

Fairfax Station ♦ Clifton ♦ Lorton
CONNECTION

American Idol host Ryan Seacrest poses with Fairfax Academy student Maddie Assel after she receives her golden ticket to Hollywood.

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Fairfax Academy student Maddie Assel, of Clifton, performs on TV on the popular, singing-competition show, American Idol.



A Ticket to Hollywood

Fairfax Academy student Maddie Assel is on American Idol.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Academy student Maddie Assel is a bubbly, outgoing, 17-year-old. She's busy with school, friends, college visits and—oh, yes, she's also a contestant on American Idol.

Viewers nationwide saw her on the popular TV singing competition, Thursday, Jan. 24, as she belted out her own rendition of the Beatles song, "Oh, Darling." She was auditioning for the show in Baton Rouge, La., and made such an impression on the judges that she got a ticket to Hollywood to compete further.

"I've watched American Idol for so many seasons and have seen people holding a golden ticket," said Assel. "But it's one of those dreams you never think will happen to you."

Her name's pronounced "as-SELL," with the accent on the second syllable, and she lives in Clifton's Little Rocky Run community. She's also been singing since age 3, both at home and as a child doing errands with her parents, Teri and Allan, who both support her music endeavors.

Now, she's almost all grown up and even has her own You Tube account, youtube.com/therealmaddiesaith, where she did covers of The Weeknd's "Wicked Games" and "Like Me" by 2 Chainz. "I haven't updated it lately," said Assel. "But I plan on adding songs weekly."

She's also gaining even more exposure for her talents via American Idol. Her friend Kara Perdue, plus her grandmother, Sylvia Assel of New Orleans, nominated her for the show together.

"They know each other and had videos of me singing, so they sent one to 'American Idol' last summer," explained Assel. "And I was one out of seven chosen from hundreds of thousands of nominations like this, in the whole country."



Maddie Assel and mom Teri Assel wait for Maddie's American Idol audition in Baton Rouge.

SHE CAME HOME from school one day, toward the end of October, and her parents told her she had to fly immediately to New Orleans to audition for LSU's music program. Since she'd been applying to that and other prestigious music schools, she was excited.

"My mom and I flew together and were met by my grandma," said Assel. "Then we went out to dinner together at Café Du Monde and a band started playing my favorite song, 'Sitting on the Dock of the Bay,' by Otis Redding. My grandma told me to get up and go sing with them, and I decided, 'Why not? I'm in the French Quarter and will never get this opportunity again,' so I did."

While she sang, people started recording her on cameras and cell phones. "I thought they were confused, but I kept on singing," said Assel. "Then all of a sudden, I heard a deep voice behind me saying, 'Yo, Maddie,' and I turned around and it was Randy Jackson."

"I was completely shocked; I had no idea what was going on," she continued. "So I started crying because I was so overwhelmed. Then Randy told me to sing for him, and I did. I sang, 'Oh, Darling,' and he said, 'I can't wait to hear you tomorrow at auditions.' He said it would be before him, Mariah Carey, Nicki Minaj and Keith Urban in Baton Rouge. It was just surreal."

SEE MADDIE, PAGE 5



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) promised to be the first person in line to sign up for the new Fairfax County license plate, and he was. On Wednesday, Jan. 3, Barry Biggar, president and CEO of FXVA, showed Herrity where to sign on the dotted line for his pre-ordered specialty license plate.

Show Your Civic Pride

Pre-order Fairfax County license plates now.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Residents of Fairfax County can now pre-order their Fairfax County license plates online at the new Visit Fairfax website—www.fxva.com/plates/.

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted last week to approve the sale of the license plates, in partnership with Visit Fairfax, the nonprofit promotion and tourism arm of Fairfax County, and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

The license plates feature the county seal, county map and the website addresses of the government and Visit Fairfax. The plate will cost \$25 a year. As mandated 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 DMV requires 350 commitments from the community in order to make the specialty plate available for purchase at all Virginia DMV locations.

Revenue from the plates will support the World Police and Fire Games—the largest sporting event in the world after the Summer Olympics—which the county will host in 2015. In following years, proceeds will be dedicated to tourism.

"We've already had numerous calls about the specialty plates," said Barry Biggar, president and CEO of Visit Fairfax, when Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) arrived at the Visit Fairfax office last week to pre-order his license plate. Herrity, who initiated the plan, estimated that Fairfax County could generate roughly \$250,000 per year from the plates.

"I don't think we're going to have trouble getting 350 residents to purchase these license plates," Herrity said.



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NEWS

Girls in the Union Mill Elementary School fifth grade class put individually packaged macaroni and cheese servings into re-sealable plastic bags for children in Fairfax County who go hungry on the weekends.

PHOTOS COURTESY
OF ANN TIMMINS



Packing up Power Packs

Union Mill Elementary students assemble 248 weekend meal-packs.

Fifth-graders from Union Mill Elementary assembled 248 Weekend Power Packs for FCPS students who would not otherwise have meals to eat on weekends. On Wednesday, Jan. 23, the entire fifth grade, along with teachers and parent volunteers, packed single-serving, kid-friendly food items such as macaroni and cheese, pasta, soup, fruit and pudding cups, breakfast bars, oatmeal packets, and cheese and crackers, into large re-sealable plastic bags.

Each Weekend Power Pack contains enough food for two breakfasts, two lunches, two dinners, and two snacks. Union Mill volunteers delivered the Power Packs to Food for Others, located in Fairfax. Food for Others will distribute the Weekend Power Packs to FCPS students in need of weekend meals. Every month at Union Mill, each grade level takes its turn in holding a two-week food drive for single serving, kid-friendly food items. The students then gather in the cafeteria to put all of the food into the weekend packs, which are then delivered to Food for Others.

To date, Union Mill students have assembled and donated more than 1,030 Weekend Power Packs, well over the school's initial goal of 750 for the year.

Union Mill students will continue to assemble the Weekend Power Packs through the end of the school year. Upcoming dates are as follows: fourth-graders are scheduled to assemble Power Packs on Wednesday, Feb. 20, and first-graders will put together Power Packs on April 17.



A group of Union Mill Elementary fifth graders pause over oatmeal packets and breakfast bars. The class assembled 248 take-home food packages for hungry children in Fairfax County on Wednesday, Jan. 23.



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Fairfax Station

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Maddie Goes to Hollywood

FROM PAGE 3

Then Jackson told Assel who'd nominated her. "It was amazing," she said. "It opened my eyes to the fact that other people believed in me, too."

Still, she was nervous before her big performance. "I wasn't prepared because everything was happening so fast that I didn't have time to practice," she said. "But I got four 'yesses' from the judges."

Walking into the room, said Assel, "I was just so excited to meet the judges. Everyone knows Mariah Carey, and she and the others all have such talent and have made names for themselves in the industry. So getting to sing before them was just incredible."

She made it to Hollywood Week but, beyond that, she can't talk about how she did because those shows haven't aired yet. So people will have to tune in to find out. But she enjoyed being a tourist, visiting Hollywood for the first time. "It was the experience of a lifetime, getting to see all the things you see in movies," said Assel. "I saw the Hollywood sign, the Kodak Theater and the Walk of Fame, and all the other contestants were nice to me and took care of me."

SHE'S CONTINUING to go on college auditions "at the best music programs in the entire country, and it's an honor to do that," she said. Assel will also be in the spring showcase for singers at the Fairfax Academy, where she's in the Musical Theater and Actors Studio program taught by Mike

Replogle, who directs the academy.

"The academy program at Fairfax High lets you focus on and practice what you want to be in performing arts when you grow up," she said. She's in her second year there, and classmate Isabelle Baucum says Assel has a wonderful voice.

"I haven't heard anyone else who sounds like her," said Baucum. "She's folksy, jazzy and poppy, with a versatile range, and totally her own artist." As for Maddie the person, Baucum calls her fun and sassy in a sweet way. "I like her a lot and I'm happy for her," she said. "I'm excited that she had this opportunity and is being noticed for it because she's talented and deserves the recognition."

Although Assel can sing rock, jazz and blues, she's leaning more toward performing pop music in college, en route to becoming a professional recording artist. Her favorite singers are Beyoncé and Haley Reinhart, who finished third on "Idol," a couple years ago.

"I was especially influenced by Haley, who opened the door for girls with those big, rock voices," said Assel. And she was helped on "Idol" by voice coach, Sarah Pramstaller, a Chantilly High grad and FCPS teacher.

"I've always wanted to be on American Idol, but I thought, 'No way I'd ever make it and sing on that stage,'" said Assel. "But I learned that everything you dream is a possibility and, if you work hard enough for something you really want, it can actually happen."

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OPINION

Homeless, Not Hopeless

BY PAM MICHELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NEW HOPE
HOUSING, INC.

George and Mary spent many years homeless and unsheltered in Fairfax County. Yes, Fairfax County, one of the wealthiest counties in the country. But in Fairfax County, homeless persons such as George and Mary are generally hidden. They live in the woods, behind dumpsters, and in shopping centers. Out of sight, out of mind.

For many years, local non-profit partners have been working with county staff day in and day out to offer persons who find themselves homeless a chance to start anew. When given the stability of housing and the support of professionals and volunteers, homeless adults—including those who have lived many years on the streets and in the woods—can and do change and become stable, contributing members of our community. We non-profit homeless services providers can tell story upon story of what a difference stable housing and supports can make in a life of someone whom others have given up on, whom others have discarded as “hopeless.”

In January 2012, 697 single adults were counted as homeless in Fairfax County and 51 percent of them (353) were chronically homeless—12 consecutive months or four separate incidences of homelessness in the past three years; 24 percent of homeless adults were unsheltered. These numbers are going up.

This month you can help us find out who is “out there.” You can hear their stories and you can help provide them the housing they need.

As part of a nationwide effort to put a name and a face to each



PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED

Homeless camp: In January 2012, 697 single adults were counted as homeless in Fairfax County and 51 percent of them (353) were chronically homeless.

number, the Fairfax-Falls Church community is participating in a national campaign—100K Homes—that will help us understand who is homeless, why they are homeless and how we can get them housed.

Join us on Feb. 25, 26, and/or 27, as a part of a volunteer team visiting campsites to interview homeless individuals. On March 1 we will give a detailed report to the community about who we found and where we go from here. See <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/homeless/100khomes/> for details.

Help us help everyone in Fairfax County find a way home.

For more information on New Hope Housing in Alexandria, go to www.newhopehousing.org.



The Fairfax-Falls Church community is participating in a national campaign—100K Homes—that will help in understanding who is homeless, why they are homeless and how we can get them housed.

We Are a Family

To the Editor:

Thank you for the wonderful articles highlighting the positive impact of Fairfax Families4Kids and the relationships and families that have come about because of the program.

As a mentor, I know firsthand how important mentoring programs such as Fairfax Families4Kids can be in a child's life.

Initially I got involved with

FF4Kids because I wanted to give back. In other words, I wanted to be there for children because I have had adults in my life that have mentored me and helped to mold me into the person I am today.

Also, my grandparents and my mother have been foster parents and I have seen the impact on foster kids of hav-



Shavonne Hayes

ing loving/caring adults in their lives.

What I have realized is that spending time with the kids has had a tremendous impact on me. I think of the various experiences of the kids—multiple foster homes, aging out without a place to live or no job. It always reminds me to remember how

truly blessed I am no matter what happens. If they can survive the

hand life has dealt to them then there is nothing I cannot overcome. I continue to be amazed and humbled by their resiliency.

To see the challenges they have aging out of the system makes me want to do all I can to ensure they have the support they need. We are more than mentors and mentees. We are a family.

Shavonne Hayes
Sterling

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SCHOOLS

Community to Discuss Boundary Changes

At its business meeting on Thursday, Jan. 24, the Fairfax County School Board voted to conduct a boundary study to address overcrowding at Fairfax High School and Lanier Middle School. The board also approved the inclusion of Chantilly High and Rocky Run Middle, Falls Church High and Jackson Middle, Oakton High and Franklin Middle, Woodson High and Frost Middle, and Robinson Secondary Schools in the boundary study.

Approximately 300 students from Fairfax High and 150 students from Lanier Middle will need to move in order to relieve overcrowding at those schools. Students who reside in the City of Fairfax will not be impacted by the proposed boundary changes. Boundary adjustments are being considered only for middle and high schools; elementary school attendance areas will not change as a result of this boundary study.

Three community dialogue meetings have been scheduled in February for citizens to discuss how to address overcrowding at Fairfax High and Lanier Middle Schools. Parents and residents can review the proposed scenarios and provide their feedback at the following community dialogue meetings. All meetings will be from 7 to 9 p.m. and will be identical in format and information presented. The following meetings will be held:

- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 19—Oakton High School cafeteria (snow date is March 7).
- ❖ Wednesday, Feb. 20—Lanier Middle School cafeteria (snow date is Feb. 27).
- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 26—Woodson High School cafeteria (snow date is March 6).

Those who plan to attend the dialogue sessions are asked to register. Parents and residents can also find more information, and submit questions and comments online.

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.

THURSDAY/FEB. 7

Volunteer at the Railroad Museum.

1-4 p.m.; other times; at The Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The museum, run by Friends of Fairfax Station, is a non-profit, all volunteer organization; docents, gift shop, and other types of volunteer positions are available with training provided. 703-506-0753, 703-945-7483 or www.fairfax-station.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

Second Saturday. 9 a.m., at the Marriott Courtyard, 11220 Lee-Jackson Highway, Fairfax. Imminent professionals speak on the divorce process, encouraging separated or divorcing spouses to be civil and reasonable for their pocketbooks, emotional health and children. RSVP. clapham@beankinney.com.

ONGOING

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CALENDAR

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

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

2nd Saturday Art Walk. 6-9 p.m. Workhouse Art Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Meet each building's featured artist, a reception in W-16 from 6-7 p.m. and more. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Have a Heart Project. 6-9 p.m., in Studio 4 at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. An art installation with a mission to help Food for Others displays empty lunch bags featuring original art works created by John Gasco, Mary Gallagher-Stout and Denise Philipbar as well as by guest artists; all proceeds from each work featured in the exhibit up from Wednesday, Feb. 6 to the end of the month benefit Food for Others. As the artists replace each sold piece of art with food, the installation evolves. \$10 donation suggested per piece. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

For Money or Love. 8 p.m., in the W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Mestey Films Productions screens the film about Patrick, a wealthy man that finds himself wondering whether his fiancée is with him for love or money, and his brother Sean, who, known for being a playboy, changes his ways when he falls in love with a woman who has an 8-year-old girl named Ashley. \$10. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

SATURDAY/FEB. 10

Live Onstage: The Amazing Gospel Souls. 11:30 a.m., in the W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox



Like a Tree, 84x53, oil on panel, Kristen Calcaterra.

Kristen Calcaterra Exhibit Explores Deteriorated Decor

Kristen Calcaterra uses lines, paint pours and contemporary oil-painting to allude to the deterioration of decorated homes; her work is inspired by travels through Charleston, S.C., Savannah, Ga., and Louisiana, where she saw local historic structures and, in Louisiana, devastation. An opening reception is on Saturday, Feb. 9 from 6-9 p.m., in Building W-8 at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Road, Lorton. The gospel band conceived inside the notorious Lorton prison system in the early 1980s is comprised of ex-offenders from the Washington, D.C., area who have collectively served 200-plus years in correctional facilities. \$15. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

Women of Excellence Luncheon. 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at the Springfield Golf & Country Club, 8301 Old Keene Mill Road, Springfield. Luncheon with complimentary childcare accompany Thirty-One products to help keep life organized

and an inspirational speech from Faye Parson on how to stay balanced. \$17. SpringWmConn@yahoo.com.

Life Behind Bars. 7:30 p.m., at the McGuireWoods Gallery in the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. To chronicle the story of the Workhouse from the Progressive movement of the late 1800s to the

social upheaval of the 1960s, the series presents a panel of former inmates depicting life at the Workhouse, moderated by a retired prison chaplain. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 17

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

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 20

Marduk. 5-11:30 p.m., at Empire, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Marduk plays on their "Voices From the Dark" tour with Moonspell, Inquisition, The Forshadowing, Deathwolf and Helgardh. \$20. www.empire-nova.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 23

Speed Stacking Tournament. 9 a.m.-1 p.m., at North Springfield Elementary School, 7602 Heming Court, Springfield. Single and double (parent and child) cup stacking competitions held concurrently with prizes; food for sale to benefit the school \$4. 703-658-5563 or semetz@fcps.edu.

SATURDAY/ MARCH 2

Springfield Art Guild Opening Reception. 7-9 p.m., at Northern Virginia Community College, Richard J. Ernst Community Cultural Center—Building CE 2, 8333 Little River

Celebrate Valentine's

Wax romantic or celebratory on an outing with your Valentine.

THURSDAY/FEB. 7

Valentine Steampunk Jewelry. 7 p.m., at Kingstowne Library, 6500 Landsdowne Centre Drive, Alexandria. Create your own edgy, romantic and trendy jewelry in a workshop combining influences from Scott Westerfeld, the Hunger Games and the Victorian and Industrial eras. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/kn/.

SATURDAY/FEB. 9

Be My Valentine. 10:30 a.m., at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Join Cody & BJ for a fun, lively show celebrating Valentine's Day with lots of singing and dancing; all ages. 703-971-0010 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/jm/.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 13

Be My Valentine. 10:30 a.m., at Richard Byrd Library, 7520 Commerce St., Springfield. Join for Valentine's stories, songs and activities for children ages 3-5 accompanied by an adult. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/rb/.

FRIDAY/FEB. 8

Dinner & a Movie Nights: Carmen Jones. 8 p.m., at the W-3 Theatre, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Combine culinary and cinema arts in an evening featuring the 1954 film directed by Otto Preminger (his spin on Carmen) and a three-course dinner designed to complement the film's theme. Reservations (small parties may share tables). \$45 per person. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

Turnpike, Annandale. The Springfield Art Guild, in collaboration with the Annandale Campus of the Northern Virginia Community Colleges, presents a month long exhibit and sale in the Ernst Auditorium lobbies.

FRIDAY/MARCH 8

Josh DeWeese Ceramics. 7-9 p.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Josh DeWeese, assistant professor of art at Montana State University, Bozeman, and former resident director of the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts in Helena, Mont., exhibits ceramic piece that have been thrown then altered, using pottery as an expressive art form in a contemporary context. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 9

2nd Saturday Art Walk. 6-9 p.m. Workhouse Art Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Meet each building's featured artist, a reception in W-16 from 6-7 p.m. and more. www.WorkhouseArts.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Masterworks V. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor Christopher Zimmerman performs J. Strauss' Emperor Waltz and Tick Tack, Pizzicato, Trisch-Tratsch Polkas and Overture to Die Fledermaus; R. Strauss' Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks and Salome's Dance. \$25-\$55. 703-563-1990 or www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

2013 Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards. 8 a.m.-10 p.m., at Waterford, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. The Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards serve as a community-wide celebration of volunteerism and the awards honor individuals, groups and organizations that have given outstanding volunteer service. Nominations/online application are due: Feb. 4 by 4 p.m. 703-246-3825 or www.volunteerfairfax.org.



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NEWS

Workhouse Arts Center Collectors Showcase Announces Honors

This year's Workhouse Arts Center Annual Collectors Showcase has over 90 works of arts displayed. The works range from paintings, fiber and ceramics to photography, blown and fused glass, and more. All works are by Workhouse Studio and associate artists.

The art works were judged by Joanna Moser, deputy chief curator, Smithsonian American Art Museum. Moser described the overall art as "really wonderful works; with a great deal of variety."

Moser selected Kerin McBride's "Orange and Black Abstract, 2010" as best in show. Moser said of the McBride art, "It's bold, monumental for its size, and suggests figures. A gutsy choice of colors."

Other awards included two runners up: Sandy Martina's "Amorphic Crater Bowls, 2012" and Dale Marhanka's "Untitled Lidded Vessel, 2008."

Honorable Mentions were awarded to Bonnie Ferguson Butler, Mary Exline, Ian Kessler Gowell, Maria Bennett Hock, Karen



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WORKHOUSE

Kerin McBride's "Orange and Black Abstract, 2010" won the Best In Show award.

Hutchison, Kathryn Lagassey, Rick Reda, Lynnette Reed, Crystal Rodgruie and HsiMei Yates.

❖ **Where and When:** Annual Collectors Showcase, Workhouse Arts Center, McGuire Woods Gal-

lery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Collectors Showcase open until Saturday, Feb. 23., Wed-Sat, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. and Sundays noon-5 p.m. Visit www.workhousearts.org or call 703-584-2900.

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South County High Presents 'Rock n' Roll'

On Friday and Saturday, Feb. 15 and 16, at 7:30 p.m., South County High School presents Tom Stoppard's dramatic comedy "Rock 'n Roll," featuring a cast and crew of all senior thespians.

Directed by Dan Deiter, the veteran cast includes Alex Hargitt as Jan, Matt Yamamoto as Max, Katie Murray as Eleanor/Esme, and Whitney Turner as Esme/Alice. The crew includes set design by Joe Carlton and Jon Alderson, light design by Robert Helvey, and stage management by Robert Helvey and Stephen Henderson.

The show runs Friday and Saturday, Feb. 15 and 16, at 7:30 p.m. at Dale S. Rumberger Auditorium, South County High School, 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. Tickets are available for \$8 for students and senior citizens and \$10 for general admission. Get tickets at the door or online at southcountytheatre.org.

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News



Jonathan and Roxanne Daley of Fairfax purchase a gift card from Wal-Mart to help restock Our Daily Bread's pantry shelves during a "Stuff the Bus" stop on Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Fairfax Wal-Mart.



(From left) Angie Carrera of Op3; Chris Garris, Our Daily Bread's food program manager and volunteer coordinator; Sharon Bulova, chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors and Wendy Lemieux of OP3 encourage shoppers to purchase gift cards.

'Stuff the Bus' Campaign Helps Feed the Hungry

Donations continue to increase as campaign enters third year.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Local grocery stores were packed this weekend with shoppers stocking up on Super Bowl snacks for the annual football fan party. At the Wal-Mart in Fairfax, shoppers were greeted with colorful displays of chips, dips and other party favorites.

They were also greeted by volunteers from Our Daily Bread (ODB), who were handing out flyers and encouraging shoppers to donate gift cards or specific items to restock ODB's pantry shelves. A Fairfax nonprofit for nearly 30 years, ODB provides food and other critical services to the working poor, the elderly and the disabled. More than half of ODB's clients are local children.

Dianne Hon, a Vienna resident, said "Stuff the Bus" makes it easy to donate. "I am already here for groceries and other items, especially since it's the day before the Super Bowl, so it's very convenient to pick up a few extra items for a worthy cause," Hon said.

"Thank you for doing this," Hon said to the volunteers. "You made this so easy."

Jonathan and Roxanne Daley of Fairfax donated a gift card to the campaign. "It's too easy to forget that there are people in Fairfax County who go hungry," Roxanne Daley said. "I love the gift card idea. It's easy and you know you're helping someone get what they want."

FAIRFAX BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAIRMAN Sharon Bulova, who greeted shoppers and encouraged them to donate on Saturday, Feb. 2, said gift cards are especially helpful for a number of reasons.

"There's a dignity about it," Bulova said. "You don't stand out from other shoppers with a gift card, and you can purchase what you want for a special recipe, or if you have specific dietary needs."

Chris Garris, ODB's food program manager and volunteer coordinator, said they are encouraging more people to donate gift cards, particularly because they help clients purchase fresh food. "A \$20 gift card

helps families supplement our pantry's non-perishable food with milk and meat."

Garris said the timing of the Stuff the Bus campaign—which is intentionally scheduled between Martin Luther King Day in January and Presidents Day in February—is important for local pantries because it occurs after the seasonal dose of good will.

"During the fall and holiday season, Our Daily Bread's food pantry is overwhelmed with donations from the community," she said. "But by February, our supplies are often running low even though the need for food is greater than ever."

"Stuff the Bus is an important component in restocking pantries after the holidays," Bulova said. "The need for healthy food is ever growing and the interest for Fairfax County residents to help is there, so we are happily providing the bridge to bring them together."

THE CAMPAIGN, now in its third year, is a partnership between Fairfax County Office of Public Private Partnerships (OP3); MV Transportation Inc., which operates the FASTRAN buses and provides volunteers; local nonprofits; and grocery store chains. All donations go directly to local nonprofit organizations that help feed needy families and individuals in the Fairfax-Falls Church Community.

"The residents of Fairfax and our partners, like MV Transportation and Frank & Co., have really come out in support of Stuff the Bus this year. Each year, we get more donations," said Michael Artson, chief planner with the county's Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS) Department, one of the food drive's organizers.

"Food pantries address a critical need which is especially acute after the holidays, the Stuff the Bus campaign helps us help our community. Its importance to helping stock the shelves can't be overstated," said Roxanne Rice, executive director, Food for Others.

Last year, more than 25,000 lbs. of food was collected for local pantries, all benefiting local nonprofits that help feed needy families in the Fairfax community.

At the end of Saturday's Stuff the Bus campaign, Juliet Reyes of Herndon, a Wal-Mart employee, who was in the middle of her shift as a cashier, asked ODB volunteers if she could donate cash. "I've been listening to people talk about this, and I want to help too. People here shouldn't go hungry."

Three Speakers to Address GOP Women of Clifton

The Republican Women of Clifton (RWC) will feature three speakers at its February meeting—Dr. Ileana Johnson, bestselling author of U.N. Agenda 21: Environmental Piracy, and Stephanie Reis, founder of the Omaha ACT for America Chapter as well as property rights advocate Martha Boneta. The event will be on Wednesday, Feb. 20, at Fairview Elementary School, 5815 Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Members and guests as well as members of other Republican Women's Clubs are invited to the social hour that will begin at 7 p.m., at which time refreshments will be served. President Alice Butler-Short will open the business meeting at 7:30 p.m., after which Johnson, Reis and Boneta will speak and answer questions. There will be a book signing of Dr. Johnson's book at the end of the meeting.

Dr. Ileana Johnson was born in communist Romania and is now an American by choice.



Stephanie Reis

She is a prolific writer published frequently in Canada Free Press, radio commentator and author of the best-selling U.N. Agenda 21: Environmental Piracy, her third book about loss of freedom in America.

Stephanie Reis is the founder and former leader of the Omaha ACT for America Chapter. Her talk will focus on the treatment of women in Islamic society.

Martha Boneta, owner of Liberty Farms in the Northern Virginia village of Paris, was threatened with nearly \$5,000 in fines for selling produce and crafts and throwing unlicensed events, including a birthday party for her best friend's child. To protect the property rights of farmers, H.B. 1430, the "Boneta Bill" was proposed in this session of the Virginia Legislature by Delegate Scott Lingamfelter, and Boneta will give an update on its status.

For more information, visit www.cliftongop.com.

OPEN HOUSES SATURDAY/SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 & 10

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

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6487 Trillium House Ln.....\$999,900...Sun 10-4.....Jean Marotta.....Birch Haven..703-402-9471
13837 Wakley Ct.....\$339,900...Sun 1-4.....Dan Mleziva.....RE/MAX..703-380-9915

Fairfax

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13403 Foxhole Dr.....\$365,000...Sun 1-4.....Jo Ann L. Prociw.....Long & Foster..703-966-3351

Fairfax Station

11107 Hampton Rd.....\$1,295,000...Sat 10-1.....Franklin Mendoza.....Weichert..703-282-2163
8030 Woodland Hills Ln...\$1,100,000...Sun 2-4.....Pat Fales.....RE/MAX..703-503-4365

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3804 Munson Rd.....\$829,000...Sun 1-4.....Patrick M. Kessler.....Keller Williams..703-405-6540
3804 Munson Rd.....\$829,000...Sun 1-4.....Thomas Hilleary.....Keller Williams..703-655-3100
3324 Stoneybrae Dr.....\$699,500...Sun 1-4.....Dana LaFever.....Weichert..703-609-3479

Kingstowne/Alexandria

5408 Castle Bar Ln.....\$618,500...Sat 1-3.....Kathy Peters.....Long & Foster..703-915-2165

Springfield

7262 Linden Tree Ln.....\$459,950...Sun 1-4...Kathleen Quintarelli.....Weichert..703-862-8808

Stafford

195 Tangwood Ln.....\$210,000...Sun 1-4.....Karen Paris.....Keller Williams..571-220-7503

To add your Realtor-represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Steve Hogan at 703-778-9418 or e-mail the info to shogan@connectionnewspapers.com. All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.

WELLBEING

Geriatric experts say healthy lifestyle habits like regular exercise, eating a nutritious diet and brain challenges can help preserve mental health as we age.



PHOTOS
CONTRIBUTED

Preserving Mental Health as We Age

Experts say diet, exercise and mental stimulation are key.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Randy Weadon walks six miles each day around the perimeters of his retirement community, Greenspring in Springfield. He also does crossword puzzles daily.

"During tax season, I walk around the halls and mentally do my income taxes in my head," said Weadon, a retired Coast Guard officer. "If I had not started walking, I don't know if I'd be alive. I am 86-and-a-half years old, but I don't feel that age at all."

Geriatric experts say healthy lifestyle habits like regular exercise, eating a nutritious diet and brain challenges can help preserve mental health as we age.

"The one thing that I always tell my patients is that if you don't use it, you lose it. I recommend crossword puzzles, mentally challenging games and reading, especially about current events," said Dr. Lisa Calusic, a psychiatrist at Inova Behavioral Health Services in Alexandria, and an Arlington, resident.

Researchers Pamela Greenwood and Raja Parasuraman, professors at the Department of Psychology at George Mason University in Fairfax, have spent more than 20 years studying the way the human brain ages with a focus on Alzheimer's disease. The two wrote a book, "Nurturing the Older Brain and Mind," in which they explore ways middle-aged people can stave off mental deterioration.

"We know that if we can put off dementing illnesses, even by a year or two through lifestyle changes, that will reduce the number of people with Alzheimer's disease, which is reaching epidemic proportions," Parasuraman says.



Randy Weadon, 86, does crossword puzzles and walks six miles each day.

The duo says that preventing and staving off mental deterioration is more important than ever now that workers are staying employed longer for economic reasons. Physical activity is an important tool as well.

"Exercise [is] the 'lifestyle' factor with the strongest effect," said Greenwood. "A number of different research groups have found benefits of aerobic exercise on both brain structure and function, and on cognitive performance."

Joel Martin, a professor of kinesiology at George Mason, agrees: "Regular exercise has been proven to slow the aging process," he said. "People have their actual age, which they can't do anything about, and their biological age. Someone could be 40 years old, live a very inactive lifestyle and not eat very well, which may cause them to be closer to 60 in terms of their biological age. Vice versa: Someone who is 60 could be very active and eat a healthy diet and feel like they are much younger, perhaps a biological age closer to mid-40s."

As an octogenarian, Weadon credits his sharpness to regular mental challenges. Martin agrees. "Regularly engaging in activities requiring cognitive function is important," said Martin. "Most tissues in the body respond to stress placed on it by becoming stronger or adapting to handle the stimulus you place on it. If you lift weights, your muscles get bigger and stronger. If you don't do any sort of physical activity to stimulate your muscles, then they get smaller and become weaker. The brain is the same way, it needs regular stimulation to maintain its function."

Experts also say not to rule out the importance of good nutrition. "The antioxidants in foods, especially fruits and vegetables, can help to preserve and protect tissues from damage that occurs as part of the natural aging process," said Martin.



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

A study published last month in *Journal of the American Heart Association* showed that eating three or more servings of blueberries and strawberries per week may help women cut their risk of a heart attack by as much as one-third.

February is Heart Month

Diet and fitness experts offer suggestions for maintaining a healthy heart.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When Mary Elizabeth O'Conner enters a supermarket, she is careful to stay within the outer perimeters of the store. "Most grocery stores are designed so that the healthiest and non-processed food, like fresh vegetables and meat are kept on the outer edges," she said. She looks for heart-healthy foods like whole grains and fresh fruit.

O'Conner has two good reasons for being tuned in to nutrition: "Both of my parents died unexpectedly from heart attacks," she said. "My father died 15 years ago in February."

February is American Heart Month and health experts are encouraging diet and exercise changes that will lead to better heart health.

Joel Martin, Ph.D. an assistant professor of kinesiology at George Mason University in Fairfax, says the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) eating plan is often recommended for people who are at risk for heart disease.

"The diet has been proven by numerous research studies to lower blood pressure. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for serious heart problems, [like] heart attacks for example," he said. "The diet emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lower amounts of sweets, red meat, and sodium. It especially emphasizes lower amounts of sodium to decrease blood pressure."

Two good options are strawberries and blueberries. In fact, a study published last month in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* showed that eating three or more servings of the berries per week may help women cut their risk of a heart attack by as much as one-third.

Consuming more Omega-3 fatty acids—found in fish, flaxseeds and nuts—has also been shown to lower the risk of heart disease.

There are some foods that should be avoided, say some experts. "[Foods that are] bad for hearts include cholesterol rich foods, like foods from animals. The current recommendation is beef once per week with a serving size the size of a deck of cards," said Laura Evans, assistant professor, George Mason University School of Nursing. "Avoid trans-fats. These are modified fats found in processed foods, cheese, all processed foods and salt."

Andrew Meade of the Reston-based National Association for Sports and Physical Education, says that the average person can reduce his or her risk of heart disease by exercising for at least 30 minutes each day.

"That is the only way to realize any heart-health benefit," he said. "Exercising for 30 minutes most days of the week builds your cardiovascular endurance."

Martin, who agrees, said, "In terms of exercise habits for a healthy heart, just getting regular aerobic exercise is a good idea ... to ensure a healthy cardiovascular system."

SPORTS

Butler Too Much for TC

LB Senior totals 29 points, 22 rebounds in OT victory.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The T.C. Williams girls' basketball team this season snapped a nine-game losing streak against West Springfield, twice beating the three-time defending Patriot District champion during the month of January.

Defeating West Springfield for the first time since 2009 gave TC an opportunity to earn the No. 1 seed in this year's district tournament. But the Titans' journey to the top of the district standings was derailed on Tuesday night by Lake Braddock's 6-foot-4 matchup nightmare.

NATALIE BUTLER

scored 29 points, grabbed 22 rebounds and blocked seven shots as the Bruins defeated the Titans 56-54 in overtime on Tuesday, Feb. 5, at T.C. Williams High School.

Along with being a force in the paint, Butler, a 6-foot-4 senior who will play at Georgetown University next season, made four clutch free throws to help Lake Braddock move into a second-place tie with T.C. Williams. West Springfield sits atop the district standings with an 11-2 record, followed by the Bruins and Titans at 10-3. Lake Braddock would win a head-to-head tiebreaker with TC, having won both regular season meetings with the Titans.

Lake Braddock led 53-52 when junior Caitlyn Mandela went to the free-throw line with 13.6 seconds remaining in overtime. Mandela made her first attempt and missed the second. Butler grabbed the rebound, drew a foul and put the game out of reach by knocking down both foul shots. The Titans added a meaningless bucket in the closing seconds.

"I knew that the crowd was going to be loud and that there was going to be lots of distractions and a lot of pressure," Butler said about her game-clinching free throws. "I just really wanted to win and the team did a great job and I didn't want to let the team down. I sort of blocked everything out and just told myself, they're just two free throws—make them and move on."

Butler also made a pair of free throws to tie the score at 45-all with 41.4 seconds remaining in regulation. She finished the evening seven-for-nine at the foul line.

While Butler came up clutch at the charity stripe, it was her production in the paint during the second half that gave the Bruins a chance to win. After Butler totaled just five points in the first half, including a scoreless second quarter, Lake Braddock coach John Giannelli said the Bruins made an effort to get the ball inside.

"In the first half, we didn't look inside at all and we didn't swing the ball at all," Giannelli said. "We



Lake Braddock senior Natalie Butler scored 29 points and grabbed 22 rebounds against T.C. Williams on Tuesday, Feb. 5.

PHOTO BY LOUISE KRAFT/THE CONNECTION

came in at halftime, we talked to Nat and we decided we need to swing the ball quicker and then Nat switches from post to post and then we get the ball inside or we swing it back. Our main goal was to get the ball inside to Nat. The more we swung the ball, the better chance we had to get it into her."

Butler responded with nine points in the third quarter, nine in the fourth and six in overtime.

T.C. Williams head coach Kesha Walton said the Titans tried to keep Butler from catching the ball down low. Six-foot sophomore Grace Patterson and 5-foot-10 senior Baylee Simpson battled in the paint, but it wasn't enough. In the teams' first meeting, Butler scored 40 points and grabbed 31 rebounds during a 76-65 vic-

tory against TC on Jan. 11, according to stats from the Washington Post's website.

"Baylee fought as hard as she could. ... Grace got out there and did the best that she could as far as banging [Butler]," Walton said. "That was our game plan: we knew we had to contain her if we wanted to come out successful tonight. ... She's a legit 6-4. Even if she catches the ball, there's nothing we can do but foul, so our goal is to try to keep it away from her as much as we can."

Junior guard Betsy Gallier scored 11 points for Lake Braddock. Junior guard Aryn Burrage scored six points and sophomore guard Christine McGrath finished with five.

LAKE BRADDOCK improved to 14-5 and extended its winning streak to five games. Tuesday was Giannelli's fourth game filling in for head coach Leigh Janis, who recently had a child.

Butler said the Bruins have handled the coaching transition well and she's pleased with the team's success. Lake Braddock finished 7-15 her sophomore season and 9-15 last year.

Giannelli, who came to Lake Braddock from Centreville this season, started the year as a varsity assistant and the head JV coach.

"Being on varsity since [I was] a sophomore, we weren't a threat," Butler said. "It's unbelievable to be a threat now in my senior year. It's great experience. There's a lot of pressure that comes with it, but I love it and I can't wait to play in the next game. Coach G has done a great job with Coach Janis. I think he blended perfectly with the team. There were no issues whatsoever. The girls respected him as a head coach and we all came to practice every day ready to work."

TC will close the regular season with a road game against Annandale at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 7. Lake Braddock will host West Potomac at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 8.

Former West Springfield standout point guard April Robinson has started every game of her freshman season for the Duquesne women's basketball team.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Robinson Excelling At Duquesne

West Springfield 2012 grad is Dukes' second-leading scorer.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

April Robinson was a scared freshman when she arrived at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. The former West Springfield standout was entering the world of Division I college basketball and wasn't sure of her place among her elder teammates.

"When she came on a visit, she was really quiet," said Duquesne junior forward Orsi Szecsi, who was Robinson's host during her visit. "I was the only person that she was talking to. When she came for school, she opened up, but she was a weak freshman, so we always made fun of her. She would just give you the look, the 'What's going on,' just staring at you, blank behind the eyes."

While Robinson's teammates gave her a hard time, and the freshman is still working on the whole "quiet" thing, the 2012 West Springfield graduate has shown the Dukes—and the rest of the Atlantic 10 Conference—there's nothing weak about her game.

Robinson, a 5-foot-8 point guard, earned a starting role and never let it go. Not only did Robinson secure a position of leadership as a true freshman—and the only freshman on the Duquesne roster—she has thrived in it. In 21 games, she's second on the team in scoring (9.0), minutes per game (27.8), assists (2.5) and total steals (31). She has twice been named A-10 Rookie of the Week (Dec. 3, 31) and has played a major role in Duquesne posting a 17-

4 record. As of Wednesday morning, the Dukes were third in the A-10 with a 6-1 record, behind Dayton (7-0) and Saint Joseph's (6-0).

Robinson hasn't been overwhelmed by playing such a prominent role.

"You just play. Starting as a freshman and playing a lot of minutes, it doesn't really mean anything because you go into each practice, each game like it's your last," Robinson said at George Washington University's Smith Center on Wednesday, Jan. 30, after the Dukes beat the Colonials 63-59 in double overtime. "You've just got to do whatever it takes to help your team get the W."

"She's come in, in my mind, and exceeded expectations," said McConnell-Serio, who received the 2004 WNBA Coach of the Year award with the Minnesota Lynx. "She has been tremendous from the beginning and competed. She has always been poised. ... We're better with her as a point guard. She makes plays, she scores, she creates ... she really understands what we're trying to do offensively and defensively and she's amazed me from the beginning of the season until now."

Robinson said the size, quickness and physicality of opponents on the college level are some notable differences from playing high school ball, but the biggest change has been dealing with full-court pressure: "You can't really breathe," she said.

"We basically build on her," Szecsi said. "I'm real proud of her because not many freshmen can do that at her position."

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21 Announcements

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DONALD YOUNG, PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on September 14, 2012, a PETITION FOR ADOPTION was filed in the office of the Cabell County, West Virginia Circuit Court. PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that a HEARING on this Petition is scheduled for March 8, 2013, at 9:15am, at the Cabell County Courthouse, located at 750 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, West Virginia 25701. Said hearing will be before Honorable David M. Pancake, Cabell County Circuit Court Judge.

Please be advised that your parental rights may be terminated in the proceeding. Also, you may appear and may any objections known or to otherwise protect your interest. You shall have thirty(30) days upon being served with this notice to respond to this notice and if you fail to respond within the required time you may not appear in or receive further notice of the adoption proceedings. A copy of the Petition, Case No.: 12-A-34, can be obtained at the Cabell County Circuit Clerk's office at the Cabell County Courthouse, located at 750 Fifth Avenue, Huntington, West Virginia, 25701, phone number 304-526-8622. Entered this 4th day of February

21 Announcements

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