

Always looking for the next challenge, Burke resident Lance Sanson scales the banks of a creek in Fountainhead Regional Park to train for the Spartan Death Race.

Burke Resident in 'Death Race'

NEWS, PAGE 3

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PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION



Burke resident Lance Sanson trains for the Spartan Death Race by jogging in Fountainhead Regional Park with a log over his shoulder.

Burke Resident in 'Death Race'

Lance Sanson prepares for June's Spartan Death Race in Pittsfield, Vt.

For those who find marathons too mundane and "century" bike rides just too casual, a new breed of extreme competitions is rapidly gaining popularity. With intimidating names like Tough Mudder, Warrior Dash and Rugged Maniac, these obstacle races offer unusual combinations of challenges that test the mental as well as physical dexterity of athletes. Atop them all—at least according to its own Web site and registered competitor Lance Sanson—is the Spartan Death Race, taking place this June in Pittsfield, Vt.

"The Death Race is where the adrenaline junkies go who are active athletes seeking to push themselves to the next level," said Sanson, a 45-year-old Burke resident. "The people who, when someone says, 'You can't do it,' are going to prove that they can."

Created in 2005 by extreme athlete Joe Desena to satisfy elite athletes thirsting for an event to transcend the monotony of triathlons, Iron Man and other established tests of human endurance and mettle, the Spartan Death race incorporates a slew of challenges spaced out over a course of 40-50 miles of forest terrain.

OBSTACLES CAN RANGE from trials of strength—two hours of chopping wood is one staple—to basic toughness, traversing elements of fire, ice water, mud and barbed wire, to sheer willpower. Not to mention mental acuity: try being read the names of 10 random US presidents, told to hike 11 mountainous miles wearing a 70-pound pack, then asked to recite them back, in order.

"You can train physically for the endurance; you

can run, everything under the sun, but mentally, you don't know what you're in for," said Sanson.

Rather than offer encouragement, course officials also take every opportunity to rattle racers' courage and self-confidence, boot camp-style. "They try to break you," said Sanson, who in addition to a Herculean physical training regimen has done extensive research on how the event generally plays out.

"They even tell you that you've failed, to see if you will accept that. To walk away. You have to keep that mental awareness, that I'm here to complete this, whether you like it or not."

With the Death Race taking anywhere between 48 and 60 hours to complete, the success rate isn't good. In fact, only ten to 20 percent of the entire field (usually around 300 entrants) actually crosses the finish line in a given year. Part of the low completion figure is from sheer lack of endurance. How many people can exercise for two days straight, much less compete?

A majority also fail due to the obscurity of the event itself: no course route or list of obstacles is ever given to the competitors. They simply receive guidance from one obstacle to the next. For typical distance athletes used to pushing themselves for a set amount of time with a visible checkered flag, this is horrific. How does one even start to train for something like this? What would even compel someone to register?

"There was no hesitation," said Sanson, describing his decision to sign up after being asked by periodic racing partner and Life Time Fitness trainer Josh King. Last summer, the two participated in several mud-based and adventure races. The season culminated in the Mid-Atlantic Spartan "Beast" race, a lesser version of this summer's main event. King then sent Sanson a link to the Death Race and Sanson couldn't resist.

"It's all fun. If it ever becomes work and I'm not getting paid, I'll realize I'm not in the right industry."

—Burke resident Lance Sanson

SEE DEATH RACE, PAGE 4

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NEWS

'Death Race' Attracts Burke Resident

FROM PAGE 3

But what about the 10 percent?

"It would worry me if there was just one person that completed it," asserted Sanson. "There are going to be limits to what I can do physically, from a strength standpoint, but I don't see that being as big a part of this race. It's not the strongest man competition. I can compete. I may not move that truck, but I'll pull that rope."

This is the unflinchingly positive attitude that Sanson, a lifelong multi-sport athlete, has taken into numerous endurance races, including the National Marathon, MS 150 bike ride, and Ragnar 200-mile team running race. It also belies his rigorous training schedule that includes eight cross-training workouts during the workweek and a full day of exercise on Saturday. Sundays are for rest, unless the winter sun is out, in which case so is Sanson's Life Time (Fairfax) based running group. Of course.

His sessions don't sound too corporeal at first—spinning class, weights, resistance bands, pool time, kickboxing—but he's picking up the intensity in preparation for June's Death Race.



PHOTO BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

Burke resident Lance Sanson shows not only can he hike with a log over his shoulder, he's strong too. Here he takes a rare pause while training in Fountainhead Regional Park for the Spartan Death Race.

EVERY OTHER WEEKEND he goes out around Fountainhead regional park in Fairfax Station looking for down trees to chop ("There's no better way to train for it"). He routinely hikes and jogs with a log resting on his shoulder, and is planning a 24-hour workout in February where he will attempt to not only stay awake, but participate in every class offered around the clock at his gym.

"My wife thinks I'm a little bit insane," admitted Sanson. "But she's always thought that. She doesn't think it's something I couldn't do."

Lynnda Gendron, fitness director at Burke Racquet & Swim Club and AAHFRP certified post rehab conditioning specialist, believes as long as Sanson and his fellow Death Racers are being smart and safe about

their prep and competition, then more power to them, literally. "I'm all in favor of challenging the body physically and mentally," she said. "There are so many different ways you can train the muscles. This is just another way for the body to move and progress."

Despite how truly taxing all this activity sounds, Sanson maintains that his motivation extends from a plain and simple love of sport and setting a healthy lifestyle example for his 7-year-old daughter Sapphire. "It's all fun. If it ever becomes work and I'm not getting paid, I'll realize I'm not in the right industry," he said.

"I'll never be on the PGA, play pro football—what's in are these kind of sports that allow guys like me to say, 'I can go out and do that.'"

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NEWS

The design of the new license plate features the Fairfax County seal, county map and the Web site of Visit Fairfax and county government.

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Civic Pride on the Road

Fairfax County license plates available soon.

You can flaunt your car and show off your civic pride, thanks to a customized Fairfax County license plate approved Tuesday, Jan. 29, by the Board of Supervisors.

The license place features the county seal, county map and the website addresses of the government and Visit Fairfax. The plate will cost \$25 a year. By state law, \$10 is retained by the state while the other \$15 goes back to the license plate sponsor after 1,000 plates are ordered.

The Board of Supervisors voted to direct the initial proceeds toward the 2015 World Police and Fire Games that will be held in the county. The World Police and Fire Games are an international sporting event offering thousands of police officers, firefighters, customs and correction officers from

around the world an opportunity to showcase their athletic excellence in over 65 sporting events. These games are the second largest sporting event in the world after the Summer Olympics.

Before the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles can proceed with plate production, it needs 350 commitments from the community. Visit Fairfax will soon allow you to sign up for one of the first license plates at www.fxva.com.

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield), who initiated the plan, noted the City of Fairfax has its own tag which generates roughly \$5,000 per year in revenues at \$15 per vehicle and is dedicated to the city's historical resources. Using Fairfax City's population as a benchmark, Herrity estimated that Fairfax County could generate roughly \$250,000 per year from its own license plates.

"I look forward to being one of the first residents to get my hands on a Fairfax County License plate," Herrity said.

—VICTORIA ROSS



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More than 150 volunteers needed to survey chronic homeless for three days in February.

The real solution to homelessness is housing.

This week in Northern Virginia, a point-in-time survey will record all of the “literally homeless” individuals and families in the region. Last year, on Jan. 25, 2012, there were 1,534 people who were literally homeless in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community; 697 of them were single individuals and 837 were people in families. A third of the total number of homeless were children. Nearly 60 percent of the adult members of the homeless families were employed.

Later in February, the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to End Homelessness will embark on a new, intensive approach to identify the nearly 300 people who are chronically homeless, living on the street or in the woods around the county. This is part of a national effort, 100,000 Homes.

Volunteers will create a registry, including names, photographs and personal stories of all

individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in the area. The information gathered will identify particularly vulnerable people, and help prioritize housing and support resources. The county’s goal is to get half of them in housing within three years.

EDITORIAL

The effort is not without precedent. Arlington’s registry week was in October 2011, and identified 153 homeless individuals, with more than half at risk of dying on the streets. Since then, more than 30 homeless people identified as vulnerable have been placed in permanent housing. Arlington’s campaign is on target to fulfill the goal of housing 100 people in three years.

The Fairfax effort, 100,000 Homes Fairfax, kicks off on Feb. 23 with Registry Week, a multi-day event where volunteers go out on the streets and gather information to create a name and photographic registry.

It will require the work of more than 150 volunteers countywide. Most will help conduct surveys with homeless individuals on the

streets for three days during registry week. Others will help with data entry and other support roles.

It’s a big commitment but also an opportunity to be a part of real change for some of the area’s most vulnerable people. Volunteer efforts on those days will most certainly lead to saving lives.

Survey volunteers make a four-day commitment, a half-day of training plus working three mornings (4-7 a.m.) in teams of four to interview homeless individuals for the registry. The same team of four must survey the assigned geographical area all three days. Survey volunteers will need to be available: Saturday, Feb. 23, overview and training, noon-4 p.m.; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, Feb. 25, 26, 27, team survey, 4-7 a.m.

The Registry Week will wrap up with a presentation to the community on March 1.

Other volunteers will help set up for the volunteer training and/or assist at headquarters each survey morning by setting up food, helping with cleanup and answering volunteer questions. You can register online and learn more at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/100khomes/registry-week.htm>.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Taking Exception on Medicaid Expansion

To the Editor:

Your recent editorial [“Expanding Medicaid Good For Virginia,” The Connection, January 23-29, 2013] is noble in its desire to “extend health coverage to more than 400,000 residents who currently have no health insurance.”

If public policy making were just that easy. The editorial then goes on to indifferently say, “the Federal government picks up the tab.” As if a reminder was needed, that tab is, in fact, picked up by the taxpayer through either more borrowing or more taxes, and not by the ubiquitous “Federal government.” (Plus, states lack a further financing tool the federal government has—printing more money.) There is no proverbial “free lunch.”

Then, the logic and math of later offering an explanation of how the cost will be financed requires a complete suspension of common sense to accept. The editorial cites

“new analysis by the Commonwealth Institute showing that expanding Medicaid to 133 percent of the poverty level would generate state general fund savings and new revenues that would total \$2.08 billion and more than offset the state’s share of expansion costs ... plus provide significant numbers of new jobs and eco-

nomie growth.”

If “expanding Medicaid to 133 percent of the poverty level” could conceivably generate that kind of revenue, jobs and economic growth, why stop there? Why not expand it to 150, 175, or even 200 percent of the poverty level? By the editorial’s logic, if the 133 percent figure will get Virginia over \$2 billion in revenue, then expanding it to 200 percent should earn the state hundreds of millions more—right? So why in reality doesn’t it work that way? Because on the flip side—and unwritten in the editorial—are such factors as increased taxes to foot the bill take money from the taxpayer that could otherwise be spent elsewhere in the economy to generate jobs and economic activity.

One last point. The editorial says that “expanding health care will add tens of thousands of new jobs.” No. It is a healthy, vibrant and expanding economy that will add the “tens of thousands of new jobs” as more dollars become available for everyone to make their choice to obtain adequate health coverage.

Chris J. Krisinger
Burke

A Very Proud American

To the Editor:

As a young person who voted in

the presidential election for the very first time, I feel privileged knowing that despite of all the problem[s] in this country I still have the right to voice my opinion through my vote. I am of Pakistani origin, but the thought of a peaceful election or inauguration in Pakistan is a mere wishful thought.

If I lived in Pakistan and attempted to vote, I would be thrown in jail, or even killed for “violating” the blasphemous constitutional amendment. Why? Solely due to my affiliation with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Being able to peacefully participate in an election is an honor and I am extremely grateful to be part of a country where even protests are peaceful. After viewing the Inaugural Ceremony, I can honestly say that voting is a right that individuals of every nation should be entitled to. I am a very proud Ahmadi Muslim and I am a very proud American.

Aneela Wadan
Fairfax

Saving the World, or at Least Fairfax County

To the Editor:

I’ve lived here my entire life. I’ve

ventured through trails all over Northern Virginia, I’ve gazed upon the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains, I’ve sat next to the awesome power that makes up the tidal region of the Potomac River, I’ve stalked trout lying in a stream bed, slowly making their way up to the surface and back down once again. But time and time again, I have seen people abuse our natural resources. The water that makes up our rivers and streams is stained heavily with garbage. The forest floors are littered with beer cans, chip bags, those empty bottles no one wanted to carry to the trash bins. We have been given a great privilege; to be able to enjoy the beauty that is the nature which surrounds us. But with this, there has been an unimaginable amount of responsibility cast upon us. We have to, for lack of a better expression, enjoy responsibly. Although this might seem like a Herculean task, it’s really not. All our lives we have been taught to throw our trash into the proper reciprocals, and to dispose of waste correctly; why not take these lessons to the outdoors? If we don’t start taking care of our world, the world will stop taking care of us.

I leave you with a quote from one of my best friends, Cecil, “If I can take it in full, I can bring it out empty.”

Hameed Ali Talebian
Herndon

BULLETIN BOARD

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.

SATURDAY/FEB. 2

Town Hall Meeting: Del. David Bulova and Sen. Chap Peterson. 9-10:30 a.m., at City of Fairfax Council Chamber, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax. Constituents of the 37th district share ideas and thoughts after Bulova and Peterson provide an overview of issues before the General Assembly. www.davidbulova.com.

TUESDAY/FEB. 5

IHOP's National Pancake Day. Participating local IHOPs celebrate by giving away one free short stack of pancakes to all who dine throughout the day; all proceeds benefit the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's National Capital Area Chapter, with the hopes that patrons will make a donation to LLS in lieu of payment for pancakes. www.lls.org.

TUESDAY/FEB. 19

Korean Caregiver Telephone Support Group. 7-8 p.m. A Korean speaking social worker mediates this support group for Korean speakers who care for older adults; the meeting topic is "Navigating Community Services for Older Adults." 703-324-5847, TTY 703-449-1186, Kristine.Choe@fairfaxcounty.gov or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices.

Seeking Singers for Anton Bruckner's "Te Deum" at Messiah United Methodist Church

Community members are invited to sing! Required rehearsals are Sundays, February 3, 10, & 17 and Friday, February 22 from 7:30-9:30 pm. You must attend at least 3 of the 4 rehearsals. Mandatory rehearsal with the orchestra on Saturday, February 23 from 9:30 am - noon.



Performance is Sunday, February 24 at 3 pm. Cost is \$10 to purchase the vocal score. Please register by January 27 to ensure a score by the first rehearsal. Call Fran Underwood at 703-569-9862, ext. 107, or email funderwood@messiahumc.org, or look for "te deum singer signup" under worship at our website.

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Where Do You Go, What Do You Do for Fun?

—HANNAH BUNTING & ANAGHA SRIKANTH



Monica Goodwin, junior, Robinson Secondary School, Fairfax
“What I do for fun is just get some friends together and have movie marathons because it’s warm inside! Around Alexandria it’s fun to just grab some Starbucks and walk around looking at the shops because there’s a lot of cool stuff that’s not really around where I live.”



David Wiener, junior, Robinson Secondary School, Clifton
“I love going skiing in the wintertime; Snowshoe and Wintergreen are my on point destinations. I also love receding into my man cave and spending hours relaxing watching TV and movies.”



Chris Mayhew, sophomore, Robinson Secondary School, Fairfax
“My friends and I like going to Starbucks. We go to one another’s houses and watch movies. Sometimes we do ‘the Brave Party Boat’ when we pile in a car and go somewhere far with the music turned up. Last week we were playing manhunt. It was really cold, and with snow on the ground we were sliding around a lot!”



Anna Barr, junior, Robinson Secondary School, Burke
“I love to have friends over and watch movies and do TV marathons, because we’re all fans of the same things. It’s fun to get together and re-watch the same episodes.”



Andie Matten, sophomore, Robinson Secondary School, Clifton
“I have five-and-a-half acres I can sled on and we can build ramps. It’s a great stretch of land. I went skiing this weekend at White Tail; it’s only about an hour and a half away and the slopes are great.”



Maily Pham, 15, sophomore at Robinson Secondary School, Burke
“I like to go ice skating with my friends and my sister. I used to go ice skating when I was small and I used to take lessons, so I like to go in the winters because I have always enjoyed it. When I go with my friends now we like to play around and afterwards we come back to my house for hot chocolate.”



Alex Squaire, 14, freshman at Robinson Secondary School, Clifton
“I just like to go to the movies because it is warm and a lot of good movies are out. Me and my friends love to go together because it’s a great way to just pass the time and still have fun!”

WINTER FUN & ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTOS BY TIM PETERSON/THE CONNECTION

From left, Christy Boltersdorf of Woodbridge and Genia Rosenblum of Alexandria take advantage of the Workhouse Arts Center’s sizeable ceramics studio.



Currently in the Workhouse Arts Center’s McGuireWoods Gallery, the Collectors Showcase features multi-media works from over 100 artists and will host many demonstrations, performances and discussions over the next two months.

Arts Blossom in Former Prison

Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton continues tradition of transformation.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Prisoners—drunks, petty thieves, assaulters, even suffragettes—quite literally laid the foundation for the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton. Part of a revolutionary self-sustaining rehabilitation program, these men and women did everything down to firing the bricks for the 1920s construction of the Colonial Revival structures still standing today that house over 70 diverse local artists’ studios and galleries, and play host to hundreds of events, workshops, festivals, cabarets and lectures for the community.

Make no mistake about it: the Workhouse of today is just the latest transformation of historic property that has seen plenty of ups and downs over the last century. “It was pretty embarrassing to have to drive by the prison,” said current Clifton resident Pam Shepherd Jones. “When I would have to tell people how to get to my house in Barrington, I’d try to avoid it, but usually had to say, ‘Go by the prison, then our house is further down the road.’ It was an eyesore, and they turned it into something lovely.”

GOING BACK TO THE WORKHOUSE’S ROOTS at the turn of the century, the District of Columbia’s jail was horrifically filthy and inundated with criminals. Together, President Theodore Roosevelt and Progressive Era reformers conceived of a new penal model in 1908, whereby prisoners

would both labor to run the very facility they were sentenced to serve in and gain trade skills in a positive, outdoor environment. The idea was they could then be reintroduced into society as more successful, higher-functioning citizens. A trial group of 29 inmates was relocated in the summer of 1910 to a 1,155-acre plot of land to the north of the Occoquan River. There, as part of their incarceration and intended rehabilitation, they built their own prison from the ground up. The Workhouse campus eventually included a variety of agricultural and skill-based enterprises, such as pastureland, a cannery, hog ranch and slaughterhouse, dairy and blacksmith. For the period, the concept was groundbreaking to say the least. “It was truly a flaming success in the United States,” said Lynne Garvey-Hodge, Fairfax County history commissioner and Progressive Era historian. “In its founding days it was one of the most premiere reformatory facilities in the US.” The Workhouse also made its mark by infamously detaining 72 members of the National Women’s Party—including a movement founder Lucy Burns—for women’s voting rights protests between July and November 1917. Artifacts and mannequins depicting scenes from this controversial period are currently on view in the Workhouse Prison Museum in Building 9. The prison facilities remained open until February 1968, during which time its occupancy swelled from the initial group of 29 to an

infrastructure-crippling 3,700 worker-inmates. Despite the fact that D.C. had expanded its correctional complex beyond the Workhouse to over 3,200 acres including a reformatory, penitentiary and youth center, this number exceeded the space available by far. After two unsuccessful attempts at re-using the facilities as both an alcoholic rehabilitation center for the D.C. Department of Public Health and a medium-security prison, a 1997 federal mandate ordered the prison to close for good in 2001. The next year, Fairfax County began the process of transforming the land again by purchasing 2,324 acres of the property for a sum of \$4.2 million. In addition to the residential developments that sprang up—including Lorton Station, Laurel Hill and Cavanaugh Crossing—the Lorton Arts Foundation stepped in with its own concept to convert some of the one-time prison structures into a multi-use arts and cultural center. The 55-acre segment of the former facility granted to the foundation opened publicly as the Workhouse Arts Center in September 2008. “A phoenix that rose from the ashes of a very sad and sordid ending to a story, that in and of itself was a phoenix,” said Garvey-Hodge, who chaired the Commission in 2005 when the Workhouse site received a nomination for the National Register of Historic Places. “The D.C. prison system was in terrible, terrible shape. I’m delighted and the citizenry is seeing something that’s come full circle.” **THE CURRENT WORKHOUSE CAMPUS** comprises seven artist studio buildings, main galleries and a youth center with over 500



PHOTO COURTESY OF WORKHOUSE ARTS CENTER

Workhouse Arts Center artist-in-residence Karen Ching works in her studio.



The Workhouse Arts Center’s McGuireWoods Gallery plays host to numerous events, including dinner parties, dance instruction and the current Collectors Showcase, on view until Saturday, Feb. 23.

member Bright, Energized Ladies’ League for Educating & Socializing. “This is obviously closer. But it’s also bigger and better,” Jones continued. “It’s very exciting, how they’re still leaving the flavor of the prison. They’re keeping the good, getting rid of the bad. Like broken glass in the windows—it’s artistic. The buildings themselves are works of art. People in the community are really embracing it.” With events like the Workhouse lecture series aptly named “Uncover the Prison in Your Backyard,” a curious and proud community has ample opportunities for discovery. On Wednesday, Jan. 9, the installment “Genesis of a Prison” drew a school-night crowd of 100. The next lecture in the series, “Life Behind Bars” (Feb. 13), features a panel of former inmates moderated by retired D.C. Department of Corrections prison chaplain Dr. Elwood Gray and figures to bring out even more curious community members. “I think now with all the awareness of a new citizenry, people are

wondering: What was the story about the prison in your backyard?” said Garvey-Hodge. “Take the chapel in the prison,” she continued. “It was conceived by a man—jailed for counterfeit—who had never been inside a church, but was artistic. The crucifix itself was sculpted by a prisoner, and the form of a prisoner was used to depict Christ. So, too, these prisoners were hanging between Hell and a new life, with the promise of a new beginning, they could be set free. There’s so much richness.” As the Workhouse continues to grow and transform, its rich historical significance and plethora of opportunities for creating, appreciating, experiencing and collecting art in the community have already made it an invaluable landmark and asset to the Lorton area. *The Workhouse Arts Center of Lorton is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday 11 a.m.-7 p.m., Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. For a full schedule of events, visit www.workhousearts.org.*

Where Do You Go, What Do You Do for Fun?

—ANNA BLORE



Bridget Demott, student, Fairfax Station resident for 17 years
“I enjoy going to thrift stores and seeing what kind of deals I can find! Shopping is an easy way to pass the time and I like the hunt, trying to see what ‘diamonds in the rough’ I can find. I can also see myself going ice skating this winter; I’m not very good but I like to skate!”



Alyssa Debra, student, Lorton resident 8 years
“When it’s snowing I like to go sledding down the neighborhood hills and pretend I can build good snowmen! I like how peaceful it is here during the winter so I’ll sometimes just sit outside, or go watch movies in my living room. I’m a big action fan and I love coming home after school to relax and have a cup of hot chocolate with the “Dark Knight.”



Jake Reece, student, area resident for 6 years
“I’m really into cars, so I enjoy driving in the snow with all wheel drive. I think you learn more about your car when you’re forced to drive it in the snow or less favorable conditions. Unrelated to cars, I also like heading into Occoquan for a cup of coffee or just to sit and watch the river. Everything’s a lot calmer here in the winter and I think that’s special from other regions.”



Lehna Asongwe, student, Fairfax Station resident for 12 years
“In terms of activities in the local area, I like to go ice skating at the Fairfax City Ice Center. It’s fun because professionals skate there, it’s cheap and I always have a good time. I’ve gotten a lot better at skating over the past few years just by watching the competitors that skate there. In the winter I also love going in to D.C. to “Busboys and Poets,” they have a lot of winter themed events and poetry slams.”



Ali Newton, student, Lorton resident for 12 years
“I usually go snowboarding with my friends. I’ve been boarding for three years now and it’s one of the things I look forward to most during the winter. I also go to local coffee houses, I think the warm atmospheres lift how heavy winter can be sometimes.”

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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.

church is moving to their new location at Madison High School and the public is welcome to join. 703-865-7929 or www.ChristChurchVienna.com.

THURSDAY/JAN. 31

American Turkish Friendship Speaker Series: Fighting Violence. 12:10 p.m., at the American Turkish Friendship Association, 3949 University Dr., Fairfax. Professor of public sociology Lester Kurtz of George Mason University talks on fighting violence. 703-267-5751.

FRIDAY/FEB. 1

Yo Gabba Gabba! 7 p.m., at the Patriot Center, 4500 Patriot Circle, Fairfax. A show based off the Nickelodeon hit, designed to "get the sillies out" with the entire family. \$34.70-\$56.15. www.patriotcenter.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 2

China National Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m., at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Yang Xu plays on violin and En Shao conducts "Requiem for the Earth," Mvt. 1, Sibelius' Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47 and Rachmaninoff's Symphony No. 2; a pre-performance discussion will be 45 minutes prior. \$30, \$52, \$60. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/FEB. 3

Christ Church Vienna Opening. 10 a.m., at Christ Church Vienna, 2500 James Madison Dr., Vienna. The

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 6

Beneath the Blindfold. 4:30 p.m., at George Mason University's Johnson Center Cinema, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax. A film on the effects of torture on survivors' lives, showing in response to the debates Zero Dark Thirty stoked concerning the representation of torture in media. cfa.gmu.edu.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown. 7:30 p.m., at Fairfax High School, 3601 Rebel Run, Fairfax. The FX Players present the junior/senior musical based on the Peanuts characters and benefiting the senior scholarship; join Snoopy, Charlie Brown and the gang. for adults, \$10 purchased online and \$15 at the door; for children ages 6-12, \$8 online and \$10 at the door; ages 5 and under, free. 703-219-2200 or www.fxplayers.org.

Mark Morris Dance Group. 8 p.m., at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax. The troop whose founding choreography was called one of the greatest of our time by Mikhail Baryshnikov and which is highly reviewed by The New York Times comes to Fairfax performing three pieces, "The Office," "Socrates" and "Festival Dance." \$23-46. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

Jenelle Lynn Randall, You're

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 12

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PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION



Stanton (center) with his adoptive parents Mike and Freda Delgado of Fairfax during Fairfax Families4Kids National Mentoring Month Celebration on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax. "This isn't easy, but you can't give up. Michael and I always say to Stanton that no matter what, we're not giving up on you," Freda said.

Fairfax Families4Kids hosted a luncheon for mentors to celebrate National Mentoring Month on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax. (From left) Alexandra LaJoux; Joan Brady, Paris, 16, a foster teen who was recently adopted; Molly Pell; Carmen Jordan, Carissa and Beverly Howard, the director of the program.

A Chorus of Praise

Fairfax County mentors celebrated during National Mentor Month.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Second article in a three part series.

Can we get an "amen?" The joyful noise coming from the David R. Pinn Center in Fairfax on Saturday wasn't a gospel revival, but it was just as inspiring and enlightening.

"C'mon now. I want to hear from everybody. Give me an adjective to describe your mentor... How about amazing?" asked Beverly Howard, the "dynamic" director of Fairfax Families4Kids.

"How about chill!" said Stanton, 14, sporting yellow sunglasses and a baseball cap, making everyone laugh.

"Supportive," shouted one teen. "Caring and helpful," shouted another.

The boisterous call-and-response session was part of a special luncheon hosted by Fairfax Families4Kids, a foster-mentoring program run by Fairfax County's Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, to celebrate National Mentor Month. Created in 2005, the program's mission is to build bonds between volunteers and foster children, a majority of whom are 14 years old or older.

"Mentors can truly make the difference between struggle and success," Howard said. "Our mentors are all heroes." She said research has shown that volunteer mentors can play a powerful role in reducing drug abuse and youth violence as well as boosting academic achievement.

While Howard was more than willing to praise mentors, many of the mentors and youth were just as enthusiastic about her.



Alexandra LaJoux, of Fairfax, holds up a poster created by one of the youth she mentors. She attended the Fairfax Families4Kids luncheon for mentors to celebrate National Mentoring Month on Saturday, Jan. 26, at the Pinn Center in Fairfax.

teach a class.

"And let me add that I love the name Paris," LaJoux said with a mischievous grin, before snapping her fingers and serenading Paris with the Cole Porter classic "I love Paris."

"*I love Paris in the spring time; I love Paris in the fall; I love Paris in the summer when it sizzles; I love Paris in the winter when it drizzles...*" I sang that song to her the first time I met her," LaJoux said, laughing. "You can see, we're just one big family here."

"Yeah, one big crazy family," Paris said, smiling. The celebration ended on a high note, as mentors gathered around a chocolate cake with candles.

"Blow out the candles and make a wish," said Howard. "I wish all of you loving families."

"Miss Beverly is fun and funny," said William, a 13-year-old in the program who was recently adopted. "When we're sad, she brings us up."

"She uses her soft, inside voice with us," said a 16-year-old foster youth. "She doesn't yell. I like that."

Another foster child spoke movingly about his mentor, "Mr. Keith" Foxx, one of the program's first mentors. "He's a great basketball player. He's smart, and he's always happy to see me."

Paris, a 16-year-old singer/songwriter, praised all the mentors by leading the group in singing "We Are The World," playing her jazz interpretation of the song on a guitar. After several years in the program, Paris was recently adopted.

"Paris is so talented. She's an avid reader and she writes poetry," said Alexandra LaJoux, a mentor who lives in Fairfax. LaJoux—known for her exuberant personality, and her penchant for bursting into song—is a music teacher who became involved in the program when she volunteered to

VIEWPOINTS

Inspired to Mentor

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors recently recognized January as National Mentoring Month. "As a nation, we need to ensure that all of our young people are well equipped to lead healthy and productive lives. You can help a young person prepare for a successful future

by volunteering with a local mentoring program," said General Colin L. Powell, the spokesperson for the national campaign, during an event in Washington, D.C. last week. As part of National Mentoring Month, we asked mentors with Fairfax Families4Kids, a Fairfax County foster-mentoring program

"What Inspires You to be a Mentor?"



Alexandra R. Lajoux

"Joy! After songwriting with creative teens in foster care, I wanted to spend more time with them and to mentor. Paraphrasing a prayer: "Child of God, my mentee dear, to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this life, I'm at your side. To light, to guard, to love, to guide."

Kathy Moore

"When my younger child left home for college, I realized that I had time, energy, and love to give to teenagers who had no caring adults in their lives. The challenges are great, but seeing the kids become confident, happy and trusting through the mentor relationships is incredibly rewarding."



Keith Foxx

"It's simple. These kids need mentors like any other children, but they also need an adult figure in their lives that can help guide them like a parent would. I had a desire to help young people, which soon turned into a love for mentoring, friendship and our kids!"

Molly Pell

"I can't pinpoint a specific reason that I became a mentor. I had a little bit of free time and I like teenagers, so I thought I'd give it a shot. Six years later, I'm still here. The kids inspire me to stick with it. They're like family to me, and I look forward to seeing them as often as I can. I am inspired by their strength, resilience and their open hearts."



Yusef Jamaludeen

"What inspired me to mentor was the overall need for positive non-parental role models for our youth. Mentors are the 'life coaches for the adolescent.' In addition, it takes little amounts of effort to be a mentor and it has such a significant impact to the mentees. As a youth with a stable home life, I can't remember how often I saw my mentor but I will never forget him. Knowing someone cares about you who isn't related to you or paid to do so makes all the difference in the world sometimes."

Chavon Rogers

"I started mentoring because I wanted to give back to the community by doing something I love, which is working with children. I continue to mentor because I love working with kids and the program. I mentor some amazing and resilient kids who bring much joy to my life."



—VICTORIA ROSS

Photos of mentors courtesy of Joan Brady of Great Falls. Brady, a professional photographer, volunteers as a mentor, photographer and videographer for Fairfax Families4Kids.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Gonna Hear From Me. 8 p.m., at George Mason University in the Harris Theatre, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax. Mason alumna, Broadway veteran and jazz singer Jenelle Lynn Randall sings a tribute performance to jazz legend Nancy Wilson. \$15, general admission; \$10 for students, staff, seniors, faculty and groups. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown. 11 a.m., 7:30 p.m., at Fairfax High School, 3601 Rebel Run, Fairfax. The FX Players present the

junior/senior musical based on the Peanuts characters and benefiting the senior scholarship; join Snoopy, Charlie Brown and the gang. for adults, \$10 purchased online and \$15 at the door; for children ages 6-12, \$8 online and \$10 at the door; ages 5 and under, free. 703-219-2200 or www.fxplayers.org.

Contra Dance. 7:15-8 p.m. and 8-10:45 p.m., at RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Rd., Reston. Susan Taylor calls contra dances and squares to the music of the June Apple Band; an hour-long workshop precedes the dance, which begins at 8 p.m. and requires no partner. 703-476-4500.

Mark Morris Dance Group. 8 p.m.,

Gay Men's Chorus of Washington D.C. in Concert

A concert by Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C., a select vocal ensemble, to perform on Saturday, Feb. 9 at 8 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. 703-537-3036 or www.jccnv.org.

at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Dr., Fairfax. The troop whose founding choreography was called one of the greatest of our time by Mikhail Baryshnikov and which is highly reviewed by The New York Times comes to Fairfax performing three pieces, "The Office," "Socrates" and "Festival Dance." \$23-46. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/FEB. 10

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown. 2 p.m., at Fairfax High School, 3601 Rebel Run, Fairfax. The FX Players present the junior/senior musical based on the Peanuts characters and benefiting the senior scholarship; join Snoopy, Charlie Brown and the gang. for adults, \$10 purchased online and \$15 at the door; for children ages 6-12, \$8 online and \$10 at the door; ages 5 and under, free. 703-219-2200 or www.fxplayers.org.

Roses and the Lost Art of Natural Perfumery. 2-4 p.m., at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Arlington Rose Foundation hosts Tara Krause of the Organic



EMILY CHASTAIN

GMCV Potomac Fever Circle

Perfumery and the fourth generation artist-chemist talks botanicals, roses and herbs; light refreshments and bouquets as door prizes included. 703-371-9351.

Library Used Book Sale. 1-6 p.m., at Freds Oak Road, Burke. Discover thousands of books for adults and children. 703-249-1520.

TUESDAY/FEB. 19

22nd Annual Board of Supervisors Breakfast. 7-9:30 a.m., at the Waterford in Fair Oaks, 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. Leadership Fairfax and community leaders join for a morning of information and networking giving businesses and residents of Fairfax County an opportunity to hear straight from the Board of Supervisors about what is happening in Fairfax County. \$50, paid alumni member; \$65, alumni non-members and general public; and \$30 current LLP '12 and LFI/ELI '13 members. www.leadershipfairfax.org.

THURSDAY/FEB. 14

Friends of the Burke Centre Library Used Book Sale. 1-6 p.m., at Freds Oak Road, Burke. Discover thousands of books for adults and children. 703-249-1520.

FRIDAY/FEB. 15

Friends of the Burke Centre Library Used Book Sale. 1-6 p.m., at Freds Oak Road, Burke. Discover thousands of books for adults and children. 703-249-1520.

SATURDAY/FEB. 16

Friends of the Burke Centre

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SPORTS

Freidman Leads Woodson Gymnastics to Patriot District Title

Cavaliers senior wins all-around championship.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

As a freshman in 2010, Simone Freidman led the Woodson gymnastics team to its first Patriot District championship. Three years later, Freidman, now a senior, helped the Cavaliers capture another title in the Patriot District's final year of existence.

Freidman, who signed with Bowling Green State University, won the all-around championship with a score of 38.1 and Woodson won the team title, beating its nearest competitor by more than 20 points

"She's been doing it for years and years. That's her life," Cooper said. "She just has the talent. She has natural ability."

Freidman won the all-around Patriot District title as a freshman during Woodson's first season after moving from the Liberty District. Club gymnastics commitments kept Freidman from competing for Woodson during her sophomore and junior seasons. She then switched to Apollo Gymnastics in Woodbridge, which allows its gymnasts to compete for their respective high schools, and re-joined the Cavaliers as a senior.

With the VHSL adopting a six-class format with conferences instead of districts next season, Freidman said she was glad Woodson will be the final Patriot District champion.

"It's actually amazing," she said. "... I think it's so awesome that we get the last Patriot District title. It really means a lot that we're going to be the last name on there."

While Freidman's top score came on the beam, she said her best work came on the

Each of the six Cavaliers who competed on beam did not fall—something Cooper, who has coached gymnastics for 30 years, said not even his championship teams of the past accomplished. Along with Freidman's first-place finish on beam, Talento placed sixth (8.725), Guidry finished ninth (8.375), Kara Urban was 12th (8.225), Keller finished 13th (8.175) and Elena Yonika was 15th (7.875).

THE TOP EIGHT FINISHERS in each event qualified for the Northern Region meet, which will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 6, at Lake Braddock.

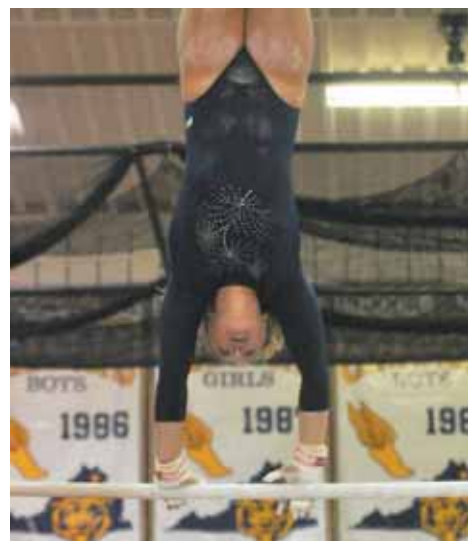
Lake Braddock's Whitney King finished second in the all-around with a score of 37.575. T.C. Williams' Holland Cathey placed third (36.3), Woodson's Talento was fourth and T.C. Williams' Grace Girard finished fifth (35.775). The top four all-around finishers, and any competitor with a score of 35 or better, qualified for regionals.

Lake Braddock's team total of 118.275 edged West Potomac by one point for the second and final regional berth. The Bruins appeared stunned when it was announced they would advance.

"I think we were all pleasantly surprised," Lake Braddock coach Ellen Hagan-Bowerman said.

King, a freshman, tied for first on vault (9.5), finished second on floor (9.475) and beam (9.4), and placed third on bars (9.2).

"She did a fantastic job," Hagan-Bowerman said. "She's a competitor. This



Woodson senior Simone Freidman won the Patriot District all-around gymnastics title on Tuesday, Jan. 29, helping the Cavaliers win the team championship at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

during the Patriot District gymnastics meet on Jan. 29 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Lake Braddock won the previous two district championships, four of the last five and 14 of 18. On Tuesday night, however, Woodson posted a score of 140.1 to take home the title. Lake Braddock finished second with a score of 118.275 to earn the district's other Northern Region berth. West Potomac placed third with a score of 117.275, followed by West Springfield (109.4), Lee (108.375), South County (106.2), T.C. Williams (104.65) and Annandale (62.825).

"We're deep," Woodson head coach Mike Cooper said. "Where some of the teams tonight, they had maybe [a strong] 1-2, but we had 1-2-3-4."

WHILE THE CAVALIERS HAD DEPTH, they also had the top performer in Freidman, who placed first on beam (9.675) and floor (9.6), tied for first on vault (9.5) and finished second on bars (9.325).



Lake Braddock freshman Whitney King placed second in the all-around at the Patriot District gymnastics meet on Tuesday, Jan. 29, at Lake Braddock.

vault and floor. She also accomplished her goal of posting a score of 38.

"I haven't competed vault at all this year in the high school gymnastics season, so this is my first time and I was really nervous about it," Freidman said. "Being able to go out there and [perform well] was a relief. With floor, it was the last event and scores were kind of coming down to see who was going to get the all-around [title] and I was kind of nervous about that."

Woodson's Rachael Talento placed fourth in the all-around with a score of 35.8. Annie Guidry was seventh (33.9) and Tori Keller was 13th (31.025).



Woodson's Rachael Talento qualified for regionals with a fourth-place finish in the all-around competition at the Patriot District gymnastics meet on Jan. 29.

is something she's been doing for a very, very long time. When it's time to compete, she's there and she's ready. Her head's in the game and she's on cue and she's on target and she gets the job done."



West Springfield junior Amy Berglund finished with 18 points against T.C. Williams on Jan. 28.

Titans Hand Spartans Home Loss

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

T.C. Williams guard Christian Roberts personally outscored West Springfield 15-14 in the first half of Monday's contest and showed no signs of slowing down in the second.

The senior converted a three-point play in the opening minute of the third quarter to extend the Titans' lead to 14 points. But later in the period, Roberts came out of the game after injuring her left wrist while playing defense. With Roberts, who had scored 18 of TC's 31 points, on the bench, West Springfield closed the third quarter with a flurry, outscoring the Titans 11-3 during the final two minutes of the quarter.

With a double-digit lead trimmed to three entering the fourth quarter, the Titans' mental toughness would be tested. But rather than fold, TC regrouped and handed the West Springfield girls' basketball team its first home loss since 2009.

THE TITANS defeated the Spartans 50-39 on Jan. 28 at West Springfield High School, leaving the teams tied atop the Patriot District standings at 8-2. According to the WSHS athletics Web site, it was the Spartans' first home loss since falling to T.C. Williams on Feb. 3, 2009. West Springfield had won three Patriot District championships, made a trio of state tournament appearances and captured one Northern Region title since the last time it lost on its home floor—and the Titans ended the streak with their most productive player of the evening sitting on the bench for the final 10 minutes.

West Springfield fell to 15-3 and had its five-game winning streak snapped. The Spartans traveled to face South County on Wednesday, Jan. 30, after the Connection's deadline. West Springfield will travel to face West Potomac at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 1.

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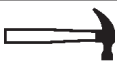
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OBITUARY

Gladys Cordelia Bushrod, 103,
of Mason Neck (Lorton) VA peacefully
entered into eternal rest on Thursday,
January 24, 2013. She is preceded in
death by her husband, Courtney and her
two sons, Calvin and Maurice. Gladys
leaves four daughters to cherish her
memory; Lorraine B Jackson, Shirley
Giles (Carl), Gwendolyn Wright and
Barbara Strange (Theodore), sixteen
grandchildren, twenty-eight great
grandchildren, sixteen great-great
grandchildren and a host of other
relatives and friends.

A visitation for family and friends will be
held on Friday, Feb. 1 from 6:00 until
8:00 at Shiloh Baptist Church, 10704
Gunston Rd., Lorton, VA, where a view-
ing will take place on Sat., Feb. 2 from
11:00 a.m. until time of service at 12:00
p.m. Interment, Shiloh Baptist Church
Cemetery, Lorton, VA.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests
that a contribution be made to the Shi-
loh Baptist Church Building Fund in
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Amazing 5 acre estate home with 2 car garage, 4 bedrooms, 4 1/2 baths in the main residence plus an additional 2 room and full bath guest house over a detached 3 car garage. Stunning, luxurious master suite plus a gorgeous custom kitchen, custom library and separate sunroom. Regulation sized tennis court, swimming pool, hot tub and 1/4 mile sports tract. Beautiful decking and balcony.

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Old Town Alexandria

\$669,000

Charming home built in 1900 * wood floors throughout * private patio & garden w/built-in gas grill * Kitchen w/granite * 2 bdrms, loft, 2.5 baths * Enjoy walking to the river & shopping * Call Judy @ 703-503-1885



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2013 Projected % Change in Home Prices

Source	2013
JP Morgan	9.7%
Barclays	5.5%
Capital Economics	5%
Freddie Mac	2-3%

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Springfield

\$435,000

First OPEN HOUSE Sunday!

Great Price!

Brand New on Market!

Well maintained!

3 finished level home with Almost 1/2 acre &

storage shed, Incredible fully fenced back yard with trees & open space. Interior freshly painted, gorgeous hardwoods on 2 lvs, Wood fireplace in LR, 3 BR, 2.5 BA, Rec Rm. Walk-out to yard. Open Sunday, Feb 3, 1-3. Call Kay Hart 703-503-1860 for info., From FxCoPky: Sydenstryker, R on Kerry, R on Lavant, R on cul-de-sac 8625 Madley Ct, Splfd 22152.



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Ann Witherspoon

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Fairfax

\$649,900

Fabulous Brick Front Colonial located in much sought after Middelridge Community. This lovely home features 5 BRs, 3.5 BAs, Hdwd flrs on Main & Upper Levels, a Grand size LR, Formal DR, Updated Kitchen, Corian Counters, Stainless Steel Appliances, Glass Sliding Doors leads to a lovely Trek Deck w/White Railings. 1st Floor Fam. Rm w/ FP Lower Level has a large Rec Rm, 5th BR & Full bath, W/O to a lovely Williamsburg Brick Patio.



Sheila Adams

703-503-1895

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Fairfax
WOW.....\$399,900 for all brick single family home, with over 2,000 square feet of living space in fabulous "Country Club View," 1/3 area lot, 4BR's, 3 full baths, minutes to George Mason, one mile to Robinson HS. What a steal, HURRY!!!! This one will not last!!!



Mary Hovland

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Cathy DeLoach

571-276-9421

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Next Door



Fairfax

\$575,000

Beautifully updated 4BR/3.5BA center-hall Colonial in sought after Kings Park West! Great floor plan - three finished levels - featuring eat-in kitchen with enhanced cabinetry, silestone counters & huge pantry; adjacent to family room. Spacious bedrooms w/Master & 2nd BR having separate sitting rooms. Great walkout LL w/rec room has plenty of space for family & friends. Top rated schools; close to VRE, Metrobus, & shopping!

BARBARA NOWAK & GERRY STAUDTE

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Fairfax

\$475,000

Former Model Home

TH with 1-car garage.

3 BR, 2.55 BA. Open floor plan. Gourmet kitchen and sunroom on back of house. Lots of built-ins. MBA w/separate shower and dbl bowl vanity.

Close to Wegman's.

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Burke Centre

\$519,900

Granite and stainless kitchen for inspired cooking with adjacent family room for casual entertaining. Four bedrooms, 2.5 baths, full finished basement, screened porch and lovely landscaped yard. Walk to bus stop, minutes to VRE station. Robinson Secondary School area!

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