

Burke
CONNECTION

PET CONNECTION

Meet Area Families' 'Best Friends'

PET CONNECTION, PAGE 8

Bridget Kennerley of Burke area gives her dog Saki some basic commands, such as sit, stand, lie down and roll over, which she has learned throughout her training course in preparation for becoming a guide dog for people with visual impairments.

Esther at
Burke
Presbyterian
NEWS, PAGE 10

Local Leaders Praise Transportation Funding Bill

NEWS, PAGE 3

FEBRUARY 28—MARCH 6, 2013

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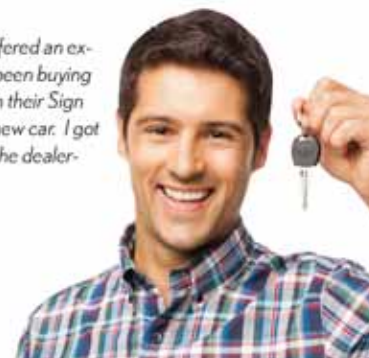
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Local Leaders Praise Transportation Funding Bill

State Senator Chap Petersen wants you to curb your enthusiasm.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION NEWSPAPERS

Politics makes strange bedfellows, and sometimes estranged ones as well. On Saturday, the last day of the Virginia General Assembly, state legislators struck a bipartisan 11th hour deal to pass a comprehensive transportation funding plan—the first long-term plan in 27 years.

Republican Governor Robert McDonnell, who received credit for hammering out the “compromise” legislation, declared passage of the bill “a historic day in Virginia.”

“There is a ‘Virginia Way’ of cooperation and problem solving, and we saw it work again today in Richmond,” McDonnell said in a statement Saturday.

The proposal, financed largely by higher sales and car taxes, is projected to raise more than \$3.5 billion for roads and rails over five years and nearly \$900 million annually after 2018. Northern Virginia would get hundreds of millions from the state, including \$300 million committed to complete Metro’s Silver Line extension to Dulles International Airport.

Many local leaders—Republicans and Democrats alike—applauded the package as a “win” for Northern Virginia.

Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock) said he was “thrilled” at the additional funding for Northern Virginia.

“Money in this bill will also help finish the Dulles Rail project, alleviate congested roads and ensure existing infrastructure is properly maintained,” Cook said. He added that he’s spoken with numerous voters in town halls and neighborhood meetings, and one of the top concerns has been the deteriorating condition of Fairfax County’s roads and increased congestion.

“With this bill, we’re one step closer to significant improvement in these areas,” he said.

SHARON BULOVA, the Democratic chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, said the bill was a “great step toward addressing the transportation challenges we face in Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia region.”

Bulova was instrumental in creating the Urban Crescent Coalition—a group of 54 mayors and county chairs of the state’s 46 most populous regions stretching from Northern Virginia to Richmond and Hampton Roads. For months, the coalition has been lobbying top commonwealth leaders to adequately fund Virginia’s “crumbling” transportation system.

Bulova said she was “especially pleased with the commitment of \$300 million for the Silver Line “which will help to keep tolls in the Dulles Toll Road affordable for Northern Virginia motorists.”

Both Cook and Bulova applauded the bipartisan efforts of Governor McDonnell, Sen. Janet Howell (D- 32), Del. David Albo



Sen. Chap Petersen confers on the Senate floor with a colleague in Richmond on Monday, Feb. 18. Sen. Dave Marsden (D-37) is sitting to Petersen’s right.

(R-42) and Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) for reaching agreement on a funding strategy that “moves us in the right direction,” Bulova said.

But State Senator Chap Petersen (D-34) put the brakes on the cross-party celebrating. In a series of scathing comments and posts on his blog OxRoadSouth, Petersen called the bill “the train wreck that was the final compromise on HB 2313,” and said it may be unconstitutional as well.

“If you like discriminatory taxes against Northern Virginia, then you might like this bill. I think it’s a terrible policy,” Petersen said in an email on Tuesday.

The bill provides new revenues for transportation through increased taxes and user fees that, in many cases, are higher for taxpayers in Northern Virginia than other parts of the state. For example, under the new bill, the sales tax rises from 5 to 6 percent only in Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads, and to 5.5 percent everywhere else in the state.

❖ There’s also a new 0.25 percent sales tax on homes in Northern Virginia. That means an additional transfer tax of \$1,250 on the sale of a \$500,000 home, on top of capital gains tax.

❖ Virginia’s car tax rises from 3 percent to 4.3 percent, meaning a new \$30,000 car or truck will come with a \$1,290 tax bill.

❖ The 17.5-cents-per-gallon tax on gasoline, which has remained unchanged since 1986, has been replaced by a wholesale tax on gasoline at 3.5 percent. For consumers of diesel fuel, the tax rises to 6 percent. The tax will not show up at the pump when consumers pay for gasoline, but will likely be incorporated into the price by distributors.

❖ State road funds are linked to Internet tax legislation currently pending (languishing) in Congress. For Northern Virginians,



Del. Tim Hugo (R-40) discusses an upcoming bill on the House floor of the Capitol in Richmond on Monday, Feb. 18.

the wholesale gas tax and diesel tax contain “triggers” that will cause them to rise if Congress does not authorize the state to collect sales tax on Internet purchases, which analysts say is unlikely to happen before the Jan. 1, 2015 “trigger date.” If Congress does not act on the legislation by that date, the tax will jump from 3.5 percent to 5.1 percent, increasing the gas tax to 17.85-cents-per-gallon.

❖ For Northern Virginia taxpayers, that means they are likely to be paying more in gas taxes after Jan. 1, 2015, than they are now.

❖ The local hotel tax increases 3 percent. Revenue from the Northern Virginia-specific taxes will be locally controlled, through the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority.

Petersen said that’s not enough to turn a bad bill into a better deal.

He described the final deal as “a grotesque combination of tax cuts, tax rebates, tax increases, new taxes, old taxes which are phased out (and then reappear elsewhere), regional alliances ... special projects, and exceptions to all of the above.”

He asked his Republican colleagues: “Did you have to rewrite the entire code book, so you could use the fake ‘but we’re cutting taxes too!’ line on gullible voters?”

He conceded the bill will raise millions for transit, including new support for Rail to Dulles, which is “critical” for the region.

And for many commuters in Northern Virginia, that may be enough reason to embrace a long-awaited transportation-funding package.

“This bi-partisan compromise is far from perfect, but it was supported overwhelmingly by the business community and weary commuters,” said former state delegate Margaret Vanderhye, a Democrat from the

34th district who was narrowly defeated in her 2009 reelection bid by Republican Barbara Comstock. “It contains \$300 million for Dulles Rail and a funding mechanism to allow our region to raise funds that stay here for our transportation priorities—something we tried and failed to accomplish with the 2002 referendum.”

Vanderhye said she was “outraged” that some Northern Virginia legislators would vote “no” solely based on their pledge to Americans for Tax Reform, the organization created by anti-tax crusader Grover Norquist. In the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, candidates and incumbents solemnly bind themselves to oppose any and all tax increases, and the ATR has the role of promoting and monitoring the pledge.

Since its rollout with the endorsement of President Reagan in 1986, the pledge has become de rigeur for Republicans seeking office.

Like most Democrats, Petersen staunchly opposes the ATR and its pledge. “The only pledge I will take is to my wife,” Petersen has said.

But his “no” vote on the transportation package puts him the same camp as Republican Del. Tim Hugo (R-40), who did not vote in favor of the governor’s bill “as I do not believe that it is the right vehicle to address Virginia’s transportation needs. Now is not the time to increase taxes on Virginia’s hard-working families. While I disagree with the bill’s approach, I appreciate my colleagues’ efforts to solve our transportation needs,” Hugo said.

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM applauded Hugo and 18 other Virginia lawmakers—including Comstock, Scott Lingamfelter (R-31), Robert G. Marshall (R-13) and David Ramadan (R-87) for “standing firm” against “a \$6.1 billion tax increase. ... These lawmakers serve as an example of what legislative leadership looks like,” the ATR said in a statement released Saturday.

Petersen said he’s unfazed by any false comparisons to those in the ATR camp, and stands by his opposition to the bill based on what he calls the bill’s “lack of vision,” the inequities to Northern Virginians and what he believes is the bill’s ultimate failure to solve the state’s transportation problems. Del. Scott Surovell and Sen. Adam Ebbins were the only other Northern Virginia Democrats to vote against the bill.

“The method for raising these funds is complicated, contradictory and will eventually create ‘two Virginias’—with differing tax rates and, ultimately, differing levels of support from Richmond,” Petersen said.

Petersen contends that any sustainable transportation funding solution should be “simple, uniform and equitable. It should stick to the historic premise that ‘the user pays’ for our highways. It should treat all taxpayers equally.”

“I’ve been told that my opposition to this plan may result in the demise of my political career. If so, I can only state, at least there’s some benefit,” Petersen quipped.

PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

\$7 Billion Budget Proposal Unveiled

Typical county household would see real estate tax bill increase by \$260 annually.

By VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

A slow economic recovery marked by the unknown impact of federal sequestration cuts were dominant factors in the restrained first draft of Fairfax County's \$7 billion budget for fiscal year 2014.

Fairfax County Executive Edward L. Long Jr. unveiled his \$7 billion budget proposal Tuesday, Feb. 26, calling for a two-cent increase in the real estate tax rate, which would raise taxes by \$260 for the typical household. Each one-cent increase in the real estate tax rate equals \$20.65 million in county revenue.

For Fairfax County Public Schools—which receive nearly 75 percent of its funding from the county—Long recommended a total transfer, which includes school debt service, of \$1.89 billion, an increase of \$33.7 million or 2 percent over this year.

THE PROPOSED COUNTY BUDGET also includes \$67.9 million in additional support to FCPS for services including Head Start, school resource officers, crossing guards and recreational programs, among others.

"We have heard from residents that we should continue with current service levels and program delivery, which we maintained through the last few years of the recession by downsizing effectively and responsibly," Long said during a news conference Tuesday.

"Moving forward, we must put in place a longer-term focus on investment in the county's future, which requires constrained spending and strategic funding priorities. We are also forced to recognize the significant yet unknown impact that is expected from federal sequestration and the continuing challenges of a slowly recovering economy," Long added.

Long noted that the residential equalization—or change in assessments of existing residential property—increased 3.5 percent from last year. Residential real estate revenue accounts for approximately 74.4 percent of the county's tax base. Nonresidential values remained flat, increasing only 0.14 percent in FY 2013.

"Despite growth in residential real estate revenue, funding decisions made last year make it critical for us to be constrained in our spending," Long said.

Long's budget also included proposed county agency reductions of \$20.52 million, including the elimination of 91 merit positions, as well as no increases in employee compensation for FY 2014. Funding for major human services and public safety would remain steady.

Long said his plan includes targeted "surgical" reductions rather than radical cuts that would eliminate programs and close facilities.

"We spent a lot of time going through each and



Fairfax County Executive Edward L. Long Jr. answered questions during a news briefing following the presentation of the proposed FY 2014 \$7 billion budget.

Budget Public Hearings—When and Where

Public hearings on the proposed FY 2014 budget are scheduled:

- ❖ Tuesday, April 9, at 6 p.m.
- ❖ Wednesday, April 10, at 3 p.m.
- ❖ Thursday, April 11, at 3 p.m.

Those wishing to speak at a public hearing can sign up online to place their name on the speakers list, or contact the Office of the Clerk to the Board at 703-324-3151, TTY 703-324-3903. The public hearings will be held in the Board Auditorium, Fairfax County Government Center and will be televised live on Fairfax County Government Channel 16. The Board of Supervisors will adopt the county's FY 2014 budget on April 30. For the schedule of the Board of Supervisors town hall meetings on the budget, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2014/advised/fy2014-town-hall-meetings.

every agency," he said Tuesday. "If you look at the 500 positions we've eliminated over the past five years, I think the heavy lifting on cuts has been done."

"We are not yet out of the woods as we recover more slowly than we would like from the great recession," Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-at-large) said in a statement. "County revenue projections are essentially flat and contributing to our challenge is the effect that sequestration will have on our economy. Already our commercial tax base is negatively affected by inaction on the part of Congress."

THE PROPOSED BUDGET includes a \$2.4 million balance for the board's consideration to address "high priority" requirements in FY 2014 or to be held in reserve for FY 2015. The county executive's budget also includes a multi-year budget framework for FY 2015, which currently has a projected budget shortfall of \$39.7 million. The multi-year budget approach, according to Long, allows the county to address challenges on a longer-term basis, even though the Board of Supervisors is still required to make budget and appropriation decisions on an annual basis.

"There's some optimism out there, we just need a little more clarity from federal government," Long said.



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Cedric Smith, 40, has been homeless and living in a tent for the past five years. On Monday, Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill) talked with Smith about resources available to help him find a permanent home.

Putting a Name and Face On Chronically Homeless

At 4 a.m., under a full moon, more than 200 volunteers fanned out across Fairfax County on Monday, Feb. 25, to identify the more than 300 people who are literally homeless, living in cars, on the street or in the woods around the county. Coordinated by the Fairfax-Falls Church Partnership to End Homelessness, the weeklong effort is part of the 100,000 Homes campaign, an intensive approach to identify and find homes for the chronically homeless. The information

gathered during Registry Week—the multi-day event where volunteers go out on the streets and create a name and photographic "registry"—will be used to help Fairfax County prioritize housing and support resources for the chronically homeless. The county's goal is to get half of them in housing within three years. Read more about the 100,000 Homes campaign in next week's Connection Newspapers.

—VICTORIA ROSS

Burke Surgeon Gains National Recognition

Richard Derner, DPM, FACFAS, of Burke, is the new secretary and treasurer of the American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons (ACFAS), a national association of over 6,800 foot and ankle surgeons. Dr. Derner was installed to his position at the ACFAS



Richard Derner

ACFAS for the profession and the patients we serve," said Derner.

Dr. Derner practices with Associated Foot & Ankle Centers of Northern Virginia and is board certified in both foot surgery and reconstructive rearfoot and ankle surgery by the American Board of Podiatric Sur-

gery. He is a member of the residency training committee with the Inova Fairfax podiatric residency program. Dr. Derner is also the chief of podiatric surgery at Stafford Hospital, in Stafford, Va., and is past president of the Virginia Podiatric Medical Association.

Dr. Derner earned his podiatric medical degree from the Ohio College of Podiatric Medicine, which is now called Kent State. He completed his podiatric surgical residency at the Doctors Hospital in Denver, Colo., and fellowship in traumatology in Ravensburg, Germany.

"I am honored to serve the college and its members as the secretary and treasurer of this preeminent organization and look forward to working diligently with my fellow colleagues to further advance the high standards of

gery. He is a member of the residency training committee with the Inova Fairfax podiatric residency program. Dr. Derner is also the chief of podiatric surgery at Stafford Hospital, in Stafford, Va., and is past president of the Virginia Podiatric Medical Association.

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A Guide to Fun

Three area mothers publish guide to child-friendly activities in Northern Virginia.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Rather than brood about the lack of cultural resources for new mothers living in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area, three local writers took it upon themselves to fill the information void. Bloggers Claudine Kurp, Amy Suski and Micaela Williamson have recently self-published "Kid Trips Northern Virginia Edition," a 220-page toddler-to-teen tome providing hundreds of honest reviews, insider tips and top picks from all manner of child-friendly culture in the area.

Written from the experienced perspective of a collective 30 years living in and around D.C., the truly local and authentic entries in the book offer parents a mighty resource for planning out recreational family time. From museums and nature centers to ice rinks and restaurants, the painstakingly inclusive book is intended to guide moms and dads through the fog of inactivity like a highly knowledgeable and motivated neighbor, whether they're established residents, new to the area or simply in town for a brief stay.

"No one really tells you, but there are a thousand different things to do with kids," said Kurp, mother of two and Oakton resident. "There's very little support out there for new mothers, and the reality is it's a totally different life: there's the world you know when you're single, and the world you know when you're a mother."

FACED WITH this information-less reality after leaving a career with Exxon Mobil and starting a family, Kurp decided to become the resource she so desperately needed herself. She built on her own experience and sought out the inside track on playgroups, movement classes, etc. and in 2008 began compiling her findings in the website D.C. Metro Mommy.

Kurp was approached by attorney-turned-blogger/editor Amy Suski, who happened to be her neighbor at the time, about updating the website together, and DCMetroMom.com was born. According to Kurp, "It was always our goal to make it a book."

The task would be a daunting one, however. Drawing from 700 blogs and thousands of vendors, the website is comprised of 12 categories and over 4,000 entries. To



Kid Trips author Micaela Williamson, of Burke, drew from experiences with her two children Matthew, 6, and Brendan, 3.

put everything into print, "We'd have 'War and Peace' on our hands," joked Kurp.

Eventually, fellow family blogger and Burke-based writer Micaela Williamson tracked Kurp down and invited her to a Mission: Sleep event. The non-profit organization provides overnight assistance to military mothers, and Williamson—herself a mother of two—was able to use the meeting to begin a networking relationship with Kurp. Williamson's award-winning blog Super NoVa Mommy and articles for "Northern Virginia Magazine" fell right in line with Kurp and Suski's work, so it seemed natural for them to collaborate.

And so began what became, ironically, a roughly nine-month process of fleshing out select DCMetroMom listings into detailed,



Kid Trips author Claudine Kurp, of Oakton, poses with her children Gia, 7, and Ava, 14 months, and husband Jim.

comprehensive blurbs for the book. "Someone joked that it was my third child," said Kurp. "I think the other two were easier."

The trio were in constant virtual contact throughout the process, meeting in person only a few times. "We relied on the Internet age," said Williamson. "We're stay-at-home moms, running a website, a blog, a household—life still carries on."

"It's phone, it's email," echoed Kurp, "close to 20 emails a day. We blew our minutes out. There are pieces of our souls that are missing from the last year."

THE BOOK, currently available as both an ebook and paperback through Amazon and Smashwords, spends a lot of time in Fairfax
SEE GUIDE, PAGE 7

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OPINION

All's Well That Ends Well

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

Not only did the 2013 session of the General Assembly end on time last Saturday, but it also ended on a high note. Having sat through a couple of decades of failed efforts to pass meaningful legislation addressing our transportation needs, I was not optimistic that we would be successful this year. The governor's proposal to fix a billion dollar problem with a revenue-neutral solution did not give me much hope. I was both amazed and delighted when the House passed a transportation funding bill by a vote of 60 to 40 that provides new revenue to meet road and transit needs. In addition to providing new money, the bill also addresses other problems by switching the gas tax from a per gallon amount to a percentage to help it keep up with future needs. The bill also provides for additional monies to be raised in Northern Virginia and spent in our region. While the bill will not



totally resolve our transportation congestion, it does provide money for mass transit and \$300 million towards the cost of the Silver Line that will help to keep the tolls down.

There are aspects of the omnibus transportation compromise that I do not like. The charging of

a \$100 per year fee for hybrid vehicles—because their fuel efficiency reduces the gas tax collected on them—is in conflict with policies we should be adopting to encourage the use of such cars. The planned reliance on the tax on internet sales that has yet to be passed by the U.S. Congress is open to question although there is a mechanism for making up for lost funds if the tax is not enacted.

Equaling the transportation bill in importance was a compromise approved in the closing

hours of the session that opens the way for the expansion of the Medicaid program in Virginia to provide insurance for about 400,000 individuals. Governor McDonnell had opposed passage of the Affordable Care Act and had refused to go along with accepting an expanded Medicaid program until reforms were put into place. The compromise bill establishes a joint committee of legislators who will approve Virginia's entry into the program as soon as certain reforms are made. It is expected that the state could enter the program as soon as the summer. Thanks to the many persons who called and wrote to the conferees and the governor; your voice did make a difference.

As is the case with most legislation, the final results are compromises. What was reassuring about this session that I had not seen in recent years was a willingness on the part of the majority to compromise with those of us in the minority. That made for an outcome that was better for everyone. I will be writing about other outcomes of the session in future columns and will be holding public meetings to report back to you.

Creating Safer Environment, Preventing Another Tragedy

BY TIMOTHY D. HUGO
STATE DELEGATE (R-40)

After the Virginia Tech shooting in 2007, I became committed to addressing mental health issues so that many of our young people could receive the help they need in the hopes of preventing another tragedy. Working with my colleagues in 2008, the Virginia General Assembly enacted comprehensive mental health legislation including several pieces of legislation that I co-sponsored. Last year, the governor signed my legislation, HB 1075, which requires community service boards to provide hospitals with informational materials on substance and alcohol abuse services to minors.

During this year's General Assembly session, I introduced HB 1609, which strives to improve the coordination between public four-year higher education institutions, mental health facilities, and local hospitals. I introduced this legislation at the request of



Centreville residents, Angel Fund President Lu Ann McNabb and Board Member Greg Richter. Angel Fund (www.angelfundva.org) was established in honor of one of the Virginia Tech victims, Westfield High School graduate Reema Samaha. The fund seeks to create an atmosphere of acceptance

where schools and communities have a caring, supportive, and inclusive environment to help young people.

HB 1609 ensures that all four-year public colleges and universities have mechanisms in place in order to expand services available to students seeking treatment. Specifically, it allows universities and community services boards to work together so that there is notification when a student is involuntarily committed, or when a student is discharged from a facility and he consents to such notification.

During the bill's hearings,

Virginia's universities unanimously testified in support for HB 1609. As this article goes to print, my legislation, along with Senator Chap Petersen's identical legislation, is before the governor for his signature.

I believe that ensuring the mental health of our children is of the utmost importance. This year's legislation is important as it will strengthen the connection between higher education institutions and mental health facilities. It will also create a safer and more supportive environment for students and may help to prevent future tragedies.

If you would like additional information on this issue, please contact me at 703-815-1201 or delthugo@house.virginia.gov.

How I Got My Dog

BY ELLEN FOX

We had been looking for a new dog for close to 10 years—I would occasionally stop at the animal shelter or at a rescue group set-up—but I really didn't know how to pick out a dog, so I just didn't. Our previous dogs had basically just fallen into our laps by differing circumstances.

When I heard that my waiter

where I frequently eat lunch had dropped dead of a heart attack while out running with his dogs, I immediately said that I would take both dogs, sight unseen. I knew that the pets of deceased owners were frequently just taken to the shelter. However, I was told that his ex-roommate had taken both dogs, was keeping one, and that he had given the other one to a girl who would be attending college in Richmond in the fall.

A year later, at the beginning of May 2012, I heard that the girl in Richmond had loaded up the dog and all her belongings (bed, leash, dish, etc.) and taken her to the Richmond Animal Shelter at the

beginning of February, three months before. I thought, oh no, the dog wouldn't still be alive at a shelter after three months if no one had adopted her. I got back to my office as soon as possible and saw there was more than one animal shelter in Richmond. I didn't even know what she looked like, but the first one I pulled up had a dog by her name. I called the adoption coordinator, and it was her! That was a Tuesday, and I filled out the adoption application and provided references. I went to Richmond on that Saturday and we brought home our new dog, who had also fallen into our laps!

She keeps my parents, who are in their late 80's, company during the day. My mother wanted me to write this because she can't stop marveling that Luna had sat in the shelter for three months and no one had taken her since she is extremely smart, well behaved, and practically perfect in every way. I think she was waiting on us (and our thanks to the Richmond Animal Shelter and its wonderful coordinator who gave her the chance to find a new home).

—Ellen Fox has been a Burke resident since 1980, and is a Springfield native who works in McLean.

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NEWS Guide

FROM PAGE 5

County, but also has a focus on Prince William, Loudoun and other counties.

Part of their drive for geographic diversity was motivated by each author's strong connection to their readers through social media. "We have an extensive following on Facebook and Twitter," said Williamson. "We wanted to make sure we hit all the counties."

Though a business venture at one level—the trio set up their own LLC to publish and have wholesale deals set up with four local stores—Kurp maintained, "This was born of us wanting to help those parents in the community. I would love to see a well-loved copy in someone's hand in a park as he or she's leafing through, finding the next thing to do."

Micaela Williamson and Claudine Kurp will make an appearance at the A Baby Affair expo for new parents on March 17. For more information on the event, visit www.ababyaffairdc.com. For the Kid Trips website, visit www.gokidtrips.com.



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PET CONNECTION

Jonathan Fernandez plays with Kristy, who the family adopted in July of 2007.

Meet Area Families' 'Best Friends'

BY ANAGHA SRIKANTH
THE CONNECTION

When Guiding Eyes for the Blind dropped off Saki at Bridget Kennerley's house, they made sure to tell her what to expect from the young golden retriever on that first night. What they couldn't tell her, however, was how different her life would be every night after.

"It was interesting at first, especially before she was trained," said Bridget. "I would have to hold her up and sprint downstairs before she had an accident at three in the morning."

After attending foundation training classes every week for the first few months, Bridget and Saki now attend the next level of classes every other week. This past December Saki was one of the youngest dogs in the region to become a jacketed guide dog, meaning Bridget can now take Saki with her into public buildings, restaurants, church and even out on the family boat.

"We want to expose her to every possible situation a blind person could take her into," said Anne Kennerley, Bridget's mother.

The Kennerleys' ultimate goal is to have Saki get through the formal training and pass the test this August to become an official guide dog for people with visual disabilities. Anne said the reason they chose to work with Guiding Eyes for the Blind was that the non-profit organization gives the guide dogs up for free to those in need.

"It's amazing how many people are involved in this," Bridget said. "We met a referee at an ice hockey game, a couple at the ski lodge, a lady on the metro ... it's an experience you can bond over with people from all over the area."

RUDY FERNANDEZ doesn't consider himself much of a pet lover.

"Except for Kristy. She's a good dog," he said, smiling fondly in the bluetick coonhound's direction. After giving in to his children's requests for a dog, he decided to adopt one from a rescue shelter. The moment he saw Kristy, he decided she was the right one.

"She's very easy-going and doesn't require a lot of attention. She loves to stretch out in the sun and probably sleeps about 18 hours of the day," he said, laughing.

Rudy said she'll often disappear upstairs with



Owen Joyce's cat, Stevie, is now 2 years old.



Bridget Kennerley walks with her dog Saki, who now accompanies her to most places and is always by her side when she is at home. Bridget said, “She sleeps next to my bed, sits there when I’m brushing my teeth and cleaning my room ... saying goodbye to her this August is going to be horrible.”

adopted her from a friend in May 2011. All she carried with her was her name, the result of a case of mistaken gender, just as her mother's—Dave—and grandmother's—Johnny—had been. Although she was just a kitten then, she learned quickly.

"At first she didn't know how to go to the bathroom in the litterbox, but just like the expression 'copy-cat,' you only have to show her what to do and she copies it," Glover said.

Joyce said he finds Stevie's nature entertaining, both for her and himself. If they shine a

A photograph of a smiling man in a yellow hoodie and a smiling woman in a floral shirt holding a small dog. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a yellow hoodie. The woman is on the right, wearing a floral shirt and holding a small, scruffy dog. They are standing outdoors in front of a house with a brick chimney.

Don and Anne Wood pictured with Fritz outside their Burke home.

At Home In Burke

At age 7, Fritz is a Jack Russell/Chihuahua mix. After being picked up as a rescue dog at a Petsmart in Oklahoma, Anne Wood drove 700 miles to bring Fritz back home to Burke with her. “She stayed on my lap the entire time and did not move a muscle,” said Wood. “I think on some level she realizes that we saved her.” Wood had lived in the Burke area for a year at the time, and Fritz quickly adapted to the “homebody” lifestyle. “Although she can get a little hyper, she’s very well-mannered,” said Wood. “She enjoys moving my shoes around the house.” Unlike most dogs, Fritz prefers to reorganize her owner’s closet as opposed to chewing down on Wood’s leather. “It’s so funny because she won’t chew on the shoes at all,” said Wood. “She just has a habit of cleaning up after me!”

— ANNA BLORE



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CALENDAR

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THURSDAY/FEB. 28

Chocolate Lovers Festival Spirit Night. 5-8 p.m., at the Chick-fil-A, 9509 Fairfax Blvd. The Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee (CLFC) and the Chick-fil-A at Fairfax Circle are partnering to raise funds in support of the 2013 festival; when the Chocolate Lovers' Festival is mentioned during an order, 20 percent of the purchase goes to support 2013 CLFC grant recipients. www.cfarestaurant.com/fairfaxcircle.

Fifth Annual Empty Bowls. 6-8 p.m., at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. Proceeds benefit Our Daily Bread's efforts to provide food, financial assistance and financial education programs and related service to needy individuals and families. Advance: \$30; at the door: \$35; children: \$10. www.odbfairfax.org, info@odbfairfax.org or 703-273-8829.

Esther, the Musical. 7 p.m., at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5960 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. A musical by local playwrights Martin and Janice Landry based on the story of Esther, the secretly Jewish queen who becomes the Queen of Persia and must take a huge risk to save her people, who are to be annihilated by royal decree. Reservations. Tickets@BurkePresChurch.org.

FRIDAY/MARCH 1

22nd Annual Board of Supervisors Breakfast. 7-9:30 a.m. Waterford at Fair Oaks, 12025 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. Network with local business leaders, and hear from the Board of Supervisors about the issues facing businesses and citizens. \$50 for paid alumni members; \$65 for alumni non-members and general public; \$30 for current LLP, LFI, and ELI classes. 703-752-7553.

Esther, the Musical. 7 p.m., at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5960 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. A musical based on the story of Esther, the secretly Jewish queen who becomes the Queen of Persia and must take a huge risk to save her people, who are to be annihilated by royal decree. Reservations. Tickets@BurkePresChurch.org.

A Streetcar Named Desire. 8 p.m., at George Mason University's Fairfax Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This haunting tale tells the story of Blanche DuBois, a Southern belle who moves to New Orleans. \$48, \$80 or \$98. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/MARCH 2

Fairytales at the Library. 2-3:30 p.m., at the City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Enjoy fairy tales by Gary Lloyd and music with Cody & BJ. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/.

Let's All Be Green. 3:30 p.m., at the City Of Fairfax Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Cody & Bj's music show for children 2 to 10 years old; songs about keeping the Earth clean with interactive musical activities. 703-293-6227, fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/.

Esther, the Musical. 7 p.m., at Burke Presbyterian Church, 5960 Oak Leather Drive, Burke. A musical based on the story of Esther, the secretly Jewish queen who becomes the Queen of Persia and must take a huge risk to save her people, who are to be annihilated by royal decree. Reservations. Tickets@BurkePresChurch.org.



Renee Colligan, a senior at Robinson, works on her makeup for a dress rehearsal for an upcoming production of Esther at Burke Presbyterian Church while Catherine Ariaie, a sophomore at West Springfield, also works on her make-up behind her. Admission to the show is free, but all seats must be reserved by e-mail to Tickets@BurkePresChurch.org.



Sarah Miller, a sophomore at Robinson, portrays the role of the Queen of Persia in the Burke Presbyterian Church's upcoming production of Esther.

PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Esther at Burke Presbyterian

Amy Grupenhagen, a sophomore at Robinson, Katie Frost, a freshman at West Springfield, and Michelle Ross, a sophomore at Lake Braddock, practice their roles for an upcoming production of Esther at Burke Presbyterian Church. The musical will be performed at the church on Feb. 28 and March 1 & 2 at 7 p.m., and March 3 at 3 p.m.



Katy Summerlin, on the right, helps Garret Niles, an eighth grader at Lake Braddock, with his make-up before the beginning of a dress rehearsal for an upcoming production of Esther at the Burke Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening.



Gregg Diggs, technical director, finishes painting the set of Esther before the production's first dress rehearsal at Burke Presbyterian Church on Sunday evening.

SUNDAY/MARCH 3

Triple Negative Breast Cancer Day. 8:30 a.m.-noon, at Starbucks, 12599 Fairlakes Circle, Fairfax. A silent auction and 50/50 raffle for the benefit of the Triple Negative Breast Foundation, to increase cancer awareness of untreatable triple negative breast cancer and research. 703-203-8690 or berman_wendy@hotmail.com.

A Magical Journey to the Jungle. 2- 3:30 p.m., at City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St., Fairfax. Meet animals from the rainforest followed by a magic show. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/branches/fx/.

A Streetcar Named Desire. 2 p.m., at George Mason University's Fairfax Campus, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. This haunting tale tells the story of Blanche DuBois, a Southern belle who moves to New Orleans. \$48, \$80 or \$98. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

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Olam Tikvah's Rock the Preschool. 4-7 p.m., at Olam Tikvah Social Hall, 3800 Glenbrook Road, Fairfax. Children's band Rocknoceros, DJ Tova Dance Party, crafts, a magic show, face painting, kosher meal deals and raffle make it a party; bring cash or check for silent auction. \$5 per adult; \$8 per child (\$10 after Feb. 24); \$30 family cap. www.olamtikvahpreschool.org.

Fine Arts Performance. 6 p.m., at the Jubilee Christian Center Church, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. The Youth Ministry of Jubilee Christian Center presents their fine arts performance; vocal and instrumental music, drama, skits and sermonettes compose the show. 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org.

Party with a Purpose. 6-8 p.m. at Grevey's Restaurant, 8130 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church. Learn about Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation volunteer opportunities for 10 weekly adoption events, fostering, transport or taking care of cats and kittens in adoption centers; door prizes and refreshments. lisamarieresue@hotmail.com or lostdogbarb@gmail.com.

FRIDAY/MARCH 8

Puccini's Il tabarro and Suor Angelica. 7:30 p.m., at Providence Presbyterian Church, 9109 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Riverbend Opera's semi-staged concert production will feature a cast of over 40 singers. General: \$25; Students: \$15. RiverbendOpera.com.

Riout Ensemble. 8 p.m., at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The dance company of former French track and field star Pascal Riout brings signature style to the area. \$23, \$38 and \$46. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/MARCH 9

Children's Book Sale. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at Fairfax City Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Thousands of gently-read books and nonbook media priced between \$.25 and \$2, organized into categories including picture books, early reading, middle reading, and chapter books. 703-293-2132 or friendsoffairfaxcitylibrary@gmail.com.

PEOPLE & PETS

Lisa Borges' dog Tuxedo, of Burke, (left) plays "tug the ball" with his friend Kinta, a Labradoodle.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LISA BORGES

Christian Kosko, 19-year-old college student of Burke, with his puppy Cooper, a Siberian husky. Kosko purchased Cooper, his first puppy, in September using money he earned coaching soccer camps over the summer. The happy pair are pictured on Redskin Sunday in November, the day after Kosko brought Cooper home from the breeder as an 8-week-old, 12 lb. puppy.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTIAN KOSKO

Zeppelin, of Burke, an 8-year-old border collie/Pomeranian mixed rescue, is, according to pet parent Kathy McEvoy, "the best dog ever, he thinks he is one of the kids and actually he is." She says, "This picture was taken on Christmas Day, he needed a well-deserved nap after opening everybody's gifts—yes, he loves to unwrap gifts."



PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY MCEVOY

The harder I practice, the luckier I get.

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Woodson Wins Region Title With Epic Comeback

Cavaliers erase 19-point fourth-quarter deficit against Wakefield.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Woodson boys' basketball coach Doug Craig, wearing a white shirt and a red, white and blue tie, climbed a ladder placed underneath one of the goals at Robinson Secondary School.

His black hair soaked with sweat, Craig ascended until he reached the net and made the final celebratory snip, separating twine from iron. With the net in his grasp, Craig pumped his fist in the air before descending to the court and placing the net around the neck of senior Peter Murray.

"That was fantastic," Murray said.

After three quarters of Saturday's Northern Region championship game were in the books, the likelihood of a Woodson postgame celebration appeared slim as the Cavaliers trailed Wakefield by 19 points. Woodson's shots weren't falling and the Cavaliers had been limited to a combined 16 points in the second and third quarters. With a state tournament berth already secured, Woodson wasn't faced with a win-or-go-home scenario. But as it turned out, the Cavaliers didn't need the fear of their season ending to pull off a miraculous comeback.

Woodson defeated Wakefield 75-70 in overtime during the Northern Region tournament final on Feb. 23 at Robinson. Woodson secured its first outright region championship in the school's 50-year history and provided those in attendance with a memorable performance.

THE CAVALIERS were down by as many as 22 points in the second half and trailed 52-33 entering the fourth quarter. Over the next 12 minutes, Woodson outscored Wakefield 42-18, including 26-7 in the fourth quarter to force overtime.

"To be honest, I think we were a bit worried, but we knew we could do it," Woodson senior Alex Boock said about the team's mindset entering the final quarter. "We knew it would be tough, but we knew we could do it."

Woodson opened the fourth quarter on an 11-0 run, cutting the Wakefield lead to eight on a Tommy Stepka bucket with 6:08 remaining. Murray's 3-pointer with 3:49 left pulled the Cavaliers within five and Boock's 3-ball 40 seconds later cut the Warriors' lead to 55-52. Each was part of a 22-3 run.

Murray made another 3-pointer with 1:20 remaining, tying the score at 59-all. Neither team would score during the remainder of regulation, sending the game to overtime.

"We just told them ... to just keep playing because we knew we could do it," Craig said. "We knew we could score a lot of points, we knew we could get hot and make some shots. We just went cold for about two quarters — we just couldn't throw it in the ocean. ...

"There's no magic potion or anything. We just kept playing hard."

Wakefield struck first in overtime on a bucket by



Woodson senior Tommy Stepka shoots while Wakefield's Ermias Nega defends during the Northern Region tournament final on Feb. 23 at Robinson Secondary School.

senior Khory Moore, but Woodson responded with a 3-pointer by senior guard Damian Bell, giving the Cavaliers a 62-61 advantage — their first lead since the 5:33 mark of the second quarter.

"I think they got the first basket (of overtime) and [Bell's 3-pointer] was the dagger," Murray said. "At that point, once we took the lead ... I think Wakefield just kind of crumpled up and backed down."

A free throw by Moore tied the score at 62-all, but Woodson's Stepka answered with a 3-pointer with 2:10 remaining and the Cavaliers led for the remainder of the contest.

"The bottom line is," Boock said, "we started playing the right way at the right time."

Murray and Boock each finished with 19 points for Woodson. Stepka had 12 points, and Eric Bowles had 11 and Bell each had 11.

Murray was named tournament MVP. Stepka and Boock made the all-tournament team.

Moore scored 37 points in defeat for Wakefield. Dominique Tham scored 12 points and grabbed 10 rebounds. Each was named to the all-tournament team.

Despite Wakefield leading by 19 entering the fourth quarter, it was Woodson leaving with the "big prize." The Cavaliers lost to Lake Braddock in the Patriot District tournament semifinals, but were able to rebound with Northern Region tournament victories against Yorktown, Herndon, South County and Wakefield.

"Woodson has had a great tradition — 19 district titles in [50 seasons]," Craig said. "There's been something missing there in that region banner [but] we finally got it now."

Wakefield will travel to Richmond to face Northwest Region champion Mountain View in the VHSL AAA state quarterfinals at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 28, at VCU's Siegel Center.

WOODSON WILL FACE Northwest Region runner-up Battlefield at 8:30 p.m. on Friday, March 1, at Robinson.

Craig said he enjoyed cutting down the net after winning a region championship. Now the Cavaliers have a shot at a state title.

"That felt pretty good," Craig said. "Hopefully we can do that again in a couple weeks."



Robinson's Matt Fall, left, dribbles against Wakefield's Khory Moore in the Northern Region semifinals on Feb. 22.

Robinson Reaches Region Final Four

Robinson boys' basketball coach Brian Nelson wasn't pleased with the Rams' approach to their Northern Region tournament semifinal matchup with Wakefield on Feb. 22 at Robinson Secondary School. But despite a season-ending loss to the Warriors, Nelson was happy Robinson reached the region final four one year after a first-round exit.

Wakefield defeated Robinson 68-58 to advance to the region final and earn a state berth. The Rams trailed 13-10 early in the second quarter before the Warriors took control with a 19-2 run. Wakefield led by double digits the entire second half and by as many as 20 points.

Nelson gave the Warriors credit, but said the Rams helped beat themselves.

"Wakefield is a great team, but our challenge was entirely mental tonight," Nelson said. "We didn't react to the big stage the way we needed to start that game. ... We beat ourselves in the first half and it was mental. We went to the basket soft, we didn't rebound, we let them do what they wanted on offense without a whole lot of resistance from us and we re-

ally let them get comfortable.

"That was one thing that we talked about was if we allow them to get in their comfort zone we're in trouble, and they got there really quick."

Robinson junior guard Matt Fall, who was named to the all-tournament team, led the Rams with 15 points. Senior Keegan Ruddy finished with 13 points, including a trio of 3-pointers, junior Avyn Johnson had 10 points and junior Joe Bynum had eight.

Robinson ended the season with a 19-9 record and finished Concorde District runner-up to Herndon.

"I think it's an outstanding year," Nelson said. "One thing that we talk about since I've been here is every

team has outdone the previous year. Last year, we won the district, [but we] got knocked out of regionals. This year, didn't win the district, but we made the region final four. I just finished telling our returning guys a new bar has been set and your goal is to out-do what we just did this year and most importantly to learn from this experience so the next time we're back on the big stage, we know what it's like."

— JON ROETMAN

"I think it's an outstanding year."

— Robinson coach Brian Nelson

HOME SALES

In January 2013, 21 Burke homes sold between \$620,000-\$189,000.

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6323 FALLING BROOK DR	5	3	1	BURKE	\$580,000	Detached	0.34	22015
9606 GLENARM CT	4	3	0	BURKE	\$540,000	Detached	0.27	22015
6205 WINNEPEG DR	4	2	1	BURKE	\$500,000	Detached	0.18	22015
6621 FAIRWEATHER CT	4	3	0	BURKE	\$494,600	Detached	0.31	22015
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6114 WICKLOW DR	4	3	0	BURKE	\$482,000	Detached	0.21	22015
10269 QUIET POND TER	3	2	2	BURKE	\$365,000	Townhouse	0.03	22015
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10423 TODMAN LANDING CT	3	2	1	BURKE	\$342,000	Townhouse	0.05	22015
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The Fairfax County Police Department is looking for vehicles in working condition that people no longer want or need and would be willing to donate. They could help their public safety community and receive a tax deduction at the same time.

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pursuit driving techniques. Later, when the car is no longer in driving condition, it will be cut up (for training on how to cut into crashed cars), blown up (providing training for Explosive Ordinance officers) or shot (used as a prop in an active-shooter scenario). Nothing will go to waste and the valuable contribution will serve many constructive purposes. For more information on how to donate vehicles or to ask questions, contact MPO Tom Beckman at the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course, 703-818-1924.

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Fairfax Station/South Run \$839,950
Multiple Offers Received

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8215 Cub Den Ct.....\$699,999.....Sun 1-3.....Lisa Clayborne...Long & Foster..703-502-8145

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8610 Running Fox Ct.....\$899,999.....Sun 1-4.....Billy Thompson..Samson Props..703 409-0340
11681 Yates Ford Rd.....\$859,000.....Sat 1-4.....Judyanne Pfarnier..Samson Props..703-989-8767

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newspaper legal notices.
Objections should be regis-
tered at www.abc.virginia.gov
or 800-552-3200.

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ABC LICENSE
Ming Ou Yang trading as Bei-
jing Tokyo Asian Bistro, 9544
Old Keene Mill Rd, Burke, VA
22015. The above establish-
ment is applying to the VIR-
GINIA DEPARTMENT OF AL-
COHOLIC BEVERAGE CON-
TROL (ABC) for a Wine and
Beer on Premises license to
sell or manufacture alcoholic
beverages. Ming ou Yang,
president.
NOTE: Objections to the iss-
uance of this license must be
submitted to ABC no later than
30 days from the publishing
date of the first of two required
newspaper legal notices. Ob-
jections should be registered
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