Interfaith's Embury Rucker Community Shelter (ERCS) operates three separate winter programs. The ERCS Winter North County Program and winter seasonal programs served over 298 clients last season.

❖The Homeless Healthcare Program (HHP) has four nurse practitioners from the Fairfax County Health Department providing free flu shots during Hypothermia Prevention season.

❖For more information on Fairfax County's Hypothermia Prevention Program, go to <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/partnerupdate/partnership-highlights-hyposeason2011-12.htm>.

❖For FACETS weekly hypothermia prevention shelter updates, go to www.facetcares.org or call FACETS at 703-352-5090 Ext. 302.

❖To learn more about FACETS Hypothermia Prevention and Response Program, or to donate to the program, contact Jerriane Anthony at 703-865-4252 or email at JAnthony@FacetsCares.org.

❖What should you do if you see a homeless person at night?

"If you see an unsheltered person at night, and you think they could be at risk of hypothermia, call the county's non-emergency phone line at 703-691-2131, TTY 711. County emergency personnel will determine which shelter option is best in the situation," said Dean Klein, director of the Fairfax County's Office to Prevent and End Homelessness.



Barbara Nowak, a volunteer organizer for Burke United Methodist Church's Hypothermia Prevention Shelter, sorts sleeping pallets in the church's library on Friday, Dec. 21.

exhausted but mentally exuberant as we transformed the church," she said.

LAST SPRING, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-at-large)—along with non-profit leaders and other county officials—held a series of information sessions to address rumors and concerns that the county would shut down its hypothermia shelters this winter and shut out many homeless residents—because of fire code violations.

Bulova said Fairfax County was "committed to serving the homeless population in a way that is compassionate and ensures their safety."

Cook said only two churches—instead of the rumored 18—were deemed unsafe to host hypother-



Arthur Garret, 29, a client at the hypothermia prevention shelter provided by Burke United Methodist Church on Friday, Dec. 21, said his goal is to become a boxer. "I have goals. I want to make the Olympic boxing team... It's never too late."

mia prevention programs.

"Most of the issues were simple ones that could be easily remedied, like installing smoke detectors," Cook said. "Everyone had to take deep breath. There's a significant commitment on the county's part to work through these issues."

Last year, there were no hypothermia-related deaths in Fairfax County. But as temperatures continued to drop below freezing during the last week of 2012, the first cold weather-related death of the winter season was reported by Maryland state health officials. On Dec. 24, an elderly homeless man in Frederick County, Md., died of hypothermia.

"It's a tragedy when it happens anywhere. That's what Fairfax County, our faith communities and non-profit partners are working hard to prevent," Cook said.

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

NEWS

City Mourns Passing of Former Mayor John W. Russell, 89

Civic leader also helped create Fairfax Art League.

Long time civic and community leader John W. Russell passed away on Dec. 24 at his home. He was 89. Russell is best known to residents as the city's mayor from 1970-1974 and again from 1982-1983.

He was the only mayor in the City of Fairfax to serve two separate terms, before his election to the Virginia State Senate. He was also appointed to the state education board by former Governor George Allen and served on the Fairfax City Council and the city's school board.

"The city mourns Mayor Russell's passing and has lowered all city flags to half-staff in honor of his service to the community," said Mayor Scott Silverthorne, who added that Russell and his father became friends later in life.

"Russell defeated my father for his third term as mayor in 1982 by 148 votes. Later in their lives, both men put their partisan political differences aside and became friends," Silverthorne said. "Mayor Russell was politically shrewd and had a wicked sense of humor, which my father seemed to appreciate when they were no longer rivals on the ballot."



John W. Russell

What people may not know about Mayor Russell, Silverthorne said, is that he loved the arts and helped create the Fairfax Art League.

"I recall seeing many of his paintings prominently displayed in Fairfax's Old Town Hall over the years," Silverthorne said.

Russell is preceded in death by

"Mayor Russell was politically shrewd and had a wicked sense of humor, which my father seemed to appreciate when they were no longer rivals on the ballot."

—Mayor Scott Silverthorne

his wife of 61 years, Ruth Marie Russell, and his three brothers. He is survived by his two daughters, Kathy Russell and Robyn Marshall (Brad), his granddaughter Heather and his two sisters.

Russell was retired from the Department of Defense where he worked as an intelligence officer. Russell was a long-standing member of the Fairfax U.M.C., and a member of the Optimist Club and the American Legion. A gathering was held at the Everly Funeral Home in Fairfax on Monday, Dec. 31. Interment is at the Fairfax City Cemetery.

—VICTORIA ROSS

BULLETIN BOARD

THURSDAY/JAN. 1

Lunch N' Life. Noon-2 p.m., at St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church, 5222 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. The Shepherd's Center of Fairfax-Burke hosts AARP President Robert Romasco in a talk on issues affecting lives of Americans 50-and-older. Reservations; transportation available. \$10. 703-620-0161, 703-273-5730 or

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

www.scfbva.org.

ONGOING

Senior Fall Prevention Classes.

1:30-2:30 p.m., at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Dr., Fairfax. Tuesday and/or Thursday classes in a heated pool designed to work on balance and

core muscles for injury prevention. \$10. 703-667-9800. **American Red Cross CPR, First Aid and AED.** Various times, at 2720 State Route 699, Suite 200, Fairfax. One-year certification, digital or print materials and continued education on Mondays through Thursday and Saturday. \$70-110. www.redcrossna.org.



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OPINION

Happy New Year, Keep in Touch

Reflecting and reinforcing the sense of community.

As local, weekly newspapers, the Connection's mission is to bring the news you need about your community, to give you the information you need to enjoy the best things in and near your community, to advocate for community good, to call attention to unmet needs, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to celebrate and record milestones and events in community and people's lives.

To succeed at any of that, we need your help. If you know of a person or an organization doing important work, something that might make a good feature story, let us know. We want to know if someone in your family or your community published a book, became an Eagle Scout, raised money for a good cause, accomplished a feat like running a marathon or having an art show. Send us a photo and tell us about it.

We publish photos and notes of a variety of personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

We are also interested in events at your church, mosque, synagogue, community center, pool, school, club, etc. E-mail us a photo and a note about the event. Be sure to include

the names of all the people who are in a photo, and say when and where the photo was taken.

We also publish notes about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, new employees and anniversaries are welcome.

To have an event included in our calendars, we appreciate getting notice at least two weeks ahead of the event, and we encourage photos. Events for our calendars should be free or at nominal cost and open to the public.

In covering the issues, we strive to provide a voice for our readers. We look forward to hearing from you.

The Connection Newspapers are published by Local Media Connection LLC, an independent, locally owned company. The publications and websites include the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, two editions of the Centre View, the Potomac Almanac and individual Connection papers and websites serving McLean, Great Falls, Vienna/Oakton, Oak Hill/Herndon, Reston, Springfield, Burke, Fairfax, Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly/Fair Oaks, Alexandria and Mount Vernon.

The publications and websites have won hundreds of awards for news and community coverage just in the past few years, including

the Virginia Press Association Award for Integrity and Community Service last year.

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Connolly: Good News in Phase One, Phase Two

Q&A with U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) on challenges and opportunities of 2013.

Q: What headline, or headlines, would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: There are many; here are a few:

- ❖ Northern Virginia Economy Continues to Grow and Produce Well-Paying Jobs

- ❖ Phase One of Dulles Rail Opens to Reston; Phase Two Construction on Time and on Budget

- ❖ U.S. DOT Approves Congressional Delegation Request for TIFIA Funding to Reduce Burden on Dulles Toll Road Users

- ❖ Bipartisan Coalition in Congress Approves Legislation to Resolve Fiscal Cliff

- ❖ Virginia General Assembly Appropriates New Money for Northern Virginia Transportation Improvements and Infrastructure Repairs

- ❖ McAuliffe Elected Virginia Governor

- ❖ Northern Virginia Remains a Magnet for Fortune 500 Companies Relocating to DC Region

- ❖ FBI Brings New HQ to Northern Virginia

- ❖ Nationals, Red Sox Face off in World Series!



U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11) entertained 75 Springfield second-graders during "Read Across America Day" last March to celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday at Hunt Valley Elementary School. "He gets an A-plus-plus for being funny," said Madeline Cassidy, 8, who thought Connolly could be a "real" teacher—if that congressional job doesn't work out.

Q: What are—or should be—top priorities for our state legislators this session?

A: ❖ Transportation—"The General Assembly needs to take positive actions to provide new funding for needed transportation and transit improvements, particularly congestion in Northern Virginia

and Hampton Roads. These two regions of the commonwealth are Virginia's economic engines. If we want to continue to grow Northern Virginia's economy, we must ensure that our transportation infrastructure is capable of meeting the needs of our citizens and our businesses. For too long, the General Assembly has ignored the pleas of Northern Virginian citizens and elected officials to provide adequate transportation funding."

- ❖ Transit Funding—"The Commonwealth of Virginia has never paid its fair share of costs for the Metro system or construction of the new Silver Line to Dulles. Most of the funding for these costs attributable to Virginia actually comes from Northern Virginia taxpayers and businesses. The Virginia General Assembly needs to provide additional funding for the region's transit needs and recognize such funding benefits the economy of the entire commonwealth."

- ❖ Education—"Providing adequate resources to protect the quality of Northern Virginia's public schools and schools across the commonwealth. The General Assembly should not rob education

SEE CONNOLLY, PAGE 7

Fairfax
CONNECTION

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OPINION

Connolly

FROM PAGE 6

funds to pay for other government functions.”

❖ Voting Improvements—“The November election showed that there were a number of problems at polling places in Northern Virginia and other locations in the commonwealth. Long lines, old malfunctioning machines, absentee ballots arriving late, were among the issues voters faced this year. The General Assembly should consider appropriate voting reforms, including no-excuse early voting. Legislation I have introduced in Congress with Senator Mark Warner, entitled the FAST Voting Act, provides a good model for the state to follow as it works to enhance voting processes and procedures.”

❖ Protecting Women’s Rights and Health—“The Virginia General Assembly’s actions restricting women’s health services, including legislation mandating invasive ultrasound exams and restricting health clinics, were an assault on women’s rights. Hopefully, the withering national criticism of these anti-women laws will con-

vince the General Assembly to protect, rather than degrade, the rights of Virginia women.”

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community?

A: Protecting and growing Northern Virginia’s economy and our vibrant public-private partnership with the federal government remains my number one priority for Northern Virginia. As a member of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee that oversees government contracting, federal workers, information technology, and other related areas, I continue to work in a bipartisan manner to maintain the balance between government functions performed by our dedicated federal workforce and those best served by the private sector. In addition, addressing our region’s transportation needs and preserving a strong educational system are important factors in maintaining our economic growth and quality of life.”

Q: Have you driven on the Express Lanes?

A: “I have used the Express Lanes several times since they opened and found that they performed as

promised. Despite heavy traffic on the Beltway, I was able to use the toll lanes to reach my meetings on time. I have received similar feedback from many constituents who appreciate another option to congestion.”

Q: New Year’s resolutions?

A: ❖ To work with my colleagues from both parties to protect the interests and the needs of Northern Virginia in the U.S. House of Representatives.

❖ To continue to seek responsible, balanced, and bipartisan solutions to grow our local and national economy and reduce the deficit.

❖ To continue to use every opportunity to meet and confer with constituents and organizations across Virginia’s 11th Congressional District and to use my office to help them deal with issues and problems they face with federal agencies and programs.

❖ To ensure that our federal government maintains the sacred trust we’ve made to our active service members, our veterans, and our military families to provide them with the services they’ve earned through their sacrifice.

— VICTORIA ROSS

AREA ROUNDUPS

Town Hall Meeting Jan. 3

The 2013 Virginia General Assembly Session begins Jan. 9 and, before it does, Del. Jim LeMunyon (R-67th) and Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34th) want to hear what issues are important to their constituents. So they’re holding a town hall meeting this Thursday, Jan. 3, at 7:30 p.m., at the Sully District Governmental Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly, to listen to residents’ ideas and priorities and share their own views on the issues.

EQAC Environmental Hearing

The Fairfax County Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC) will hold its annual public hearing on the environment on Monday, Jan. 7, 2013, at 7:30 p.m. The hearing will be in the county Government Center auditorium, 12000 Government Center Parkway in Fairfax. Citizens are invited to attend, share their views and identify environmental issues applicable to the county.

Environmental issues considered by EQAC include water quality, air quality, noise, hazardous materials, solid waste, stream valley protection, wildlife management, light pollution, visual pollution, energy, climate change response and adaptation, land use, transportation and the use and preservation of ecological resources.

Democratic Women of Clifton

The Democratic Women of Clifton will meet Sunday, Jan. 13, from 3-5 p.m., in the Clifton Town Meeting Hall, 12641 Chapel Road in Clifton. All Democratic women in Northern Virginia are invited to become members of this organization. For more information, write cliftonwomendems@aol.com or visit the DWC website at www.democraticwomenofclifton.org.

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The Quest for Youth and Beauty

Spending billions of dollars to improve one's appearance.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Hiba Hakki reclines on an exam table as a physician picks up a syringe with his latex-gloved hand and points it at her face. He inserts the needle into the flesh around her eyes. She cringes slightly. This is a Botox injection, just one of the cosmetic procedures Hakki undergoes for the sake of beauty.

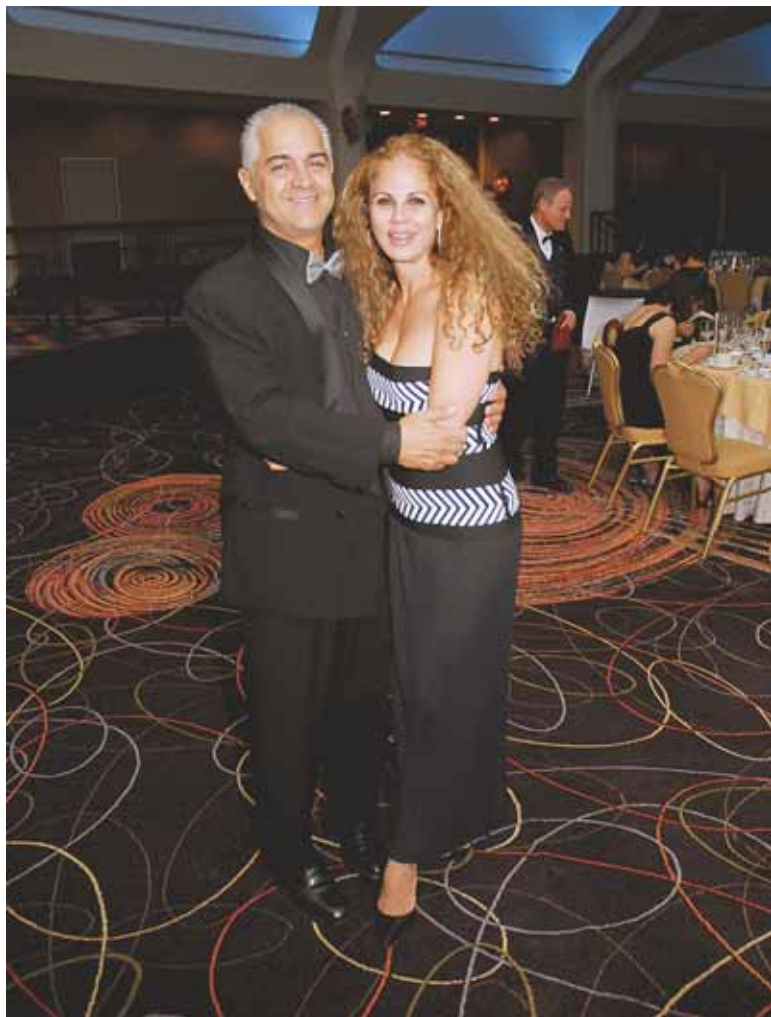
"There is a slight burning sensation," said Hakki, who is 58. "But it's like anything else that we women do for our appearance that we dread. The needles are very fine so it's not too bad."

Hakki is devoted to maintaining a polished appearance, which doesn't include "crow's feet," frown lines, enlarged pores, sagging breasts, discolored teeth or even chipped nail polish. She is not alone in her desire to look her best. A recent survey by the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS) shows that more than half of all Americans, regardless of income, approve of cosmetic plastic surgery, and spent nearly \$10 billion on cosmetic procedures last year. ASAPS says that Botox (Botulinum Toxin Type A) injections top the list of the most popular non-surgical cosmetic procedures, followed by hyaluronic acid, laser hair removal, microdermabrasion, and IPL (intense pulsed light) laser treatment.

"There is a societal pressure to look young and beautiful," explained Arlington resident Linda Gulyn, Ph.D., a Marymount University psychologist who teaches about the natural process of aging from a social-psychological perspective. "Some people have a tougher time growing older than others, and they look for ways to slow down the natural change."

Candice Early, a spokesperson for the Arlington and Reston offices of plastic surgeon and McLean resident Dr. Wendy Gottlieb, M.D., says that laser hair removal is one of the treatments most commonly requested by patients in her practice. "The laser focuses on the hair bulb under the skin and kills it so that it will not grow back," said Early. "I did it on my underarms seven years ago and I still don't have underarm hair."

Hakki, whose husband is plastic surgeon Dr. Ayman Hakki, M.D., admits that the procedure is not pain-free. "If you can imagine snapping rubber bands on your



Hiba Hakki, pictured with her husband plastic surgeon Ayman Hakki, M.D., is among those who use cosmetic procedures to help keep the signs of aging at bay.

skin, that is what it feels like," she said. "Laser hair removal is not a one time treatment. Multiple treatments are needed for it to be effective. You need a lot of money and a lot of time."

For those seeking to rid their face of wrinkles, age spots and acne scars, microdermabrasion is an option. During the procedure, an esthetician uses a hand-held device that emits crystals onto the skin's surface and polishes it. "It peels off the top layers of skin to reveal new skin cells," said Early. "It temporarily damages skin and takes about a week to heal. At first, it looks like really bad sunburn on your face."

During an IPL laser treatment, an esthetician uses a hand-held device to administer the bright-light treatment. "It's like laser resurfacing for the face," said Early. "It tightens and rejuvenates the skin, but you need several treatments. It helps with age spots and makes the face firmer and more youthful."

Fillers like Restylane and Hylaform are sought-after weapons for those seeking fuller lips or wrinkle-free skin. Hyaluronic acid,

the key ingredient in these fillers, is produced naturally in the body, but decreases as one gets older.

"I've had fillers distributed all over my face. If you use just a little bit, others will never know it was done," said Hakki. "I have used fillers to plump my lips, but I have to be careful not to get too much because I don't want to look like Donald Duck."

Using cosmetic procedures in moderation is the key, say experts, to maintaining a natural look. "The overuse of Botox, for example, can make a person look like a lion," said Early. "We can spot people who are addicted to cosmetic procedures and we turn those people away. If we look at you and feel that you don't need a procedure, we won't give it to you."

Gulyn adds, "Our society equates youth with beauty, but there is a line between doing things that freshen your appearance and putting yourself at risk. You have to determine whether or not you're putting yourself at physical risk, disrupting your family or preventing yourself from adapting to the natural changes of aging."

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Mary Garner's New Year's resolution is to increase the intensity of her workout routine. The 69-year-old retiree plans to seek the advice of a fitness trainer to create a plan to achieve her goal.

"Over the last three months, I've hit a plateau with my workouts," said Garner, who spent more than 40 years working as a math teacher for Alexandria County Public Schools. "During the holidays I ate too many cookies. I'd like to lose at least 10 pounds, but I don't want to put too much pressure on myself."

In December of 2011, Clint and Vickie Lambert resolved to shed extra pounds in 2012. The decision was promoted by a conversation with the couple's cardiologist who suggested weight loss. As they said goodbye to 2012, Clint, who is 68 had lost 45 pounds, while Vickie, who is 69, had lost 35 pounds. The Lamberts, who live at Greenspring retirement community in Springfield, say they accomplished their goal through behavioral changes that included regular exercise and healthy eating habits.

"The biggest change has been minimizing the quantity of food



Senior citizens at Greenspring retirement community take Zumba, a Latin-inspired dance-fitness class.

intake," said Clint Lambert, a retired psychiatric mental health clinical nurse specialist. "We were just eating too much."

Vickie Lambert, former Dean and Professor Emerita of the Georgia Health Sciences University, College of Nursing said, "It is nice to finally feel comfortable in our clothes and enjoy the positive comments from our friends."

Local fitness experts say the New Year is an ideal time to set and begin working to achieve fitness goals. Even those seniors with mobility issues can benefit from physical activities done in an upright position. "The activities must be done regularly and with a gradual increase in the amount of

Developing a Cardio Workout Plan

Experts say benefits include weight loss and decreased heart disease risk.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

During Martin McKay's annual physical examination shortly before the holidays, his doctor suggested that he consider intensifying his cardiovascular exercise routine.

"It was kind of funny because there's nothing to intensify. I don't do cardio workouts," said McKay, who lives in North Potomac, Md. "I don't work out at all for that matter."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that healthy adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity each week. The benefits include weight control and a decreased risk of heart disease. Local fitness experts offer tips for beginning or increasing an aerobic workout.

For those like McKay who aren't engaged in cardio exercises, ex-

about increasing the intensity of their runs."

THIS STRATEGY APPLIES not only to running but also cycling, swimming, and other forms of cardio exercise. In fact, Martin recommends that people not limit themselves to one form of exercise.

"Running two days a week and swimming one day would also be a good idea," said Martin. "Performing the same form of cardio everyday also may lead to injury by inducing the same stress on themselves over and over again. Swimming is a good alternative because you can still get a really good cardio workout but the forces your body is exposed to is much lower."

Experts acknowledge that getting aerobic exercise might be more challenging during winter months. "You may not be able to go running or swimming during the cold winter season, but you can do other physical activities like dancing [or] ice skating," said Rosa Ganey, Burke resident and nurse health educator for Fairfax County Health Network. "If you're a member of a gym, try taking classes."



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

George Mason University students get a cardiovascular workout on the school's Fairfax campus. Joel Martin, Ph.D., professor of kinesiology at George Mason University suggests that those embarking on an exercise routine start at a low level of intensity.

Developing a support system is key to maintaining morale when a workout plan. "Join a walking group or jogging group," said Michelle Walters-Edwards, Ph.D., professor of health and human performance at Marymount University in Arlington.

Stay motivated by setting small goals. "Once a person reaches [the first] goal they should set a new one," said Martin. "For example, running one mile in under 10 min-

setting goals, thinking about past successes, choosing a role model and above all staying positive."

Franke said that changing a habit requires doing it consistently for at least six months. "While six months seems like a long time, it takes that amount of stick-to-itiveness to really make the resolution a regular habit," she said.

Local fitness experts say the New Year is an ideal time to set and begin working to achieve fitness goals. "Consult your physician [and a] senior personal trainer before beginning an exercise program," said Juanita Kuntz, a Springfield-based wellness coordinator who specializes in fitness for the elderly. "Physicians will give you needed recommendations and restrictions to be used for your personal exercise program. A senior fitness professional is knowledgeable in functional limitations and possible chronic health conditions or impairments that senior adults may need to look out for."

To maximize success, experts say goals should be measurable, detailed and attainable. "Start slow, set reasonable goals and choose an activity you enjoy," said Kuntz. "If you actually enjoy something you are much more likely to get out of bed and do it. Don't expect to reach your goals instantly. Be patient with yourself."

VIEWPOINTS

Fairfax Residents Discuss Their New Year's Resolutions

— ANAGHA SRIKANTH



Divya Madusudhan, 19, student at Boston University, Fairfax

"Exercise more, I feel like that's the most common one. I feel like I should space myself out more time-wise during the school year so final exam time isn't so bad. In all honesty, I know after the first week I'll be done with my resolutions, but it's just generally what I want to do over the year."

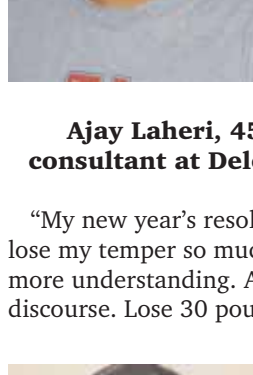
Neema Laheri, 17, senior at Robinson Secondary School, Fairfax

"I've been thinking about that and I really need to manage my time better so I can work less and play more. I want more time to myself so I can enjoy life and not stress."



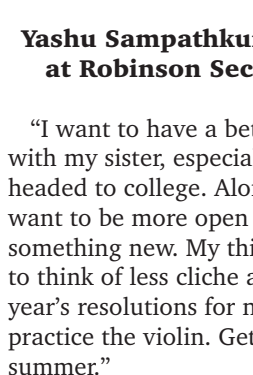
Sahil Laheri, 15, sophomore at Thomas Jefferson High School, Fairfax

"Exercise more to help fight my asthma and to become more fit in general so I can have a better physique. I should probably eat healthier also to support that."



Ajay Laheri, 45, management consultant at Deloitte & Touche, Fairfax

"My new year's resolutions are to not lose my temper so much and become more understanding. Avoid any political discourse. Lose 30 pounds."



Neha Sampathkumar, 12, seventh grader at Rocky Run Middle School, Fairfax

"Stop procrastinating because I need to do better in school, especially science. I also want to eat healthier because I don't think my metabolism is going to last forever. I also want to get more active in after school stuff because I feel like I'm really lazy so that's why I'm trying out for the spring musical."

Yashu Sampathkumar, 17, senior at Robinson Secondary School, Fairfax

"I want to have a better relationship with my sister, especially since I'm headed to college. Along with that I want to be more open and trying something new. My third resolution is to think of less cliché and better new year's resolutions for next year. Actually practice the violin. Get toned up by summer."

Hot Topics for 2013

FROM PAGE 3

hubs many of the innovative businesses in the nation and the world. The opportunity exists for us to capitalize on the spirit of entrepreneurship and innovation to continue to grow the regional economy into the future. Economic diversification will be key, especially in the health of the IT sector."

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community, and how will the Fairfax Chamber play a role?

A: "When asked why they choose to headquarter or locate in Northern Virginia, businesses consistently cite the quality of the public schools sys-

tem and a qualified workforce as the number one reasons for selecting Fairfax County. Our region stands to face a gap in the number of workers qualified in the STEM fields and available jobs. Preparing our students in these critical areas is of paramount importance. To address this, the chamber has assembled other chambers and organizations throughout Northern Virginia to create scalable systemic solutions to train students in the STEM disciplines and prepare them to be equipped for the workforce of the future."

Q: Have you driven on the Express Lanes?

A: "Yes. I would rate my experience as excellent. The Express Lanes are a great example of what can be accomplished when the private and public sector work together to solve a problem."

Drummond: In a Word—Gridlock

Fairfax City Councilmember Dan Drummond and wife Kerry attended the reception honoring former Mayor Robert F. Lederer in June at the City Hall Atrium. Drummond, a former journalist, is director of Public Relations for Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. He is also a member of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and Transportation Planning Board.



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Q: What headline, or headlines, would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Kitty Pozer Park Opens in Downtown City of Fairfax, Creating Renewed Interest in Restaurants, Shops"

Q: What are—or should be—top priorities for our state legislators this session?

A: "Providing a forward-thinking plan to fund transportation projects, supporting legislation that gives local government more autonomy and focusing on issues that matter most to Virginians, not 'show' bills that make headlines, but don't create jobs or improve our quality of life."

Q: What are some challenges/opportunities facing Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "In a word: gridlock. Political gridlock in Washington, D.C. will have a continuing negative impact on the Northern Virginia economy

and transportation gridlock continues to dampen residents' quality of life."

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community? How will you address it?

A: "Balanced growth and development in the City of Fairfax. We have a number of housing and retail development projects coming before the city council that could positively alter the city's future. We need the community's input on what they want their community to look like."

Q: Have you driven on the Express Lanes?

A: "No, but I certainly can see why people would want to take it if the Beltway is jammed."

Q: New Year's resolutions?

A: "Like just about everyone else, I'll be trying my best to eat better and exercise more. We have great gyms and trails in the City of Fairfax so there's no reason I can't make it happen."

Herrity: Transportation As a Priority



Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), center, stands with McGruff as the crime-fighting bloodhound gets ready to take a bite out of crime during National Night Out events across Fairfax County in August. McGruff, the popular canine, started the night off at the West Springfield District Station, where he was joined by fellow law enforcement officers and Supervisors John Cook (to McGruff's right) and West Springfield Police Captain Joe Hill (next to Cook).

Q: What headline, or headlines, would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "VDOT announces Express Lanes Project for I-66 Giving Commuters Transportation Choices"

Q: What are—or should be—top pri-

orities for our state legislators this session?

A: "Coming together as a delegation to solve some of our transportation funding shortfall."

Q: What are some challenges/opportunities facing Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: "Traffic congestion, sequestration (and/or the inevitable cuts in the federal budget), and the county's budget shortfalls projected for the next several years. On transportation, Fairfax County has the opportunity to go back to our traditional way of funding new infrastructure—developer proffers. Our state delegation has an opportunity to come together as a region and identify existing and new funding that can be used to fund a state priority—transportation. There is also opportunity for using our scarce resources wisely, and partnering with the private sector to get goals accomplished. Bringing the Express Lanes to I-66 would offer congestion relief with a way to pay for it and give commuters transportation choices. With the coming budget cuts we have the opportunity to further diversify our economy in Fairfax County and the county's projected budget shortfalls provide an opportunity to correct the structural imbalances in the current budget."

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community?

A: "Outside of sequestration, the ever-present problem of traffic congestion is this region's biggest issue. Outside of the issues I mentioned before (Express lanes for I-66 and the focus of

proffer dollars on transportation), I believe we have to begin reducing the congestion on the Fairfax County Parkway. I was able to have the Parkway's designation changed to a primary road in 2012 which should bring more state construction and maintenance resources and held a hosted a town hall to begin developing the vision for the future of the Parkway. Hopefully we will be successful in converting these actions into additional capacity in 2012."

Q: Have you driven on the Express Lanes?

A: "I have and they are great. Not only do they give you a more predictable commute when you really need it, but the new entrances in to Tysons help tremendously. They appear to be having a positive impact on the regular lanes as well. I am hoping the county's new Connector express bus routes that start in January will reduce congestion in the regular lanes even more and that eventually we will see slug lines into Tysons."

Q: New Year's resolutions?

A: ♦Keep off the weight I lost during last year's surgery.

♦Continue to proactively serve the residents of Fairfax County.

Manney: 'Pain We Can Agree to'

Nancy-jo Manney, the executive director of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, spoke during the news conference kicking off the long-awaited demolition of Springfield Mall. Manney, standing with Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee) and Vornado/Charles E. Smith President Mitchell Shear, was unconditionally optimistic about the renovation of Springfield Mall last year, and she said she's "going for even more optimism in 2013" with her headline this year. (We all have our fingers crossed for this one.) For more information on the chamber, go to www.springfieldchamber.org



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Q: Top headline for 2013?

A: "Express Lanes and Silver Line Unlock Gridlock."

Q: Top legislative priority?

A: "The top priority for the 2013 General Assembly must be finding a long-term sustainable transportation funding source for NOVA and the commonwealth. The answer is going to be 'what pain can we agree to' because there is no solution that doesn't hurt."

Q: Challenges and opportunities?

A: "I think the economy will continue to be our biggest challenge, but as bad as it may be elsewhere I believe NOVA still has more opportunities for growth. Being this close to Washington DC does have its benefits."

Q: What do you consider to be the num-

ber one issue affecting the community?

A: "We're going to see a lot of revitalization and economic development come to life in the Greater Springfield area in 2013. Its impact on our community could be a bit overwhelming for some. The Greater Springfield Chamber will work with property owners, developers, DOT and our elected officials to roll out the welcome mat."

Q: Express Lanes?

A: "I have my E-ZPass Flex but haven't yet had a need to use the Express Lanes. But look for my Subaru going up and down, up and down, and up and down the lanes during my two free weeks in January!"

Q: New Year's resolution?

A: "Ask me my New Year's resolution in July. In the meantime, I've got too much to do to spend time planning what I need to do."

Marsden: State Credit Card Maxed Out



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

State Senator David Marsden (D-37) in front of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Fairfax Station. Marsden is currently serving his second term as a senator in the Virginia General Assembly. On Jan. 12, 2010, Marsden won a special Senate election to replace Republican Ken Cuccinelli, who was elected attorney general the previous fall. Since 2006 and prior to serving in the State Senate, he served in the Virginia House of Delegates representing the 41st district.

Q: Top headline for 2013?

A: "Governor McDonnell eliminates Route 460 funding and invests in lower tolls on Dulles Toll Road." Nobody uses the current 460, why would they use the new one?

SEE HOT TOPICS, PAGE 16

CALENDAR

To have community events listed, send to south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416 with questions. Deadline for calendar listings is two weeks prior to event.

TUESDAY/JAN. 8

Encore Chorale Rehearsal. 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., at The Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. Former high school and college choristers, church, synagogue and community choral singers are invited to sing in a dynamic rehearsal with the Encore Chorale for their Spring 2013 season. 301-261-5747, info@encorecreativity.org or <http://encorecreativity.org>.

SATURDAY/JAN. 12

Eighth Annual Comedy Night. 8:30 p.m., at the JCCNV, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. A pre-show happy hour begins at 7:45 p.m. followed by the early show, then an uncensored performance at 10 p.m. \$34, \$36 for JCCNV members; discounts for groups of 10-plus. 703-537-3000 or jccnvcomedyntite.brownpapertickets.com.

SUNDAY/JAN. 13

11th Annual Used Book Sale. 9 a.m.-5 p.m., at Beth El Hebrew Congregation, 3830 Seminary Road, Alexandria. An enormous selection of books of all subject sorted by category with parking available and no entry fee (early entry, from 8:30-9 a.m. costs \$10). lennieg@cox.net.

MONDAY/JAN. 14

11th Annual Used Book Sale. 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Beth El Hebrew Congregation, 3830 Seminary Road, Alexandria. An enormous selection of books of all subject sorted by category with parking available and no entry fee (early entry, from 8:30-9 a.m. costs \$10). lennieg@cox.net.

FRIDAY/JAN. 18

Aquila Theatre with Edmond Rostand's "Cyrano De Bergerac." 8 p.m., at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, Intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123, Fairfax. **Edmond Rostand's** classic tale of unrequited love, presented by acclaimed British-American touring troupe **Aquila Theatre**. \$20; \$32; \$40. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

FAITH NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

St. Leo the Great Church in Fairfax offers a program for Catholics who are away from the church, struggling with church teachings or who would like to more fully practice their faith by returning to the Sacraments; the program, Welcome Home, is offered on Sundays, Feb. 3, 10, 17 and 24 and March 3 and 10 at 7 p.m. in the St. John Room, 3770 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. csmith@stleofairfax.com.

Fairfax Baptist Temple, at the corner of Fairfax County Parkway and Burke Lake Roads, holds a Bible Study Fellowship at 9 a.m. Sundays followed by a 10 a.m. worship service. Nursery care and Children's Church also provided. 6401 Missionary Lane, Fairfax Station, 703-323-8100, www.fbtministries.org



Marc Unger

Eighth Annual Comedy Night Hosts Marc Unger

On Saturday, Jan. 12, the JCCNV hosts its eighth Annual Comedy Night at 8:30 p.m., 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. A pre-show happy hour begins at 7:45 p.m. followed by the early show, then an uncensored performance at 10 p.m. \$34, \$36 for JCCNV members; discounts for groups of 10-plus. 703-537-3000 or jccnvcomedyntite.brownpapertickets.com.

SATURDAY/JAN. 19

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Masterworks IV. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor Christopher Zimmerman and flautist Christina Jennings perform Mozart's Overture to The Magic Flute, Leshnoff's Flute Concerto, Ives' The Unanswered Question and Brahms' Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68. \$25-\$55. 703-563-1990 or www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

SUNDAY/JAN. 20

Garden Gauge Model Train Display at the Fairfax Station

Railroad Museum. 1-4 p.m., at the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Washington, Virginia & Maryland Garden Railway Society will have a display and running G Gauge (Garden Gauge) model trains. \$3 for adults; \$1 for children. 703-425-9225 or www.fairfax-station.org.

Savior Glover's "SoLe Sanctuary." 7 p.m., at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, Intersection of Braddock Road and Route 123, Fairfax. Celebrated choreographer and tap dancer **Savior Glover** honors his art form with a Hoofer's meditation on the art of tap. \$23; \$38; \$46. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Lord of Life Lutheran offers services at two locations, in Fairfax at 5114 Twinbrook Road and in Clifton at 13421 Twin Lakes Drive. Services in Fairfax are held on Saturdays at 5:30 p.m. and Sundays at 8:15, 9:45 and 11:15 a.m. Services in Clifton are held on Sundays at 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. 703-323-9500 or www.Lordoflifeva.org.

First Baptist Church of Springfield offers Sunday school at 9:15 a.m., followed by a 10:30 a.m. worship service. 7300 Gary Street, Springfield. 703-451-1500 www.fbcspringfield.org.

Clifton Presbyterian Church, 12748 Richards Lane, Clifton, offers Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery care is provided. Christian education for all ages is at 9:45 a.m. 703-830-3175.

St. Andrew the Apostle Catholic Church, 6720 Union Mill Road, Clifton, conducts Sunday masses at 7:30 a.m., 8:45 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. It also offers a Saturday

vigil at 5:30 p.m. and a Thursday Latin mass at 7 p.m. 703-817-1770 or www.st-andrew.org.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 8304 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield, offers casual worship services on Saturday evenings at 5:30 p.m. featuring contemporary music. More traditional services take place on Sunday mornings at 8:15 and 11 a.m. Sunday School is at 9:45-10:45 a.m. for children and adults. The church also offers discussion groups for adults. 703-451-5855 or www.poplc.org.

Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway in Springfield, supports a Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) program on the first and third Wednesday of each month. Meetings are 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the church. All mothers and children are welcome. The program provides mothers an opportunity to get to know other mothers through discussions and craft activities. Register at 703-451-5320.

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PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Matt Mero



The flyer for the Friday, Jan. 4, comedy show.

Robinson Grad Is in Sully's Comedy Show

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Sully's Restaurant is the place to be on Friday, Jan. 4, at 8 p.m., when Robinson Secondary grad Matt Mero joins headlining comedian Rob Maher in an evening of comedy. Sully's is at 14511 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Chantilly; cover charge is \$5.

Also on the bill are up-and-coming, Washington, D.C., stand-up comedians Allison Wruk, Danny Charnley, Jon Yeager and Rachela Forcellese. Maher is a regular performer at the D.C. Improv and at clubs in Richmond. And he's a two-time finalist in Comedy Central's laugh-riot competition.

Mero is not only one of the comics, but also the host, organizer and promoter of this show, along with Yeager. Mero grew up in Fairfax and graduated from Robinson in 2003.

"After being pressured by some of my closest friends for about six months, I finally worked up the courage to get on stage and try out stand-up comedy for the first time, about a year and a half ago," explained Mero. "I have always enjoyed making people laugh, but that first time making an entire room full of people laugh was something on a completely different level—I was instantly hooked."

"My jokes touch on a wide variety of topics; from relationships to religion to dealing with a grumpy pet cat," he continued. "I like to point out the absurdity in our culture, sometimes by posing an equally silly and abstract hypothetical scenario. When it comes down to it though, I'm there to make the audience laugh. It's what I love to do, and it's what they came for. When I see or think of something that makes me chuckle, I write it down. Then I try and deliver it in a way that lets everyone get in on the joke."

THE JAN. 4 SHOW will also kick off a stand-up comedy series that Sully's will offer every Friday night from 8-10 p.m. Each week will feature a different

powerhouse headliner, plus on-the-rise local comics, and Mero and Yeager will organize each event. "We're very excited to see this room grow into something amazing," said Mero.

He and Yeager have been hitting many of the same open-mic venues for the past year and, when the opportunity to perform at a place right in their own backyard came up, they latched onto it.

"We both have a lot of the same views about how a comedy show should be run," said Mero. "But most importantly, we both want everyone at a show to have a good time. We have tailored each Friday night to have a lineup of comics who are not only very funny, but whose sense of humor and style work well together. The audience should feel a smooth transition from comic to comic on any given night, as if they are reading a novel with each chapter written by a different author."

Basically, said Mero, "We just want everyone to have a good time. Jon and I are pretty laid-back guys. So we want a cool place for comics to come tell jokes to a willing audience, and a place [for] people who don't tell jokes to come and laugh at the end of the week."

The show is for audiences age 21 and up because of the mature language. But, added Mero, "We don't put on anyone who tells sexist or bigoted jokes; we have no tolerance for ignorance."

AS THINGS STAND NOW, he said, people living in western Fairfax County have to travel to Arlington or the district to see a comedy show. But at Sully's, said Mero, "We've brought the same comics you see in D.C. to Chantilly."

He says the area's top comedic talent will be on the bill. "Everyone in our shows is certifiably funny," said Mero. "These are people that Jon and I have seen and worked with, and we know they're hilarious. We're taking local comics who maybe haven't been in the game long enough to pick up any 'professional' shows and giving them a great stage and audience to work their magic."

In addition to best sellers, FCPL also offers special events with best-selling authors. On Dec. 19, the subject of discussion at Fairfax County regional libraries was Mark Twain.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Readers of the Pack

What Fairfax County residents read in 2012.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

What books captivated, enthralled and riveted local readers' attention last year?

According to Mary Mulrenen, spokesperson for the Fairfax County Public Library, Fairfax County readers selected many of the same fiction and non-fiction favorites that caught the attention of book-lovers nationwide. Dr. Seuss, science fiction and once again, lawyers (John Grisham's 25th legal thriller) topped the charts.

Mulrenen compiled the following "Top Five" lists based on the top 100 checkouts from Fairfax County Public Library in the adult, teen and children's sections. The Hunger Games Trilogy leads with a combined 10,330 checkouts on all three titles. Dr. Seuss has staying power with 9,822 checkouts and John Grisham's The Litigators has 4,868, making it the most popular title in the system. The same titles were best sellers on The New York Times list, which tracks national and independent book store sales, as well as Internet retail sellers such as Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

The Fairfax County Public Library system includes eight regional libraries, 14 community libraries, with more than 2.4 million items available for checkout. According to the FCPS website—www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/—in 2012, there were: 495,831 registered customers; 5,246,854 visits to library branches; 13,034,816 items loaned; 4,162,599 visits to the library's Internet website and 172,630 people attended 8,934 events.

Adult

TOP FIVE FICTION

The Litigators by John Grisham
V is for Vengeance by Sue Grafton
The Drop by Michael Connelly
Zero Day by David Baldacci
Explosive Eighteen by Janet Evanovich

TOP FIVE NONFICTION

Unbroken: a World War II Story of Survival, Resilience and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand
In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler's Berlin by Erik Larson
Bossypants by Tina Fey
Steve Jobs by Walter Isaacson
The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by Rebecca Skloot

TOP FIVE EBOOKS

The Litigators by John Grisham
The Help by Kathryn Stockett
Explosive Eighteen by Janet Evanovich
A Game of Thrones by George Martin
The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo by Steig Larsson

Teen

*TOP FIVE TITLES

The Book Thief by Markus Zusak
Divergent by Veronica Roth
The Giver by Lois Lowry
Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher
The Summer I Turned Pretty by Jenny Han

TOP FIVE SERIES

Hunger Games trilogy by Suzanne Collins
Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling
Inheritance series by Christopher Paolini
Twilight series by Stephanie Meyer
Uglies trilogy by Scott Westerfeld

Children

TOP FIVE SERIES

Diary of a Wimpy Kid series by Jeff Kinney
Magic Tree House series by Mary Pope Osborne
Harry Potter series by J.K. Rowling
Heroes of Olympus series by Rick Riordan
Fly Guy early readers by Tedd Arnold

TOP FIVE TITLES

The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish by Dr. Seuss
The Invention of Hugo Cabret: a Novel in Words and Pictures by Brian Selznick
Green Eggs and Ham by Dr. Seuss
Hop on Pop by Dr. Seuss

SCHOOL NOTES

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

Caleigh Patterson of Fairfax is a member of the 2012-2013 Lynchburg College women's basketball team, coached by Abby Pyzik. Patterson, a junior center, is averaging 3.2 points per game and 3.5 rebounds per game.

Patterson, an exercise physiology major, is the daughter of Pip and Shan-

non Patterson.

The Hornets (5-3/2-0 ODAC) will travel to face off against Averett University in a non-conference matchup on Saturday, December 15 at 2:00 p.m.

Sean Padraic Brennan, a junior majoring in computer science at the

University of Rochester, has been named to the Dean's List for academic achievement for the spring 2012 semester. Brennan, a resident of Fairfax Station, is the son of John and Mary Ellen Brennan, and a graduate of South County Secondary School in Lorton.

Keegan Ruddy and the Robinson boys' basketball team finished second at the Pohanka Chantilly Basketball Classic.



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Robinson Boys' Basketball Finishes Runner-Up at Pohanka Tourney

Rams beat Wilson, South County, lose to Mountain View in final.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Robinson boys' basketball team headed to the locker room with momentum at halftime of the Pohanka Chantilly Basketball Classic championship game on Dec. 29.

The Rams were strong defensively, limiting Mountain View to 25 points, and junior guard Jared Steen beat the buzzer with his second 3-pointer of the evening, giving Robinson a six-point lead.

As the second half progressed, Steen continued his sharpshooting and finished with five 3-pointers. The Rams' defense, however, failed to follow suit.

Mountain View (Stafford) outscored Robinson by 10 points in the second half and captured its first Pohanka tournament title with a 63-58 victory at Chantilly High School. The Wildcats scored nearly as many points in the fourth quarter (20) as they did in the first half.

"We stopped defending in the second half," Robinson head coach Brian Nelson said. "We played great defense in the first half. The things we did well in the first half defensively we did not do in the second half and Mountain View took full advantage of that. . . . I don't think we played anywhere close to our best in the second half."

ROBINSON DEFEATED Wilson (Washington, D.C.), 62-53, on Dec. 27 and knocked off South County, 72-67, in the semifinals on Dec. 28. After playing three games in three days, Nelson said fatigue could have been a factor for the Rams' second-half struggles against Mountain View, but the team couldn't use that as an excuse.

"Effort is [the] No. 1 priority," Nelson said, "and we didn't give that for 32 minutes."

Steen continued draining perimeter shots into the second half of the championship game. His final 3-pointer cut the Mountain View lead to 59-57 with



Junior guard Jared Steen (12) made five 3-pointers against Mountain View in the championship game of the Pohanka Chantilly Basketball Classic on Dec. 29 at Chantilly High School.

1:14 remaining in the contest, but the Wildcats held on. Steen finished with a team-high 15 points and was 5-for-13 from 3-point range.

"He hasn't shot the ball all that well so far this season," Nelson said. "He's a great shooter, but he hasn't shot up to his expectations yet this year. Maybe this is the game that kind of gets him going a little bit."

Steen's career-high for 3-pointers made is six, a mark he set last season.

"If I'm open, I'll shoot it," Steen said. "If it goes in or goes out, I'll take the next open shot I have. I can't think about the last shot [whether I] miss or make it. I have to have a clear mind."

Senior forward Keegan Ruddy scored 14 points for Robinson and senior guard Nate Hackett added 10. Senior forward Nick Bynum grabbed nine rebounds.

"We didn't come out as intense as we should have," Hackett said. "We came out to start the game ready to play. In the second half, we were all lackadaisical and weren't ready to play. It seemed like everyone was slow and our defense wasn't up to par."

Junior guard Matt Fall and Bynum were named to the all-tournament team for Robinson. Fall averaged 13 points per game, including an 18-point performance against Wilson and a 15-point effort against South County. Bynum averaged 12 points per game. He finished with 25 points and 11 rebounds against South County.

Mountain View's Joe Wilson was named tournament Most Valuable Player. He averaged 16 points and 5.7 rebounds per game, including 17 points and six boards against Robinson. Mountain View's Ben Keller made the all-tournament team, averaging 13.7 points per game. He had 14 points against the Rams. Mountain View's Tyrus Mason had 16 points in the championship game and Tyrell Mason had 11.

WITH THE LOSS, Robinson, the defending Concorde District champion, entered 2013 with a 9-3 record. The Rams will host Centreville at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 4 for their district opener.

"We're not going to hang our heads about this for a long time," Nelson said. "We're disappointed that we lost, but we've got bigger goals that we need to accomplish this season."



PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

South County senior Justin Hampton was named to the all-tournament team at the 2012 Pohanka Chantilly Basketball Classic.

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

South County Boys' Basketball Places Fourth

The South County boys' basketball team finished fourth at the Pohanka Chantilly Basketball Classic, losing to host Chantilly, 69-56, in the third-place game on Dec. 29.

The Stallions defeated Mills Godwin, 62-59, on Dec. 27 and lost to Robinson, 72-67, in the semifinals on Dec. 28.

Senior guard Justin Hampton was named to the all-tournament team. He averaged 24.3 points per contest, including a 36-point performance against Robinson. During the game against the Rams, Hampton tied a tournament record with seven 3-point field goals.

Nathan Williams averaged 13 points per game for the Stallions. South County (5-6) will travel to face Lake Braddock at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 4.

Hayfield Boys' Basketball Wins Lake Braddock Tourney

The Hayfield boys' basketball team defeated McLean, 62-51, on Dec. 28 to win the Glory Days tournament at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

The Hawks beat Hylton, 75-62, on Dec. 26 and Lake Braddock, 47-36, on Dec. 27.

Brandon Lawson, Tyler Seelman and Amir Atkins were named to the all-tournament team for Hayfield. Atkins scored 17 points against McLean, Lawson finished with 16 points and Seelman added 11.

Hayfield (8-3) has won eight in a row after a 0-3 start. The Hawks will host Wakefield at 7:45 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 4.

West Springfield Girls' Basketball Handed First Loss

The West Springfield girls' basketball team lost to South Lakes, 42-34, in the championship game of the IAABO Holiday Classic on Dec. 28 at Prince George's Community College. The Spartans were 10-0 prior to the contest.

West Springfield defeated Suitland, 55-39, on Dec. 26 and River Hill, 50-38, on Dec. 27 to reach the tournament championship game.

The Spartans will travel to face T.C. Williams at 7:45 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 4.

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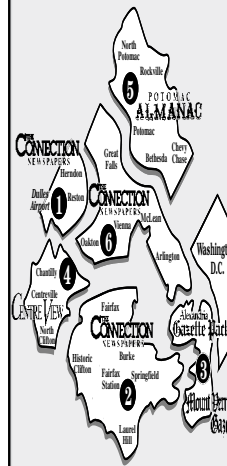
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Hot Topics for 2013

FROM PAGE 10

Q: Top legislative priority?

A: "Transportation. Without new funding sources we are in trouble. The state credit card is maxed out; our construction dollars are being diverted to maintenance; we soon will not qualify for our federal highway match. Our 'Best State to do Business' rating is headed south and Rt. 460 will not help! Pay attention to Senator John Watkins (R- Powhatan) bill to provide new funding (\$733 billion). It is brilliant and won't cost the average Virginian much of anything."

Q: Top opportunity?

A: "Our greatest opportunity is to finally address our violence problem. Let's make sure gun owners are responsible to keep their firearms

out of the wrong hands by holding them civilly accountable if they allow them to be stolen or misappropriated and used in a crime through carelessness. Finally, require background checks on gun purchasers conducting private sales at gun shows. A no-brainer."

Q: Express Lanes?

A: "Express lanes are great. I work in Bethesda and live in Burke and the commute is much easier as people are using these lanes enough to make life easier for those of us in the regular lanes. I want to throw them flowers."

Q: Resolution?

A: "I will not eat anything that comes on a toothpick in Richmond this session and will work out at the YMCA every day... sure."

Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), who has been instrumental in pushing the Springfield Mall project forward, holds up chunks of Garfinckel's Department Store as souvenirs of the iconic mall's demolition, which began on Monday, Nov. 26 with the destruction of what was originally the upscale Garfinckel's (and later became a Sports Authority.) "The exterior demolition is a strong signal that the mall renovation is well underway," McKay said, adding that he keeps pieces of Garfinckel's in his office along with other remnants of Springfield's past.



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Q: What are some challenges/opportunities facing Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: ♦ Economic development opportunities from BRAC, the Silver Line, Springfield Mall, and possibly a move to the Springfield GSA site by the FBI

♦ Challenges: same as above because of our crumbling transportation infrastructure.

♦ Continuing to responsibly pull out of economic decline by not destroying our highly regarded local services: police, schools, human services, parks and libraries, etc.

Q: What do you consider to be the number one issue affecting our community?

A: "Where you stand depends on where you sit, so one person's number one issue may be number 15 on a neighbor's list. However, I am very concerned about how we will balance our increasing needs (education, human services, and transportation) with our shrinking funding.

My colleagues and I on the county board will be doing our best to craft a sustainable budget and we'll be lobbying our state and federal partners for the support we deserve."

Q: Have you driven on the Express Lanes?

A: "I have not. They are a good alternative for those who can afford them but they in no way should relieve the state from its neglect of our roads and imposing tolls on our community."

Q: New Year's resolutions?

A: "Professional: to continue to dedicate myself to representing the residents of Lee District and Fairfax County, and to find ways to maintain our quality of life and essential services in the face of federal and state cuts.

Personal: To listen to my wife when she tells me to cut back on coffee and to make sure that regular trips to the gym make it onto my busy calendar."

McKay: Increasing Needs, Shrinking Funding

Q: What headlines would you love to see for Northern Virginia in the coming year?

A: ♦ Tolloed to Death, Virginians Revolt Against Inadequate State Transportation Funding

♦ General Assembly Votes for Sensible Transportation Funding to Northern Virginia

♦ Monster Pothole Swallows 18-Wheeler ...State Road Funding Wake Up Call

♦ Virginia Elects a Governor With a History of Working Across Party Lines

♦ General Assembly Drops Divisive Social Issues in Favor of the People's Work

♦ Springfield Mall Progress Continues; Community Eager for Re-Opening Next Year

♦ GSA Dinosaur Makes Way for New FBI Headquarters in Springfield

♦ Schools' Commitment to Helping Struggling Schools and Students Succeed Pays Off

Q: What are or should be top priorities for our state legislators this session?

A: ♦ Getting a handle on our Northern Virginia transportation crisis

♦ Funding our education system and human services safety net



At the Saratoga park-and-ride lot, there are spots for bicycles and motorcycles as well as bus bays for the Fairfax Connector buses to Tysons Corner.



This overpass carries the relocated Rolling Road over the Fairfax County Parkway.



As part of Phase Three on the Fairfax County Parkway, Donegal Drive was closed permanently and the traffic signal eliminated at the parkway.

Express Lanes Ahead of Schedule

A look back at transportation developments in the area in 2012.

When thinking of the past year's events that impacted Springfield, it's hard not to include transportation in the equation.

The opening of the 495 Express Lanes was the biggest transportation development in 2012. Most of the 50 overpasses were completed in 2011, and in the final year of construction, the Braddock Road and Leesburg Pike (Route 7) access ramps were completed. The Braddock Road ramp is an access point for cars heading north on the express lanes. At Route 7, the ramp provides a southbound access only. Both ramps feature 500-ton box beams that required multiple cranes and full road closures of I-495. Pavement was laid for the new lanes throughout the corridor that are now general-purpose lanes. Over the summer, the electronic tolling system was tested and glitches were ironed out in the control center off Edsall Road in Alexandria. The lanes opened just before Thanksgiving, earlier than scheduled.

While the 495 Express Lane project was wrapping up, the I-95 Express Lanes project was just getting started. The project will expand and improve the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes from Dumfries to Edsall Road and extend new HOV lanes from Dumfries to Garrisonville Road, resulting in 29 miles of express lanes in which vehicles with three or more people can choose to pay a toll to use the express lanes or they can ride in the general purpose without having to pay. After the ribbon cutting in August, a tree clearing operation throughout the new nine-mile stretch south of Dumfries Road began and will continue through 2013. The project is due to be completed in late 2014.

Other transportation developments in Springfield included the completion of the final phase of the Fairfax County Parkway, which involved the rerouting of Rolling and Hooes Roads. In addition, the Virginia Department of Transportation held a public information meeting on the

interchange improvements at the parkway and Rolling Road. Construction on this project is not scheduled to begin until March 2014 and be completed in the summer of 2016. Also along the Fairfax County Parkway, the Saratoga park-and-ride lot was completed by the end of December. The 535-space lot will be a launching point for a Fairfax Connector bus line to Tysons Corner, via the 495 Express Lanes.

On Old Keene Mill Road, work is underway to reconstruct a bridge on Old Keene Mill Road in Springfield that crosses Pohick Creek just east of Huntsman Boulevard. The \$2.1 million improvement project will be completed next May. Another bridge rebuilding project is at Hooes Road and Accotink Creek. Throughout most of 2012, motorists were detoured around this area, using the Fairfax County Parkway and Rolling Road. The project is scheduled to be completed in spring 2013.

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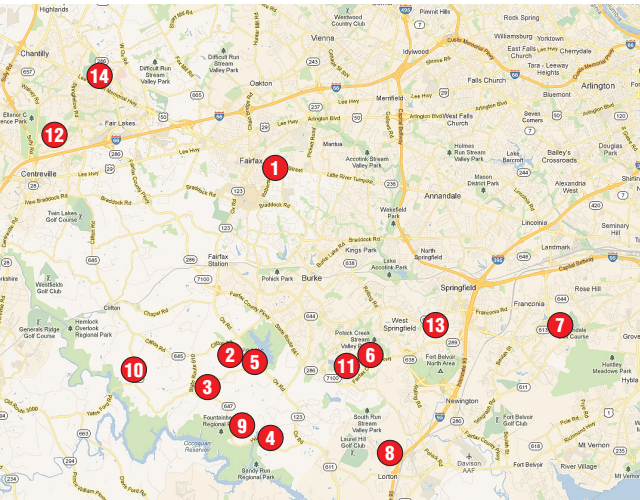
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