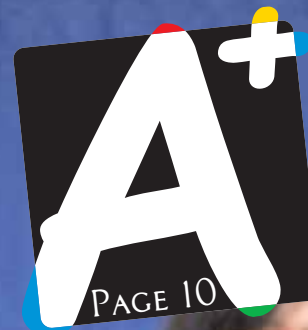


Jolene Vettese in her role as Diana, and Harv Lester in his role as Dan in a rehearsal for the Reston Community Players' production of the "Next to Normal."



# Rock Musical Takes CenterStage

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Final Metro  
Walkway  
Piece Installed

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New Recreation  
Facility Debated

NEWS, PAGE 3



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PHOTOS BY ANDREA WORKER/THE CONNECTION

**A representative from Reston Accessibility Committee presents remarks to crowd at Reston Community Center at the organization's meeting to discuss future needs and development.**

## New Recreation Facility Debated

**Reston Community Center solicits public input on a new indoor recreation center at Baron Cameron Park.**

BY ANDREA WORKER  
THE CONNECTION

**R**eston Community Center invited the public to bring their wish lists to an open forum meeting on Monday, Feb. 11, to discuss the potential development of a new indoor recreation center at Baron Cameron Park. In 2012, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors transferred 68 acres at the park to the Fairfax County Parks Authority, and Bill Bouie, who is both a member of the Reston Community Center Board of Governors, as well as the chairman of the parks authority board told the assembly that the Reston Community Center is "an interested party" in the Fairfax County Parks Authority's Master Planning Process about to begin in March. "We are looking ahead to FY 2015's budget, and in partnership with the FCPA our hope would be to develop an indoor facility on the site," said Bouie, to a meeting room packed with individual residents, as well as plethora of local organizations, including the Reston Association, Reston Interfaith, Sustainable Reston, Reston Accessibility Committee, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, the YMCA, Reston Runners and more. "Reston continues to grow and that growth means we need to respond and expand our recreational offerings."

**RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER HAD REPRESENTATIVES** from the planning and facility management firm Brailsford & Dunlavy on hand to facilitate the brainstorming portion of the agenda. Brailsford & Dunlavy conducted a similar study for Browns Chapel Park on behalf of Reston Community Center and Reston Association. Craig Levine, senior project manager with the firm, spent about 45 minutes taking suggestions and commentary.

Several attendees made pitches for additional venues for performing and cultural arts programs,

whether at the Baron Cameron site or elsewhere, but the number one request was for a multi-use aquatic center to be the focal point of the potential new facility, featuring a 50 meter pool with "lots of lanes and a real diving well." Members and representatives from the Reston Master Swim Team, Reston Swim Team, South Lakes High School and other athletic associations took turns describing the inadequacies of the current aquatic facilities in the Reston: "You just can't get in half the time;" "There are 15 outdoor pools in Reston and only one indoors — you can't count on swimming or training locally except in the summer;" "The South Lakes divers have to practice at 8:30 at night in Herndon — they feel like they aren't even part of the swim team," were some of the comments.

Several members of the audience invoked the name of the Reston-founder, Robert E. Simon. "If we are going to do this, let's think big like Bob did. Especially with the arrival of the MetroRail, let's think about making Reston a destination stop. What about a facility that will host regional events — or even Olympic trials?"

Non-competitive swimmers also had their say. Some referenced the pool at Ida Lee Park in Leesburg for better conditions for therapeutic and rehabilitative aquatic programs in warm water. "Let's face it," said one resident who used aqua-therapy for rehab purposes, "the athletes are looking for the cooler water, while those who need the pool for other health reasons need the water warmer. We need someplace that can accommodate everyone, especially as the population of Reston ages."

**OTHER REQUESTS** were made for more adaptable classroom space, indoor running tracks, and adequate parking to complement all Reston Community Center facilities.

Reston Community Center Executive Director Leila Gordon closed the meeting by reminding everyone that this was just the first in a series of public feedback sessions that will be taking place. Another meeting is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 25, but all interested parties are encouraged to check the Reston Community Center website at [restoncommunitycenter.com](http://restoncommunitycenter.com) for up-to-date information and to provide feedback on this and any other related issue.

### VIEWPOINTS

## What are you looking for in the proposed new recreational facility at Baron Cameron Park?

— ANDREA WORKER



**Paige Sogandares**, Langston Hughes Middle School, student and swimmer, Reston

"I get up 6 days a week at 3:45 so I can swim at the Tysons YMCA because we just don't have the indoor facilities here. I sure would like to not have to get up that early, or inconvenience my family. If we had somewhere to swim like that indoors, year-round, it would be great. And it would bring more revenues to Reston, the businesses and restaurants where we shop and eat, especially after meets."



**Ambassador Dennis K. Hays**, director of The Emergence Group, president of Reston Runners

"Reston needs a premier facility, we're a premier community. Reston Runners has more than 800 members. Many of our members are triathletes. They need the aquatic facilities as well as indoor running and other training options. A modern, multi-purpose facility is in keeping with the Reston vision."



**David Vurdelja**, Sprint, Reston

"Any new facility needs to support the Reston brand, fit in with the Reston motto that this is a place to Live, Work, Play, and Get Involved. We definitely need a pool that accommodates a variety of needs and a lot of people, but we need to make it a place that encourages family and community. Let's make it a facility that will be part of the equation when people consider where they want to live."



**Thom Clement**, executive director of Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

"Our organization enjoys an excellent partnership with Reston Community Center, but it would be great to have more adaptable space for classes and programs. About 250 of our 1000 members are here in Reston. Sometimes we have to turn people away, or even not hold a program, just for lack of space. We do use the Hunters Wood and Lake Anne facilities, as well as rental space, but locally we are really maxed out. And we would like to continue, as well as expand the excellent speakers and programs we offer."



## NEWS



Workers at the Reston Station development help prep the final piece of the walkway that will connect to the Metrorail station Thursday, Feb. 14.

PHOTOS BY  
ALEX McVEIGH/  
THE CONNECTION

# Final Metro Walkway Piece Installed

91,000-pound span completes walkway from metro station to development.

BY ALEX McVEIGH  
THE CONNECTION



Workers prepare to place the final piece of the pedestrian walkway attached to the Wiehle Avenue Metrorail station Thursday, Feb. 14.

Just before midnight on Thursday, Feb. 14, construction crews laid the final span for the pedestrian walkway that will connect the future Reston Station development to the Wiehle Avenue Metrorail Station. The station is due to open in December, and with it the Reston Station development.

The mixed-use development will feature 1.3 million square feet of Class A office space, 1,500 luxury residential units, 300,000 square feet of retail space and a 200-plus room hotel, as well as an outdoor plaza, all spread out over 4.5 acres.

It will also contain a 1.5 million square foot parking garage and transit center that goes seven stories underground. In addition to parking spots, there are more bus bays, a bicycle storage facility and kiss and ride spaces as well, said Maggie Parker of Comstock, the property's developer.

The walkway goes from the station to the Reston Station development and has an observation deck located above the middle westbound lanes of the Dulles Toll Road.

The final piece, which weighed more than 91,000 pounds, was backed up the westbound exit ramp from Wiehle Avenue to the toll road via a remote control, 80-wheeled trailer.

After it was put in place on the ground, workers used a high tensile-strength line to attach it to a crane, which lifted the piece into place, where workers then secured it.

Workers prepare to attach the final piece of the walkway that will connect the Wiehle Avenue Metro Station to the Reston Station development Thursday, Feb. 14.



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PHOTO BY MIKE MOSELEY

From left, William David Meinert, South Lakes High School; Tatiana Michelle Liu, Potomac Falls High School; Alexis Michelle Gruber, Dominion High School; Adam Michael Cleland, Flint Hill High School; Nicole Marie Frank, Potomac High School; Steven Tai, Lanier Middle School; Meghan Elizabeth Babington, Dominion High School; Sarah Erica Slate, Langston Hughes Middle School; Nikole Rae James, Potomac Falls High School; Yechan Lim, Centreville High School; Kathryn Nei, Hunters Woods Elementary School and Isaac Daniel Mantelli, Westfield High School.

## Reston Lions Honor Music Competition Winners

**W**inners of the James A. Bland Music Scholarship competition, co-sponsored by the Reston Lions Club and the Reston Community Center and held at the community center on Tuesday, Jan. 29, were as follows: vocal competition, Alexis Michelle Gruber, first place; William David Meinert, second place; and Nikole Rae James, third place. Instrument competition, Yechan Lim, first place; Tatiana Michelle Liu,

second place; and Sarah Erica Slate, third place.

First place winners received prizes of \$100 and are eligible to compete in Virginia Lions Regional, District and State competitions for additional prizes. Second place winners received \$75 prizes and third place winners received \$50.

Judges were Lydia Kriso, Gretel Von Pischke, Elizabeth Kluegel and Leslie Luxenburg.

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# OPINION

## To 'Get That Vote We All Deserve'

### From Fix Gun Checks tour to White House.

BY OMAR JOSEPH SAMAHA  
BROTHER OF REEMA SAMAHA

GUEST EDITORIAL



After my sister Reema was killed at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, our lives changed forever. I say "our lives" changed forever because gun violence doesn't just affect the direct family of the person killed, but an entire community. As I learned more and more about gun violence, I found that on a daily basis, this ripple of pain and suffering is repeated 34 times in 34 communities around the country, that's a Virginia Tech massacre every day.

This all became even more apparent when I drove around the country on the Fix Gun Checks tour. The campaign promoted respect for the second amendment and fixing our background check system on gun purchases to prevent dangerous, prohibited purchasers from acquiring them.

The campaign began shortly after the Tucson, Ariz. massacre where U.S. Rep. Gabby Giffords was shot along with many other innocent Americans. For months I campaigned across the country, holding public events in small towns and big cities. When I made it to Tucson, Gabby was still recovering from her gunshot to the head, yet I had the opportunity to meet her sister and those affected by the

shooting. Her sister gave me a bright blue bracelet that had inscribed on it, "Gabby," along with a peace sign and a heart. I've cherished it and worn it ever since along with my "Hokie Hope" bracelet as I've hoped and prayed for her recovery and for all those affected by gun violence.

**IN EVERY STATE** I traveled to, I met with families and survivors of gun violence, mayors, congressional members, law enforcement officials, doctors, gun owners and NRA members. From the rural countryside, to the suburbs, to the inner cities, I witnessed the same thing: gun violence affects people in every community and from all walks of life. The resounding plea from everyone I met along the way is that we must do more to prevent gun violence in our country while respecting our second amendment rights. This can and must be done in a comprehensive manner in order to have real results.

After the Newtown shooting, everything changed, and Americans could not bear the thought of inaction. We can see that a push from citizens could cause the president and Congress to finally act to prevent these tragedies from occurring.

I went to the White House last Tuesday to speak with the first lady and other policy advisors and on Capitol Hill I spent much of the day meeting with congressional members. Everyone is now committed to working on the complex issue of gun violence prevention around our country while making sure our

Constitutional rights are not infringed.

On Capitol Hill, U.S. Rep. Jim Moran has been a very strong vocal leader in gun violence prevention and has worked closely with us over the years. He invited me to be his guest to the State of the Union. I was honored to attend along with many others who have experienced gun violence in their lives and even more so when President Obama acknowledged our presence.

The president spoke strongly about how the time for talk is over and the time for action, to vote on gun violence prevention measures, is now. He reiterated, "They deserve a vote!" when referring to those who have been murdered in the growing number of massacres, for the 34 Americans killed every day, for the families and communities affected, and for the survivors who live their lives with permanent injuries and trauma.

**SHORTLY AFTER** the State of the Union address, as I was leaving, I randomly got to meet one of those survivors, Gabby Giffords. She was being escorted by her husband, Capt. Mark Kelly. I had the feeling that one day we would cross paths. I introduced myself to her and though I don't believe she knew who I was, when I showed her the bracelet with her name on it her expression changed to one of excitement and enthusiasm.

Although Gabby is still recovering and re-learning how to speak, the words we exchanged were enough to give us more hope and energy, to continue on until we get that vote we all deserve, for our safety, for our children, and for our families and communities.

### COMMENTARY

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

## Circus Comes to Town



I am going to be taking two of my grandchildren to the Barnum and Bailey Circus at the Richmond Coliseum tonight. It is really amazing how quickly the circus can move into its venue; amaze, entertain and hold in suspense its audience; and then pack up and move on. Just a few blocks from the Coliseum, the General Assembly opened at the State Capitol the second week in January and will pack up this week and members will go back home. For the last six weeks the 140 members of the House of Delegates and State Senate along with their staff and about a thousand lobbyists have been holding forth on Capitol Square for the annual legislative session. The agenda is serious, and the activities over the past several weeks have been humorous, suspenseful and in a term used by the circus ringmaster, "unbelievable."

As we pick through the pieces of a legislature getting ready to ad-

journal, we find that there have been almost 3,000 bills and resolutions dispensed within a short period of time. Fortunately the legislature has gone paperless with most of its functions, saving the hundreds of trees that were killed in the past to support the process. By going online, citizens have greater access to what is going on at [www.viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://www.viriniageneralassembly.gov). Less than a third of the introduced legislation will make it to the governor's desk, and some of that will be duplicate bills from the House and Senate. Even more fortunate is the fact that most people will be unaffected by the legislation as much of it relates to the operation of government and the courts.

Some of the bills that got media attention luckily will not be becoming law. Bills have to pass both houses in identical form to go to the governor for his signature. The House plan to study a currency for Virginia (that I opposed) was de-

feated in the Senate. A Senate bill that would have regulated fox penning (that I supported in committee) died in subcommittee. A bill that passed the Senate that would have outlawed discrimination in state employment based on sexual orientation was killed in the same House subcommittee that has killed my bills on the same subject for many years. The governor's effort to restore voting rights to offenders (that I supported) was defeated in a House committee. A resolution warning of the evils of the United Nations Agenda 21 passed the House (without my vote) but was defeated in the Senate.

These bills and others like them were but sideshows when compared with the bills in the center ring. Adjustments at the midpoint of the biennial budget would have been simple enough if not for the opportunity for the state to expand Medicaid to provide insurance for almost 400,000 more of the working poor in the commonwealth. The health benefits and the qual-

ity of life and economic benefits of the expansion are clear, and the expansion has been endorsed by the Virginia and Fairfax Chambers of Commerce. The opposition comes from the governor and other conservatives who got themselves out on a limb in opposing the Affordable Care Act or "Obamacare." A conference committee continues to work on a solution to resolve the matter.

Responding to the estimated \$1 billion per year in transportation needs with revenue-neutral bills as demanded by many will require a magic act worthy of any big tent performance. Our congestion is the worst in the country, but a group of legislators consider their no-tax commitment to Grover Norquist to be more important than their constituents' interests. A conference committee is trying to work out this issue.

When these two big issues are resolved, the legislature will fold its tent for the off-season but will return again next year for some of the same acts.

Reston  
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## WEEK IN RESTON

### Fire and Apparent Homicide in the Reston Area

Police are investigating an apparent homicide that occurred in the Reston area on Monday, Feb. 18. Around 6:12 a.m. the Fairfax County Fire Department was called to an apartment in the 12000 block of Waterside View Drive for a report of smoke. Firefighters determined the smoke was coming from inside an apartment on the second floor and forced entry. They found an adult female deceased inside the apartment.

Police detectives and the Office of the Fire Marshal are investigating the woman's death jointly. The investigation is in its early stages but detectives have determined the victim had trauma to her upper body. She has not yet been identified.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

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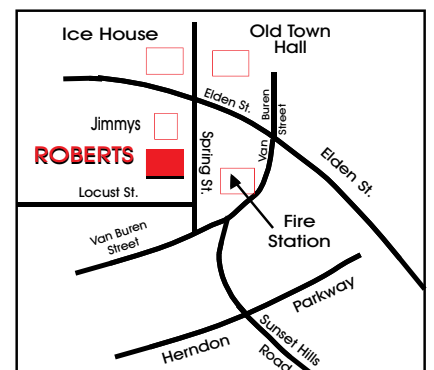


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# Rock Musical Takes CenterStage

## Reston Community Players to present “Next to Normal.”

By DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

A “cathartic, powerful rock musical, with a hopeful ending and a great honesty to it” is the way director Andrew JM Regiec describes the next Reston Community Players production, the Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award recipient “Next to Normal.”

With a score of about three dozen songs, “Next to Normal” tells the story of a suburban family battling personal demons “through a fast-paced story-telling and the heightened emotions that music can bring,” said Regiec.

With Brian Yorkey’s lyrics aiming to stimulate the senses, and his book providing a deep look into family dynamics matched with Tom Kitt’s exhilarating plugged-in music, “Next to Normal” expanded “the scope of subject matter for musicals” ac-

BERNARD MARKOWICZ/COURTESY OF THE RESTON COMMUNITY PLAYERS



From left, Terry Barr in his role as Gabe, Harv Lester in his role as Dan, and Jolene Vettese in her role as Diana in a rehearsal for the Reston Community Players’ production of “Next to Normal.”

ording to the Pulitzer committee. The Broadway production closed in January 2011, running 733

regular performances.

The musical follows a wife and mother, Diana, who struggles to

### Where and When

“Next to Normal” performed by Reston Community Players, CenterStage Theater, Reston Community Center, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston (in the Hunters Woods Village Center). Performances March 1-23, 2013. Friday and Saturday 8 p.m., Sunday matinee March 10 & 17 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets: \$23. Call 703-476-4500 or visit [www.restonplayers.org](http://www.restonplayers.org). Parental guidance recommended.

overcome the muddles of her life since a family tragedy and her bipolar disorder. Everyone near her is affected; her husband Dan, their teenage daughter Natalie and a son, who may or may not be quite what he seems.

Each is trying to find the light of day; one that is optimistic and hopeful.

Music Director Elisa Rosman described the musical score as high-lighting “how one fights demons.” She will be leading a 6-piece band including keyboard, violin, cello, bass and guitar. For Rosman, “the music adds so much emotion with a varied score of rock, folk, and ballads.”

In the central role of Diana is

Reston Community Players veteran, Jolene Vettese. In this production she sings more than 20 songs. She auditioned for the part because “the characters touched me; I wanted to bring Diana to life as she worked through her tough times.”

Newcomer Ashleigh Markin is daughter Natalie. Her character is trying to be perfect but that is not going so well. She wanted the part remembering “the life of a teenager and all the changes one goes through, all the highs and lows.”

Other family cast members include musical theater veteran Harv Lester, as husband Dan, trying to hold his family and himself together. Another musical theater veteran, Terry Barr is Gabe, the son. As a narrator of sorts, he is key contributor to the action setting of the production.

The show will be presented in the intimate setting of the Reston CenterStage which allows the audience to feel connected to the poignancy before them.

## ENTERTAINMENT

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

### FRIDAY/FEB. 22

**Kids’ Night Out.** 6:30-10 p.m., at RCC Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. This program is designed for older children (6-8 years old) to play games, enjoy arts and crafts, dance, play sports, and watch movies; refreshments included. Reston resident: \$15; non-Reston resident: \$30. [www.restoncommunitycenter.org](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.org).

Children ages 5-10 can make a food-safe, finished item, to be returned one week later; paints, material, supplies and instructions provided. \$10. [www.herdon-virginia.gov](http://www.herdon-virginia.gov).

### THURSDAY/FEB. 28

**Wine Dinner.** 6:30 p.m., at Il Fornaio, 11990 Market St., Suite 106, Reston. Five courses prepared with wine. \$65. 703-437-5544 or [banquets.reston.ilfo.com](http://banquets.reston.ilfo.com).

### 2013 Xing Wen Art Studio

**Exhibition.** 7-9 p.m., at Reston Community Center Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. This exhibition displays Xing Wen’s paintings of the Yi and Tibetan ethnic groups in China. [www.restoncommunitycenter.com/arts\\_exhibits.html](http://www.restoncommunitycenter.com/arts_exhibits.html).

### SATURDAY/MARCH 2

**A Night at the Movies: Songs from the Silver Screen.** 4-7:30 p.m., at Reston Community Center, Hunters Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. The Reston Choral’s 2013 Pops Concert will showcase songs from great film soundtracks—from Breakfast at Tiffany’s to Amistad. \$25 for adults, \$20 for seniors/youth. 703-476-1111 or [www.restonchorale.org](http://www.restonchorale.org).

### TUESDAY/FEB. 26

**The Stray Birds.** 7:15 p.m., at Amphora Diner Deluxe, 1151 Elden St., Herndon. The Folk Club of Reston-Herndon hosts the group voted to the Top 10 Folk & American Album of 2012 (by NPR). \$11 for members; 12 for non-members. 703-435-2402 or [DAHurdSr@cs.com](mailto:DAHurdSr@cs.com).

### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 27

**Paint Your Own Pottery.** 5:45-6:15 p.m., at the Herndon Community Center, 814 Ferndale Ave., Herndon.

### ONGOING

**Saturday Morning Cartoon Skate.** 11 a.m.-1 p.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Share the ice with Scooby-Doo, Cat in the Hat and other friends. 703-709-6300 or [skating@restontowncenter.com](http://skating@restontowncenter.com).

**Movies and Mimosas.** 11 a.m., at Reston Town Center, 11940 Market St., Reston. Saturday and Sunday showings in the morning; look up showings online. [bowtiecinemas.com](http://bowtiecinemas.com).

**TGIF Free Fridays.** 5-7 p.m., at Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market St., Suite 103, Reston. An evening of family art-making and storytelling. 703-471-9242 or [www.restonarts.com](http://www.restonarts.com).

**Rock ‘n’ Skate.** 8-11 p.m., at Reston Town Center, 11900 Market St., Reston. Live DJ and music on Fridays until 10 p.m. with games and prizes until 11 p.m. 703-471-9242 or [www.restonarts.com](http://www.restonarts.com).

**Open Mic Night.** 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Jimmy’s Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Every Wednesday. Register your band at [BluesSlide@aol.com](mailto:BluesSlide@aol.com) or 703-593-5206. [www.jimmystavern.com](http://www.jimmystavern.com).

**Insomnia Theater.** 11:30 p.m., at Reston Town Center, 11940 Market St., Reston. Friday and Saturday showings; look up showings online. [www.bowtiecinemas.com](http://www.bowtiecinemas.com).

### SATURDAY/MARCH 2

**Beyond the Blue and Grey: The Virginia Home Front, Artists Reception.** 7-9 p.m., at ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center St., Herndon. A reception for the exhibit that goes beyond Civil War art to showcase a collection of ideas (on places, social



“Thanatos, a Still Life Blue,” by Dorothy Bonica, the League of Reston Artists’ newest and youngest member.

## League of Reston Artists Opens Parkridge Exhibit

Paint and Flash is the new League of Reston Artists exhibit, featuring paintings and photographs in a wide range of styles and subjects. Open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Parkridge 5 Building, 10780 Parkridge Blvd., Reston, through April 12. [www.leagueofrestonartists.org](http://www.leagueofrestonartists.org).

history and unique attributes of the “home front” representing the Civil War era; the exhibit, up from Tuesday, Feb. 26 through Sunday, April 7, coincides with the Sunday, March 17, reenactment of Mosby’s Raid on Herndon Station. [www.ArtSpaceHerndon.org](http://www.ArtSpaceHerndon.org).

5206. [www.jimmystavern.com](http://www.jimmystavern.com).

### 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 Tchaikovsky’s 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 [fairfaxsymphony.org](http://fairfaxsymphony.org).

### WEDNESDAY/MARCH 13

**Open Mic Night.** 9:30 p.m.-1:30 a.m. Jimmy’s Old Town Tavern, 697 Spring St., Herndon. Every Wednesday. Register your band at [BluesSlide@aol.com](mailto:BluesSlide@aol.com) or 703-593-

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RSVP requested [ElectionsCommittee@reston.org](mailto:ElectionsCommittee@reston.org) or 703-435-6530.

For additional election and voting information, check out the Reston Association’s website at [www.reston.org](http://www.reston.org).

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# Choosing a Summer Camp

Region offers programs to tempt children with interests ranging from sports to drama to science.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

While most of Washington is braving the winter weather, April Toman has been planning for summer. At the top of her list: choosing a camp for her two children, Claire, who is in fifth grade, and Will, who is a second grader.

"I start thinking about it in January," said Toman, who lives in Alexandria. "I talk to my kids about what they are interested in taking. There are so many options and the popular camps fill up quickly."

Education experts say summer camp is an important part of a childhood experience, and parents should start considering options well before the end of the school year.

"I think summer camps are wonderful for kids," said Tammy Davis, a doctor of education and a professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington. "Sometimes kids lose ground over the summer, especially with regard to their mental activity. Summer camp can continue brain development, especially with regard to creativity, mental activity, physical activity and social activity."

Davis, who is a former camp counselor, elementary school teacher and school counselor, said children who are not exposed to new social activities could become isolated. "If your kids are only playing video games or going to the pool every day, they run the risk of cocooning themselves," she said. "Choose a camp that expands your child's horizons, that will be stimulating and engaging and where they will develop new friendships without the pressure of an academic environment."

Toman, whose children will attend summer camp at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria, says that from traditional day camps to specialty camps, the options for children are plentiful. "My children have done junior veterinarian camp in the past, and this year we might try an eco-adventures camp."

**FROM SPORTS TO SCIENCE**, the Washington region is filled with camps that will suit almost every child. For example, Annie Moyer, director of the Sun & Moon Yoga Studio in Arlington and Fairfax, says yoga camps are options for children who have never practiced yoga. "No yoga experience is necessary," she said. "We do yoga games and poses, breathing, artistic expression and, weather permitting, outdoor playground time."

For youngsters with a passion for all things artistic, Jeanne Loveland, education director for the Greater Reston Arts Center, suggests art camp. "Our camps are based on the GRACE mission, which is contemporary art" she said. "There are some discussions and there are art projects. There is one camp of messy art projects that your mom would never let you do at home. The camps are educational, but also fun. We will bring in local artists."

Loveland added that during one session, students will learn about public art, and "will create a public art work that will be displayed publicly after the camp."

Jim Supple, director of summer programs at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School, encourages parents to consider specialty camps as well as traditional day camps. "Specialty camps are great ways to try new



Students show projects that they made during a physics camp at SummerTimes Camp at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School last summer.

things, to expand horizons, and to challenge yourself," he said. "Children are naturally curious and specialty camps provide a way for children to learn more about their interests. If a child is not the most athletic and would rather learn about fashion or photography, acting or magic, specialty camps provide that outlet. They allow children to find things that they are good at and lets them be proud in that activity."

While the thought of academic camps might cause some children to cringe, Mollianne Logerwell, Ph.D., director of science education at George Mason University's Virginia Initiative for Science Teaching and Achievement, says that does not have to be the case. George Mason hosts science camps, and "students frequently tell us that camp was not only fun, but also increased their interest in science," she said. "Additionally, classroom teachers have told us that students who attended a VISTA camp ask higher-level questions and are more engaged in science lessons than students who did not attend camp."

Logerwell said VISTA camps are geared toward low-income students. "It's also a great way to expose families with limited knowledge to the possibility of attending and affording college."

**WITH SO MANY OPTIONS** for summer camps, choosing the best camp for your child can be overwhelming. "When parents are looking for a camp, they should try to find a camp where they're comfortable with the facility, the programming, and counselors and staff," said Kevin Rechen, camp director for the Norwood School in Bethesda, Md.

Gabrielle Summers, who is planning to send her children to summer camp at the Norwood School, says that she considers safety first. "Second, [I consider] the qualifications of counselors and leadership and their love of the children. [Then] I look at cost, early bird discounts, payment due dates and cancellation policies."

For those who may not be able to afford the cost of summer camp, Rechen suggests that parents do a little research. "Many summer camps offer financial aid," he said. "There are also foundations that give grants for camps."

No matter which camp a child attends, however, Davis has one caution: "Be careful about over-scheduling camps, doing back-to-back camps and not giving children down time," she said. "Some people use camp as day care and that is not always a good thing."



Elementary school students at the Potomac School, in McLean, celebrated Black History Month by researching, writing and reading essays about famous African-Americans.

## Learning From the Past

What some local schools are doing to celebrate Black History Month.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

The sound of steel drums vibrates through the air of a crowded auditorium in Potomac, Md. In McLean, elementary school girls share their understanding of the struggles of Rosa Parks. A group of second graders from Alexandria treks to downtown Washington to see the massive memorial statue of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr.

Local schools are celebrating Black History Month with activities like these. They range from student-led faculty meetings to music and food-filled festivals. In fact, some local school officials say acquiring knowledge of the history of the African-American community is a significant part of a well-rounded education.

"I think acknowledging and celebrating Black History Month is important because we're not yet in a place where we can say that we're paying attention to the contributions, perspectives and experiences of African-Americans in this country on a consistent basis," said Rodney Glasgow, head of the Middle School at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Md.

A group of eighth-grade boys at St. Andrew's led a faculty meeting and told teachers and staff what it's like to be African-American teenagers. "The boys helped our faculty understand a little bit more about where they come from and some of their unique perspectives and challenges," said Glasgow. "It is

different way to celebrate Black History Month, but we're hoping to do something meaningful and really address the state of African-Americans in our culture."

Ann Richardson Miller, director of admission for The Madeira School, in McLean, said students there shared a school tradition: "We had an all-school meeting in which a team of eight Madeira students who had attended the Student Diversity Leadership Conference [in Texas] ... discussed their experiences. Madeira has sent a team of students to that conference for the past 10 years."

Kindergarten through third grade students at the Potomac School in McLean researched, wrote and read essays about famous African-Americans. "Each homeroom teacher selects one black American each week whose achievements have had a positive impact on our nation," said David Grant, the school's director of diversity and inclusion. "The students write a report about that person. Three or four students from each class will do a short presentation during a school assembly on each Friday during February. Students will have learned about 12 important African-Americans by the time the assembly is over."

Educators say that while Black History Month activities are important, they hope the events spark a dialogue that extends beyond February. "It is important because many people may not understand how important the African-American experience is to our country's history," said Grant.



# TJ Students Promote Science

## Science Innovation and Youth Conference at Langston Hughes Middle.

BY OLUFEMI AKINSITAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he study of science and technology among youths was given a boost on Saturday, Feb. 9, at the Langston Hughes Middle School. The Science Innovation and Youth Conference (Sci2YC), a STEM conference aimed at encouraging the study of science and technology among middle school students was hosted by Project BEST.

Project BEST (Building Excitement for Science and Technology), the organizer of the event, according to the founder and CEO, "is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing students with education, enrichment and a joy for learning and understanding the exciting science and technological advances happening around us."

Parth Chopra working with Robert Young, Nikhil Garg, Roy Reinberg and Dhruv Garba—all juniors of Thomas Jefferson High School—came up with idea of the project, which he described as "100 percent student driven."

**"I hope to show the students that there are different ways to get to science."**

— Dr. Roian Egnor

Activities during the day-long event include forensic analysis during which students participated in finger printing, chromatography and DNA analysis. Classical mechanics in physics, such as centripetal motion, linear momentum, angular momentum and conservation momentum were also demonstrated using tools such as a bicycle wheel gyroscope and spinning table.

One of the speakers at the event, Dr. Roian Egnor, a neurobiologist from the Janelia Farm Research Campus, Ashburn, demonstrated the vocalization and the behavior of mice. She said, "I hope to show the students that there are different ways to get to science." Other speakers at the event included Mike Bruce, the president and CEO of Inscope International, who gave an interactive demonstration of how STEM can be applied to students' lives.

In her comment, Joyce Matthew, the STEM chairperson of Walt Whitman Middle School, said "events like this are great, the focus is to get minority students and girls involved in science, and it's great to see students running it."

In attendance were students from Walt Whitman Middle School, Poe Middle School, Rocky Run Middle School and Lake Braddock Middle School. Also present were students from Langston Hughes Middle School, Robinson Middle School, Lanier Middle School and Longfellow Middle School.





From left, Nikhil Garg, Robert Young, Roian Egnor, Parth Chopra, Dhruv Garba and Roy Reinberg, core members of Project BEST, presenting a t-shirt to one of the guest speakers Dr. Roian Egnor.

PHOTOS BY OLUFEMI AKINSITAN/THE CONNECTION



Students at work during the forensic analysis session at the conference.

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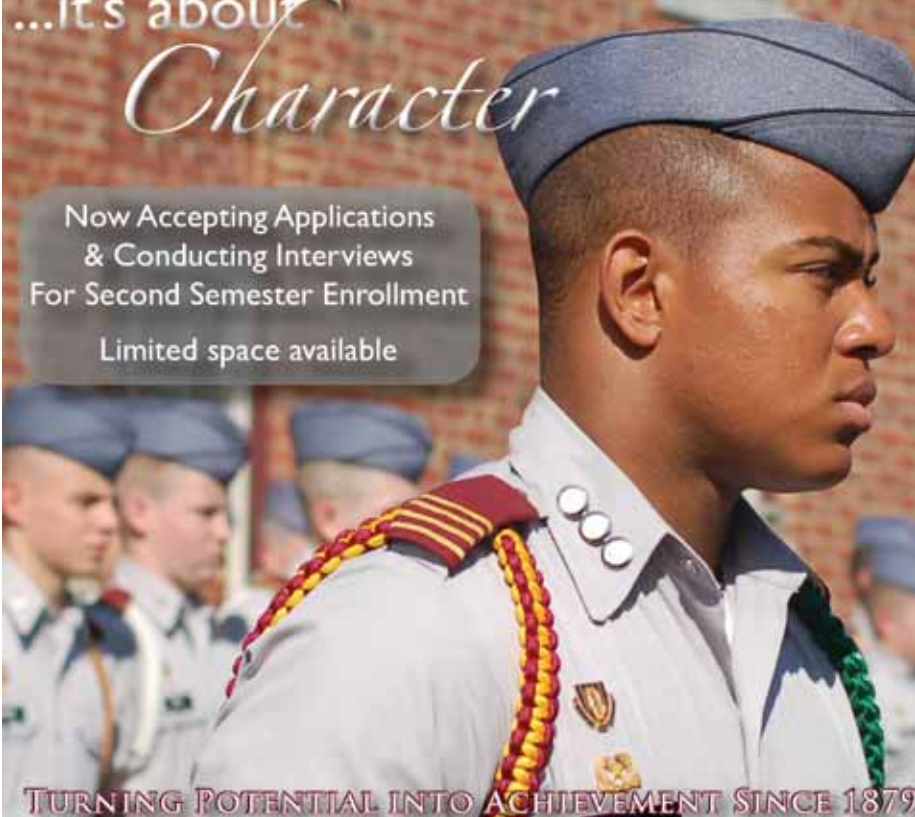
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# SPORTS



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Marshall senior Grant Leibow scored 24 points against McLean in the Liberty District championship game on Feb. 15. Leibow was awarded the MVP of the tournament.

## Marshall Boys' Basketball Wins Liberty District Title

Statesmen hold off defending champion Highlanders at South Lakes High.

BY ALEX VAN REES  
FOR THE CONNECTION

The Marshall boys' basketball team captured the first Liberty District championship in program history on Feb. 15 when the Statesmen defeated the McLean Highlanders 60-45 in the district tournament championship game at South Lakes High School.

Right out of the gates, the No. 4 Highlanders picked up the early lead within five seconds by driving down the court and getting on the board first, 2-0.

However, that lead would not last for long.

"We didn't come out the way we wanted to tonight," said McLean junior guard Joey Sullivan, who finished with five points. "We turned the ball over too much. I think we just let the hype of the game get into our heads and that's not the way we wanted to come out. We tried to adjust after the half and made it to within eight points, but they held on."

**THE FIRST PERIOD** went back-and-forth the entire eight minutes with little scoring taking place; it was a great testament to how well these teams can play defensively.

"I think we proved a lot of people wrong this season," said Sullivan. "If you were to ask some of the coaches around the league, I don't think many of them would have said that we would be back in the district championship. Just getting here, we accomplished many goals and proved people wrong."

At the end of the first period, the No. 2 Statesmen took a 9-7 lead, and that was the closest the Highlanders would come to the title. As the game progressed, Marshall continued to build its lead and by the end of the half, the Statesmen had pulled away by 11 points, 26-15.

"All tournament I think we played really well," said Marshall senior guard Grant Leibow, who led the team with 24 points. "We definitely turned it up this tournament. We had a couple down points in the



McLean's Samer Abdelmoty was named to the All-Liberty District Tournament team.

season when we lost a couple of games in the row, and that just motivated us to do better. We knew we had a chance to win."

The Statesmen burst out of the gates and were ready to get the second half underway; they posted 18 points in the third period, the most in a single period the entire game. Not to mention, they only allowed the Highlanders to tally 13. After three periods, Marshall held a 16-point lead, 44-28.

Heading into the final period, the Highlanders had one last chance for a comeback, and they outscored the Statesmen 17-16. However, that was not enough as Marshall

defeated the defending Liberty District champs 60-5.

"It feels great to win the championship finally because the last two years, we were eliminated in the first game of the tournament," said Marshall head coach Dan Hale, who was named the coach of the year for the Liberty District boys. "For them, it's a real testament to them about how much work they have put in, both in the offseason and throughout the year on and off the court. Everyone has a role and they each filled that tonight. They are a very dedicated bunch."

Leibow was awarded the MVP of the tournament and was named to the second-team all-district. Senior forward Doug Turpin and junior guard Towner Hale both finished second on the team with nine points.

"Even though we were the higher seed, I think that took pressure off of us," said Leibow. "No one expected us to win, and I think we proved a lot of people wrong. We had never been here before, so we didn't know what to expect."

**SENIOR CENTER JOHN PASCOE**, who was named to the first-team all-district, led McLean, the defending district champion, with 17 points and seven rebounds. He and senior guard Samer Abdelmoty, who posted 11 points, each made the all-tournament team.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Will Ferguson, seen earlier this season, and the Herndon boys' basketball team won the Concorde District title by defeating Robinson on Feb. 15.

## Herndon Boys' Basketball Wins District Title

The Herndon boys' basketball team won two games by a combined four points to capture the Concorde District championship.

The Hornets defeated Chantilly 53-52 in the semifinals on Feb. 14 and beat Robinson 51-48 in the championship game on Feb. 15. Herndon entered the tournament as the No. 1 seed, securing the Hornets a first-round bye and a spot in the regional tournament.

According to stats from the Washington Post's website, Will Ferguson led Herndon with 26 points against Robinson in the district final. Dorian Johnson finished with 12 points. Against Chantilly, according to the Post, Ferguson scored 20 points and Johnson had 13.

Herndon faced Fairfax, the No. 4 seed from the Liberty District, in the opening round of the Northern Region tournament on Feb. 18.

## South Lakes Girls' Basketball Falls in District Semis

The South Lakes girls' basketball team lost to eventual champion Madison 55-52 in the semifinals of the Liberty District tournament on Feb. 14.

According to stats from the Washington Post's website, Abigail Rendle led South Lakes with 25 points. Gabrielle Schultz scored nine points for the Seahawks and Caitlin Jensen added eight.

South Lakes, which entered the district tournament as the No. 1 seed, qualified for the Northern Region tournament by defeating No. 8 Marshall in the opening round. The Seahawks faced Chantilly in the opening round of regionals on Feb. 18.

## Marshall's Stahl Places Third at State Gymnastics Meet

As a freshman in 2012, Marshall's Morgan Stahl competed at the VHSL state gymnastics meet, but failed to place in the top eight in an event.

As a sophomore, Stahl earned a trip back to the state meet. This time, she walked away with some hardware.

Stahl placed third in the all-around competition at the state gymnastics meet, earning all-state honors with a total of 38.325 on Feb. 16 at Centreville High School. Stahl placed second on floor (9.725), fourth on beam (9.675) and finished in a tie for fifth on vault (9.725).

Stahl also finished 15th on bars (9.2).

"It feels really good," Stahl said. "Last year I was here as a freshman and I didn't place on anything, so it was nice to come back and improve so much."

Western Branch's Jamie Stone won the all-around state title with a total of 39.1. Great Bridge's Courtney Adams was second (39) and Woodson's Simone Freidman was fourth (38.1).

One day earlier, Kellam won the team championship with a score of 148.3. Washington-Lee finished runner-up for the second consecutive season, posting a 147.2 — the highest score in program history.



## FAITH

# P Minor of a Purim Paparazzi

BY RABBI LEIBEL FAJNLAND  
DIRECTOR OF CHABAD OF RESTON-  
HERNDON



Instead of joining an exasperated press probing into prominent people's privacies, I will pursue celebrities like King Ahasuerus, Queen Esther and Vashti of Persia. I will serve a much greater purpose by presenting a better picture, or portrait, of the Megillah's principal personalities. It gives me the opportunity to report on the grand procession of Mordechai, Haman and his sons Parshandatha, Parmashta and Poratha, to name only three. Now, with the approach of Purim, I prefer to devote my expertise to promote the proper performance of the Purim procedures and its prerequisites.

Perhaps you are perplexed and perturbed why we make such a big production out of Purim, exaggerating it out of proportion to other projects or programs? Why must we twist ourselves into a pretzel with all this perennial Purim propaganda? I propose that this is precisely Purim's Problem. If Purim is not paramount in your mind, it probably needs more and better PR.

Purim represents the promise of Jewish perseverance under pressure and persecution. Although it transpired in Persia approximately 2,300 years ago, Purim is not an ancient anachronism, but part and parcel of the present. As the Baal Shem Tov paraphrased the Talmud: "One who reads the Megillah backwards has not fulfilled his obligation," for Purim is as current and contemporary as this newspaper.

Purim is pervaded by Divine Providence, as the Megillah prefaces with the Royal parties and profaning of the pure priestly vessels, the priceless perfumes, progressing with Mordechai's premonition of peril, and the evil oppression and persecution perpetrated by Persia's prejudiced premier, Haman, may he and all his conspirators perish. Esther and the Jews prepare to preempt Haman's evil plot, while Mordechai is promoted to prominence, paraded in

purple and imperial paraphernalia. Purim's profound principles may appear to be compromised by the peripheral pranks, silly improvisos, superficial pretenses, parodies and parades. Yet paradoxically, scriptural interpretation compares Purim to Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the year!

Purim pertains to each and every one of us. It speaks to every person of every profile and persuasion, from the lowest to the uppermost; from a protesting preppie to a

presiding provost; from the poorest, perspiring paparazzi to the prim & proper president of Purdue U., or the paradigm of any other prosperous corporation.

Rather than preach Purim principles in the abstract, we should be particular and specific, for proverbially, practice makes perfect. So here is a paragraph on Purim's Four important precepts:

1) The Megillah parchment is proclaimed on Purim day, and the preceding night.

2) We send our friends and peers, by proxy, a pair of provisions: Hamantashen (poppy or prune), Perrier, Pringles, pirogen, pears, apricots, peppermint candy, or other appropriate foods portions, whether or not they have that persistent PR pronunciation, as long as they are edible.

3) It is imperative that we open our purse, and provide to the deprived on Poorim. We should proffer a coin (at least a quarter) each, to two poor persons. It is your prerogative how much to give, but the more the merrier. If you can't personally locate poor persons, participate by placing the proceeds into a pushka/charity can.

4) On Purim we partake of a Party, and pour a Lchaim!

Happy Purim!

With thanks to Israel Rubin and Lechayim Magazine. For all Purim related questions and information visit [www.chabadrh.org/purim](http://www.chabadrh.org/purim)

Rabbi Fajnlend can be reached at  
[Rabbi@chabadrh.org](mailto:Rabbi@chabadrh.org).

## FAITH NOTES

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community, including special holiday services. Send to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday.

**Trinity Presbyterian Church,**  
651 Dranesville Road, Herndon, has Sunday worship services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Nursery and childcare

are provided and youth and adult Sunday school classes are held prior, from 9:40-10:45 a.m. 703-437-5500 or [www.trinityherndon.org](http://www.trinityherndon.org).

**Vajrayogini Buddhist Center,**  
Unitarian Universalist Church, 1625 Wiehle Ave., Reston, holds monthly classes for the general public which use Buddhist teachings to practice medita-

tion. [www.meditation-dc.org](http://www.meditation-dc.org) or 202-986-2257.

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Call Specific Agents to Confirm Dates & Times

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### Falls Church

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### Herndon

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