

Empty Bowls Event Raises \$18,000

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Artist Susan Fox Hirschmann and student Stephen Shaffran pose with bowls they created and donated to this year's Empty Bowls benefit event.

Putting a Face On Homelessness

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NEWS

From left, Rev. Kären Rasmussen, a director on Our Daily Bread's all-volunteer Board of Directors and the social justice minister at Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax (UUCF); Lisa Whetzel; Carole Tuchrello, ODB financial literacy program assistant; and Carla Thompson, ODB project BRIDGE

PHOTOS BY
TIM PETERSON/
THE CONNECTION



Approximately 300 people filled the main hall of the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center in Fairfax.

Empty Bowls Event Raises \$18,000

Our Daily Bread's signature fundraiser benefits Fairfax County residents living below the poverty line.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

As the Fairfax Saxophone Quartet played dulcet American swing standards to an audience of 300, the atmosphere inside the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center last Thursday night struck a balance between light-hearted and serious.

While outwardly entertaining, with balloon animals, face-painting, live music and close to 400 colorful handmade bowls available to take home, the fifth annual Empty Bowls fundraiser highlighted a humbling reality: the large population of working poor in the Fairfax County area.

The benefit is the "signature fundraiser" of the evening's host organization Our Daily Bread, according to executive director Lisa Whetzel. "It's a great community event," she said—and a significant one, that drew the presence of Fairfax Mayor R. Scott Silverthorne and Delegate David Bulova (D-37), among others. "First, it's a lot of fun," Bulova said. "Second, I'm amazed how many people are here—feeling good lending a helping hand."

WITH THE HELP of nearly 1,000 volunteers, the non-profit outfit offers a variety of assistance to less fortunate or disadvantaged community members. The annual income of a standard client household is below the poverty line and around \$18k per year, either from a single parent or combined wages. Support from Our Daily Bread is meant as a safety net for struggling families faced with a job loss, accident or other financial crisis, and comes in the form of food, financial education and school supplies.

Loosely based on a national model, this Empty Bowls ("So that they may be filled..."—the slogan reads) featured handcrafted pottery donated from local professional artists as well as amateurs. Custom, hand-carved works from renowned Annandale-

based artist Susan Fox Hirschmann were available alongside submissions from a handful of area high schools, sports teams and paint-your-own pottery craft institutions such as Clay Café Studios in Chantilly. Admission to the event (\$30 for adults in advance and \$35 at the door) included a bowl to take home as well as a meal.

In contrast to the beautiful and well-appointed host convention hall, a simple meal of soup and bread, all donated by local restaurants, served as a reminder of the evening's objective. With choices like Butter-nut Squash Apple (from Choices by Shawn) and Minestrone Genovese (from Piero's Corner in Fairfax), and bread from Great Harvest Bread Company, selections were hardly meager, but the effect wasn't lost on anyone.

"We're here to talk about the fact that there are poor and homeless right here in Fairfax," said Hirschmann. The full time teacher and studio artist has donated to Empty Bowls since its inception, and inspires her students to do the same. "It's more than learning clay," she said, "it's learning about giving. Every year I encourage my students to give up at least one bowl."

While Hirschmann herself brought 10 "wheel-thrown" pieces this year, her pupil Stephen Shaffran donated seven of his own creations. The seventh grade student at Robert Frost Middle School said he "likes to get his hands dirty" on the potter's wheel. "My only criteria for these were everything must be a different shape, size and color. I'm quite happy to be here, donating these bowls."

TOGETHER WITH ADMISSIONS, a silent auction of additional artworks helped bring in a sum of \$18,000 in donations for Our Daily Bread. According to the group's communications director Heather Webb, these funds will go directly to providing emergency food and financial assistance for needy families all over Fairfax County.

For reference, in 2012 Our Daily Bread offered food assistance to 287 households, financial aid to 228 households, and holiday assistance to 3,161 households.

"It's about connecting local people," said Hirschmann. "This has grown from a very small event to something much larger. I'm thrilled. We develop those connections and [the aid] grows when we don't remain silent."



Delegate David Bulova and his son Grayson helped themselves to some local art in various mediums. "I can't believe someone didn't already grab [my bowl]," Bulova said. "It has three different colors—I plan to bring it down to put on my House of Delegates coffee table."



George Mason senior Allison Stockwell (left) wears a colorful crown from balloon artist Martha Ades (right) of Fairfax. Stockwell is part of Mason's Recreation and Leisure program that was assisting with cleanup after the event.



PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION



Lesha Debose and Tchonda Bishop call out to those living in a homeless encampment in the Lorton area while volunteering their time to help identify and register the chronically homeless during Registry Week.

Encampments like this were found scattered around the Lorton area, usually near major shopping areas, but sometimes in isolated fields. Not all encampments had tents for people to sleep; volunteers often found old couches and sleeping bags, or temporary shelters made of cardboard, plastic and scrap pieces of wood.

Putting a Face on Homelessness

462 homeless interviewed during Registry Week, an intense effort to document Fairfax County's chronic homeless.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Under a bright moon on a chilly Monday morning, a team of volunteers and homeless advocates roamed the woods near Reston Town Center to put a name and a face to those in Fairfax County considered “chronically homeless.”

One of the teams, which included Supervisor Cathy Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill), stumbled across wood scraps, broken branches and pieces of plastic that served as the home for Thomas, a 40-year-old unemployed carpenter from Florida who had been living under a cluster of trees since Christmas Eve.

Wearing several layers of clothing, including a dark blue hoodie for warmth and camouflage, Thomas apologized for his living conditions.

“I’m really sorry you all had to come out like this. Be careful of the branches,” he told volunteers.

Thomas said a rough divorce and getting laid off from his job contributed to his homelessness. He said the temperature, nearing 40 degrees by 5 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 25, wasn’t “too bad for sleeping. I’ve slept in worse.”

“My biggest concern is getting robbed or beaten. That’s why I try to protect myself with this little fortress of branches and blankets,” he said.

Thomas was just one of 462 chronically homeless individuals found in the woods, in cars, and in tents last week.

Armed with flashlights, food, gift cards and assorted items of warm clothing, more than 200 volunteers and homeless advocates fanned out across Fairfax County for



Volunteers, elected officials and representatives from area organizations attend a community debrief at the Jubilee Christian Center on Monday morning. The debrief was held to reveal the results of a countywide survey on homelessness held last week.

three days—Monday, Feb. 25, through Wednesday, Feb. 27—roaming the woods and other homeless “hot spots” to count, photograph and get names and histories for the county’s chronically homeless.

THE UNPRECEDENTED EFFORT to create a name and photographic “registry” is a component of the 100,000 Homes Campaign, a nationwide initiative to help nonprofits and local governments prioritize and allocate housing and support resources for the chronically homeless, defined as those living consistently without a home for more than a year.

The county’s goal is to get half of them in housing within three years.

“I was struck by the differences in talk-

ing with someone in their ‘home’—in their space—versus when we are in shelter and other settings where we must set the rules,” said Kerrie Wilson, CEO of Reston Interfaith. “There was a sense of pride from those homeless interviewed when they showed volunteers their campsites.”

“After giving my gloves to a man who immediately placed them on his hands for warmth, I realized that this is home and his struggle every day,” said Dean Klein, director of the Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (OPEH).

Cedric Smith, 50, who has been homeless for five years, was found living in a tent behind a Herndon shopping center. Supervisor Cathy Hudgins asked him how he became homeless and his goals for the future.

Key findings from Registry Week

Volunteers and homeless advocates gathered the following information from the 462 individuals they interviewed last week. The information was released during a community debrief at Jubilee Christian Center on Monday, March 4.

- ❖ Nearly a quarter were between 18-34 years old
- ❖ 10 percent were veterans
- ❖ Nearly half were employed
- ❖ The largest number of chronically homeless (151) were found in the Route 1 corridor
- ❖ More than three-quarters of the chronically homeless were male
- ❖ “Unable to pay rent/utilities” and “job loss” were the most often cited reasons for homelessness
- ❖ 40 percent had a physical disability

“Five years from now, I hope to be in my own apartment,” he said. He told Hudgins and other volunteers that he also misses his two children, who live in southern Virginia.

“I want to have a place where they can visit. They’re in my heart every day. ... They’re my primary concern and they keep me going every day,” he said.

HUDGINS, who has worked extensively with Fairfax County’s nonprofits to help find affordable housing for the homeless, said she hoped the 100K homes campaign opens doors and eyes to the plight of homeless individuals.

“We have to step up to this question. ... Are we going to walk away from this tonight and say, ‘That’s just the way people live?’ Well, it’s not the way people should live,” Hudgins said.

“The theme for me this week was persistence,” said Amanda Andere, executive director of FACETS. “Most importantly the persistence of the men and women we met living in their cars or on the street. In the worst conditions they continued to smile and seemed hopeful this caring community would help find them a home. Some of them were gone to work before we got there or were on their way back to the woods from an overnight shift.”

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Dreaming in a Foreign Language

A foreign exchange student reflects on experiences gained in area.

To the Editor:
The best experience in my life. That's how I would describe living in a foreign country while being a student. This statement comes from my personal experience but I can guarantee you that there are many reasons why I think everybody should try it.

The first thing that I noticed while being away from home was the independence and autonomy that you gain. A very trivial example is that I personally started doing my laundry or organizing my time better. Don't you think autonomy is among the most important values that a teenager should develop? Well they will, because you cannot rely on any other person except yourself when you first start living in a place that for you is foreign. Self-confidence comes along and you will feel proud of yourself for having taken such an important decision.

"[Being an exchange student] stresses the need to deal with dramatic changes and to acquire a level of competency not often emphasized in undergraduate education, such as communicating skills and thinking competencies, including critical, creative, comparative, metathinking, and self-regulating competencies" ("Exchanges, Cultural and Scientific"). If

there is something I could really wish for my future sons or daughters is that they will be self-sufficient and autonomous enough to gain a place in this world.

Another main reason for which I'm writing today is probably more obvious but absolutely not less important. Only by living completely immersed in a culture you can really understand the pure essence of it, you can understand of what is made and why is shaped in a certain way, you can understand the strengths and the weaknesses and, most important, you can understand better your own culture through comparison. I think that these days we really need to improve the consciousness of our cultural background to realize our role in the community of the world. There is no better way to educate your children so that they will be open to accept what is different and far from their perception and will be ready when they grow and will forge the future of our world. "The true beauties in life are the differences that capture the eye. The reflection of culture in a person's language is what makes that person unique" ("Language and culture"). So differences make us unique and being an exchange student allows you to feel those differences and live them completely.

Talking about interaction with the rest of the world I cannot forget to mention the reason

why most of the people think students travel abroad: learning the language. This is probably the easiest part of the whole experience because learning to speak comes along with your normal life. Without realizing it you will start dreaming in the foreign language after one month (as it happened to me). However this learning method is nothing like what you have seen in school so far and works much better and faster. "Students enrolled in immersion programs work toward full proficiency in the second language and usually reach a higher level of language competence" ("Learning and Teaching Foreign Languages").

So again I ask you is there something better than learning without studying? It is my opinion that never before in history have language skills played such an important role in determining your future occupation.

If we add all these reasons together what we obtain is the perfect receipt to excel in the global community, to achieve a mature understanding of your personal beliefs and to live the best experience in your life.

Lorenzo Serafini
Alexandria/Springfield

The writer is an international student at Hayfield Secondary School for the fall 2012 semester, during which he lived in the home of Bob and Mary Magnini in Alexandria where he was placed by the World Heritage International Exchange Student Program. For more information call 703-507-9224.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unprecedented Interference With the Election Process

To the Editor:

I am extremely upset by the recent interference of the Fairfax County Democratic Committee in the election process in Fairfax County. The term of one of the Republicans on the Electoral Board is expiring. By law, and by historical precedence, the chairman of the Fairfax County Republican Committee has the prerogative of requesting the Circuit Court to fill this position with a selection of his choice. The chairman chose to request the re-appointment of Mr. Hans von Spakovsky, the incumbent, who is a nationally recognized expert on election law and who has been a valuable asset to the Electoral Board in protecting the integrity of elections in Fairfax County. Unfortunately, the Fairfax County Democratic Committee interfered with this process by writing a letter to the court alleging various claims against Mr. von

Spakovsky which have no basis in fact. As an apparent result of this unprecedented interference by the Democrats, the Republican choice for a Republican seat on the Electoral Board was denied by the court and an alternate Republican selected. This will be a great loss to the voters of Fairfax County. Mr. von Spakovsky's vast knowledge of election laws and his wise counsel in understanding the intent of the law as written by the General Assembly will be sorely missed. All Democrats who value their vote and the integrity of the election process should be ashamed of this unprecedented and unworthy action by the Fairfax County Democratic Committee.

Dr. Keith G. Damon
Fairfax

Out of Mainstream

To the Editor:

According to a Feb. 25 article in "Politico," two prominent Republican CEOs lambasted GOP gubernatorial candidate Ken Cuccinelli at the Feb. 22 meeting of the Re-

publican Governors Association, saying his hard core socially conservative policies will make Virginia less attractive for business, and he is out of the Virginia mainstream.

It is good to finally see leading members of the Republican Party speaking up for the betterment of our state.

To date, Mr. Cuccinelli has not exhibited the same kind of moderation as his would-be predecessor Gov. McDonnell. As case in point, he has been quite vocal in his disdain for the transportation bill recently passed under the stewardship of McDonnell, who of course is a Republican as well. The bill is primarily based on new taxes and cuts, and was passed on a bipartisan basis. As alluded to in the

article, this seems to be the breaking point amongst even establishment Republicans, such as these CEOs.

Instead of focusing on tangible issues such as roads, education and transportation, he has focused his attention on socially partisan issues such as limiting women's contraceptive rights. Perhaps now that leading figures of Cuccinelli's own party have reprimanded him for deterring new business from coming to Virginia due to his socially extremist witch hunts, the voters of this commonwealth will move on to the business of determining a serious leader with real solutions.

RJ Narang
Vienna

Write

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Letters must be signed. Include home address and home and business numbers. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Send to:

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Two Historic Measures Mark Assembly Session

Q&A with Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41).

Editor's Note: This is part of an occasional Q&A series with your state, local and national representatives. The Connection interviewed Del. Eileen Filler-Corn about her legislative victories and losses during the 2013 General Assembly "short" session.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Transportation funding was one of the big stories to come out of Richmond during the 45-day "short session," but it wasn't the only one.

Unlike Congressional gridlock, where lobbyists, special-interest groups and political aspirations converge to slow down legislation, the pace in Virginia's capitol is fast and furious. Legislation gets passed in the blink of an eye. It's a pace Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn, the second-term Democrat representing nearly 90,000 residents in Burke, Fairfax and West Springfield, knows well.

Before she became one of the few women serving in the Virginia House, she learned to navigate the political process in Richmond during her tenure as deputy director of the Virginia Liaison Office in Washington for Governor Mark Warner, as well as a senior advisor to Governor Tim Kaine. She



Del. Filler-Corn met with new George Mason President Angel Cabrera in Richmond to discuss his vision for the future of George Mason University.

also chaired the National Governors' Association Executive Committee Staff Advisory Council during Governor Warner's term. At the beginning of the 2013 General Assembly, she introduced 13 bills for consideration. Her legislative priorities included

education, transportation and public safety. She also introduced legislation focused around cutting college students' expenses, expanding voting hours, protecting children and protecting funding for Virginia Railway Express.

About Del. Filler-Corn

For more than 24 years, Eileen and her husband Bob have lived in Fairfax County along with their children, Jeremy, 18, and Alana, 16. Delegate Filler-Corn serves on the Finance Committee, Transportation Committee and the Militia, Police and Public Safety Committee. In addition, she was appointed to the Joint Commission on Transportation Accountability, and serves as co-chair and founding member of the bipartisan General Assembly Arts Caucus.

She is currently the director of government relations for Albers & Company, where she serves as liaison to the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments, the Southern Governors' Association, the Senate Presidents' Forum, State Legislative Leadership Foundation and the National Association of State Chief Information Officers.

Del. Filler-Corn's website is www.eileenfillercorn.com. Her e-mail address is delefiller-corn@house.virginia.gov. She is active on Facebook, with updates for the community. You can "like" her at Eileen Filler-Corn for delegate to receive these updates. She also encourages citizens to contact her with ideas for legislation that would improve the community.

Q: What drove your legislative agenda this session?

A: With a short session, I decided to introduce important legislative proposals that would make a difference for the 41st District and across the commonwealth. It is always my priority to reflect the views of

SEE Q&A, PAGE 13

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CALENDAR

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

FRIDAY/MARCH 8

Brendan's Voyage. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band.

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, who came to the U.S. in 1981 on a modern dance fellowship, brings his ensemble's signature style and much-lauded choreography 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.

AAUW 2013 Spring Fling. 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Country Club of Fairfax, 5110 Ox Road, Fairfax. Internationally

St. Patrick's Spirit Surrounds Celtic Concert

Spirited Cape Breton fiddler Natalie MacMaster plays a tribute to Celtic culture in honor of St. Patrick's day. The acclaimed folk artist step dances and plays on Sunday, March 17, at 7 p.m. at GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Tickets for youth grades 12 and under are half-price when accompanied by an adult. \$24, \$40, \$48. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

renowned foreign affairs specialist Michael Colopy speaks on "How China Looks at the U.S." at the AAUW luncheon with a silent auction. RSVP by March 4. \$38. 703-256-6246.

Discover Turkey. 6:30-8:30 p.m., at the American Turkish Friendship Association, 3949 University Drive, Fairfax. Mehmet Secilmis of Discover Turkey Travel gives a presentation on destinations in Turkey; light food and raffles included. RSVP. 703-267-5751 or rsvp@atfa.us.

Brendan's Voyage. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band.

Beethoven Orchestra Bonn. 8 p.m., at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor and Music Director Stefan Blunier leads a 106-member orchestra in an all-Beethoven program featuring renowned French-Canadian piano soloist Louis Lortie. \$30, \$52, \$60; students in grades 12 and lower receive half price tickets when accompanied by an adult. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.



Natalie MacMaster, acclaimed fiddler of Cape Breton.

SUNDAY/MARCH 10

Irish Social Dance. 3-6 p.m., at Blenheim Civil War Interpretive Center, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. The Shepherd's Pie Ceili Band plays live music for a partner-rotating

dance featuring Irish polkas, reels and mazurkas; beginners welcome, instruction provided. \$8 for members; \$10 general; children under 12 are free. 703-273-6869, 703-273-6097, joanna.ormesher@fairfax.va.gov or ceiliset@yahoo.com.



PHOTO BY SOFIA NEGRON

"Celestial Tides," one of Riout dance ensemble's modern dance pieces.

Riout Enchants in Area Debut

Riout (pronunciation: "ree-you"), the dance company of former French track and field star Pascal Riout, who came to the U.S. in 1981 on a modern dance fellowship from the French Ministry of Culture, brings his ensemble's signature style and much-lauded choreography to the area for the first time. The athlete-gone-dancer is famed for performing opposite Baryshnikov and has been compared to Balanchine. \$23, \$38 and \$46. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu. The performance is at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax, on Friday, March 8 at 8 p.m.

FRIDAY/MARCH 15

Children's Book Sale. 10 a.m.-5 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.

The Flying Cows of Ventry and

Conor Malone. 7:30-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from area bands: The Flying Cows of Ventry play in the restaurant and Conor Malone plays in the cellar. www.theauldshebeenva.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Children's Book Sale. 10 a.m.-4 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.

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra:

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

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra. 8 p.m., at George Mason University's Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Maestro Christopher Zimmerman leads the orchestra on a salute to Johann and Richard Strauss; pre-concert lecture begins at 7 p.m., presented by musicologist Rachel Franklin. \$25-\$55 for adults; \$5 for students ages 6-18. www.fairfaxsymphony.org.

SUNDAY/MARCH 17

St. Patrick's Day Celebration. Noon-2:30 p.m., 5-9:30 p.m. at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from area bands; The Flying Cows of Ventry play all day in the restaurant, Irish Session Players play in the cellar in the afternoon and Conor Malone plays in the evening. www.theauldshebeenva.com.

Children's Book Sale. 1-3 p.m., at Fairfax City Regional Library, 10360 North Street, Fairfax. Thousands of gently-read books and nonbook media

on sale for \$5 for as many books as fit into a bag; books are organized into categories including picture books, early reading, middle reading, and chapter books. 703-293-2132 or friendsoffairfaxcitylibrary@gmail.com.

Natalie MacMaster Concert. 7 p.m., at GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The Cape Breton fiddler showcases Celtic culture and St. Patrick's ay in a family-friendly dynamic folk performance; tickets for youth grades 12 and under are half-price when accompanied by an adult. \$24, \$40, \$48. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

FRIDAY/MARCH 22

Brendan Sheridan and Brendan Mulvihill. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band. www.theauldshebeenva.com.

Easter Musical Drama, "Christ Alone." 8 p.m., at The Jubilee Christian Center Music Department, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. Jubilee Christian Center will present the musical drama "Christ Alone." 703-383-1170 or www.jccag.org.

2013 Mason Dance Company Gala Concert. 8 p.m., at GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A showcase of five works of contemporary choreography performed by Mason dancers and the premiere of Topos, choreographed by William Smith III, School of Dance alumnus now a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group. \$10 for youth ages 10-plus; \$20 for adults; \$12 for students, faculty and staff. 888-945-2468 or www.cfa.gmu.edu.

SATURDAY/MARCH 23

Build Your Own Rain Barrel

Workshop. 10 a.m.-noon, at Acres Community Center, 4401 Sideburn Road. A popular workshop from the Northern Virginia Rain Barrel Program Partners; build a rain barrel to take home and learn maintenance and care. \$55. http://arlingtonenvironment.org/be-green/live-green/barrel/.

Brendan Sheridan and Brendan Mulvihill. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band.

2013 Mason Dance Company Gala Concert. 8 p.m., at GMU Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. A showcase of five works of contemporary choreography performed by Mason dancers and the premiere of Topos, choreographed by William Smith III, School of Dance alumnus now a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group. \$10 for youth ages 10-plus; \$20 for adults; \$12 for students, faculty and staff. 888-945-2468 or www.cfa.gmu.edu.

SUNDAY/MARCH 24

Benefit Concert with the Ahn Trio. 3 p.m., at George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. The internationally acclaimed trio joins the American Youth Philharmonic Orchestra and Music Director Daniel Spalding to perform various chamber works to benefit the youth orchestra. \$50. cfa.gmu.edu.

FRIDAY/MARCH 29

Celtic Union. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band. www.theauldshebeenva.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 30

Celtic Union. 7-9:30 p.m., at The Auld Shebeen, 3971 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax. Live Irish music from an area band. www.theauldshebeenva.com.

SUNDAY/MARCH 31

Jubilee Christian Center of Fairfax Easter Eggstravaganza Egg Roll. 1-3 p.m., at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Pkwy., Fairfax. The event activities are free, and include moon bounces, games, face painting, egg roll, music, and door prizes; featuring a performance by the Children of Light Dancers; up to age 11. 703-383-1170, or www.jccag.org.

SATURDAY/APRIL 27

Model Classic 2013. 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. The Northern Virginia Modelers Chapter of the International Plastic Modelers Society holds their annual exhibit of scale models and additional exhibits with raffle prizes, events for children, lectured from historians and concessions. www.novaipms.org.

ONGOING

Join Jewish War Veterans of the USA. The Burke Post, E. 100 at 5712 Walnut Wood, Burke, invites Jewish veterans and service members to join. Call David B. Meyers at 703-209-5925 for information.

NVSC Dance. 6:30-10:30 p.m., at the Elks Lodge, 8421 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax. Beginner lessons at 7:30 p.m. and a buffet dinner preceding from 6:45-8 p.m.; cash bar available. No partners needed. \$4; \$5 additional for buffet dinner. www.nvshag.org.

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FAITH NOTES

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

Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10125 Lakehaven Court, Burke, holds an Easter season Bible study in the Free Faith tradition Wednesdays from 7:30-9:30 p.m. on March 13, 20 and 27. The purpose of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of American culture's single most cherished book with a focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus and to serve as a class for those who want to know more about Unitarian Universalism and how the religion looks at the Bible. 703-503-4579 or administrator@accotinkuuc.org.

Knollwood Community Church Fellowship Center, 10000 Coffey Woods Road, Burke, holds a 12-week Stretch Your Faith-themed yoga class series from Tuesday, Feb. 19, to Saturday, May 16, on both Tuesday evenings from 6:15-7:30 p.m. and Thursday afternoons from 1:30-2:45 p.m. All levels are welcome; bring a yoga mat, towel and optional yoga strap and blocks. The first class is free. \$72 (one day per week) or \$8 drop-in rate. 571-239-3416, sandyro@holyyoga.net or www.facebook.com/holyyoganova.

St. Leo the Great Church in Fairfax offers a program for Catholics who are away from the church, struggling with church teachings or

who would like to more fully practice their faith by returning to the Sacraments; the program, Welcome Home, is offered on Sundays, Feb. 24 and March 3 and 10 at 7 p.m. in the St. John Room, 3770 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. csmith@stleofairfax.com.

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

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

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

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

WELLBEING

Mental Health Counseling Professors Honored

Cultural sensitivity at the heart of their work.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Fred Bemak and his wife Rita Chi-Ying Chung, who are both professors at George Mason University in Fairfax, recall being in Haiti shortly after the catastrophic earthquake of 2010. They were there to provide mental health counseling to those traumatized by the natural disaster.

"We were working in one of the tent camps," said Bemak who, with Chung, has been a professor of counseling and development in George Mason's College of Education and Human Development since 2000. "There were tents and each contained about 30 cots. People lived side-by-side with no privacy. There was little food and little water."

They worked with a woman who was so traumatized that she had been unable to get out of bed for three months. "The traditional response is 'let's get her off to the side and speak to her alone,'" said Bemak. "But that is the Western model of therapy. When you're looking at family-oriented communities, there is a tremendous need to connect with others."

As Bemak spoke with his bed-ridden patient, others began to join the session. "We started to talk to her and crowds started to gather around her cot," he said. "It became a huge healing intervention where for the first time in three months, she got out of her cot. We had a [session] that was conducive to the community in Haiti."

Bemak and Chung's peers will salute their dedication to human rights, social justice and culturally sensitive mental health treatment later this month when they receive two of the American Counseling Association's highest honors.

Chung will receive the Gilbert and Kathleen Wrenn Humanitarian and Caring Person Award, which Bemak was awarded in 2011, and Bemak will receive the Kitty Cole Human Rights Award, which Chung garnered last year. Additionally, Chung will receive the 2013 Outstanding Faculty Award from the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia and Dominion Resources.

"I am deeply honored that I was even considered for these awards. It is a true honor. I feel so privileged to be in this field," said Chung, who noted that her background fuels her passion for her work.

"I am a person of color and I grew up in another country," said Chung, whose parents moved from China to New Zealand after the World War II. "Being an immigrant to the United States myself, I under-



PHOTO COURTESY OF GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

George Mason University Professors Fred Bemak and Rita Chi-Ying Chung will be honored by the American Counseling Association for their dedication to human rights, social justice and culturally sensitive mental health treatment.

stood the struggles and challenges of immigrants and refugees. A lot of counseling theories are based on Western beliefs. Coming from an Eastern background, I know that culture plays a major part in the way we react and respond to major life experiences."

Bemak worked as a counselor and also served as director of the Upward Bound Program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. "I worked with white, African American and Latino students who were struggling academically," he said. "When they came together, for many it was the first time that they'd been around people of other races."

Bemak and Chung say cultural sensitivity and insights are often lacking in mental health care. This underscores the importance of their work with Counselors Without Borders, which Bemak founded. It provides culturally responsive humanitarian counseling after disasters. Together, they've led teams of therapists and students in providing mental health therapy along the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, and on American Indian reservations and in Latino migrant communities after the San Diego wildfires.

"The two of them have traveled to more than 55 countries, together and individually, where they have worked with at-risk youth, immigrants and refugees; counseled child-trafficking and post-disaster victims; and guided students of color and former child soldiers," said Catherine Probst, a spokeswoman for George Mason University.

The couple also co-authored "Social Justice Counseling: The Next Steps Beyond Multiculturalism" last year.

"We both do the work because we want to give back," said Chung. "We're trying to instill in the next generation of counselors to give back. I am not waiting to be recognized, but I hope this will inspire people to do the work because there is so much need out there."

"A lot of counseling theories are based on Western beliefs. Coming from an Eastern background, I know that culture plays a major part in the way we react and respond to major life experiences."

— Rita Chi-Ying Chung, Ph.D.

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PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

This man has just finished shoveling the sidewalk in this Fair Oaks neighborhood.

A Snowy Day in Fair Oaks

The local area received 3 or 4 inches of heavy, wet snow on Wednesday, March 6, but strong winds blowing it around made it hard to measure.

Thick, wet, heavy snow blankets the parked cars in foreground while a mother and child cross the street.



These boys brave the cold and wind to build a snowman in their backyard.



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SPORTS

Woodson Boys' Basketball Reaches State Semifinals

Cavaliers' season ends with loss to Henrico in Richmond.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Woodson boys' basketball team made its living from the perimeter during the 2012-13 season. With multiple players capable of knocking down 3-pointers, the Cavaliers could shoot their way to a commanding lead or overcome a seemingly insurmountable deficit.

On Monday, however, it was Woodson's opponent that set the nets on fire during the first half while the Cavaliers were sent packing following an afternoon of shooting struggles.

Woodson lost to the Henrico Warriors 75-65 in the AAA state semifinals on March 4 at VCU's Siegel Center in Richmond. The Cavaliers shot 39 percent from the field (22-for-57), including 30 percent (seven-for-23) from 3-point range.

"We're a team that shoots the ball," Woodson head coach Doug Craig said, "and we didn't shoot it that well tonight."

Meanwhile, the Warriors shot 54 percent (25-for-46), including knocking down seven of nine 3-point attempts in the first half, helping Henrico build a 42-29 half-time advantage.

"This is a great high school team that we had this year and I really thought we had the potential to get to the state championship, but you can't win every game," Woodson sophomore point guard Eric Bowles said. "If a team shoots



Woodson senior Michael Hansler scored a team-high 17 points during a loss to Henrico in the AAA state semifinals on March 4 at VCU's Siegel Center in Richmond.

better than you, there's nothing you can do about it. Even if you're playing good defense and they're still making their shots, there's just nothing you can do."

DESPITE AN OFF-SHOOTING NIGHT, Woodson still had a chance late in the contest. Senior forward Peter Murray beat the buzzer with a 3-pointer at the end of the third quarter, cutting the Henrico lead to 52-48. A pair of free throws by senior guard Michael Hansler trimmed the Warrior advantage to 58-55 with 4:49 remaining in the game, but the Cavaliers couldn't get over the

hump.

A three-point play by Murray brought Woodson's deficit to 64-59 with 3:38 left in the game, but Henrico scored the next six points and remained in control.

"It's always frustrating in that situation," Murray said about getting close but not being able to get over the hump. "Like coach said, shots weren't falling tonight and that seemed to be the dagger tonight for us. Normally, if a team is going to come out and out-shoot us, that's going to be a problem for us, especially from the 3-point line, because that's where we've had success



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Woodson students cheer during the boys' basketball team's AAA state semifinal match-up against Henrico on March 4 at VCU's Siegel Center in Richmond.

throughout the year. ... Mentally, it is hard when your shots aren't falling, but our team kept shooting, we kept working hard and we kept trying to cut the lead back, but it didn't work out at the end."

Murray, who was named MVP of the Northern Region tournament, finished with 14 points and eight rebounds. Hansler scored a team-high 17 points and Bowles had 14. Senior Tommy Stepka scored 12 points and grabbed 10 rebounds, and senior Alex Boock added six points.

The Cavaliers had plenty of fan support during the game as at least 10 buses transported Woodson students to Richmond for the 3:15 p.m. contest. The "WT Woodson Cavalry" was fired up when Murray's buzzer-beater pulled the Cavaliers within four entering the final quarter.

"We got the crowd back into the game and that was the pivotal point there," Murray said. "Hopefully we could make a run off that, but [Henrico] came out and adjusted to everything we had and came out and beat us in the fourth

quarter, which was the turning point."

WOODSON FINISHED THE SEASON with a 25-5 record. The Cavaliers went 13-1 against Patriot District opponents during the regular season and entered the district tournament as the No. 1 seed. Woodson lost to Lake Braddock in the district semifinals, but bounced back to win the school's first outright region championship in its 50-year history. The Cavaliers trailed Wakefield by 19 points entering the fourth quarter of the Northern Region tournament final on Feb. 23 and came back to win 75-70 in overtime.

Woodson beat Battlefield 65-52 in the state quarterfinals on March 1 at Robinson Secondary School, earning the Cavaliers a trip to Richmond.

"I don't know how many fans we had here tonight, but it was ridiculous," Craig said after the Cavaliers' loss to Henrico. "I told the kids, these are the things that you're going to remember 20 years from now when you come back for your high school reunion."



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Q&A With Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn

FROM PAGE 7

my constituents and address the issues that affect our community.

Like every legislative session that I have participated in, I dedicate the nine or 10 months away from Richmond speaking to constituents in my district about legislative ideas, their concerns and issues they have noticed in the community. Every day I strive to reflect the voice of my district and help those in our area that may need state-related assistance.

Q: Bullying is a hot topic for every parent. What motivated you to sponsor the legislation on that issue?

A: HB 1871, which I was proud to co-patron, defines the term “bullying” as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim. It also requires schools to establish a prohibition against such behavior and adopt policies to create a bully-free environment. This was important legislation in order to establish a clear and legal definition of bullying and to help prevent it in our schools. Too often today we hear about tragic instances of bullying gone too far and this legislation takes another step forward to prevent another unfortunate event.

Q: What were the most important pieces of legislation this session?

A: This session saw two of the most important measures passed during my time in the House of Delegates. The final day of the Legislative Session was a historic one for the commonwealth. A new comprehensive transportation package passed and is awaiting the governor’s signature. In addition, the budget passed and included Medicaid expansion. Both of these measures underwent considerable revisions and compromise throughout the seven weeks of extensive debate and consideration. I supported the transportation plan, which will generate \$880 million annually for statewide transportation funding, and provide another \$350 million for Northern Virginia transportation projects. In addition, this bill provides dedicated funding for mass-transit and inter-city passenger rail and includes \$300 million for Phase II of the Dulles Silver Line metro. I feel strongly that the benefits represented by this comprehensive plan successfully help address our area’s transportation needs, however I did not agree with every aspect of the transportation package. I was disappointed in the \$100 fee that was included for hybrid vehicles, a provision that I opposed. It is my hope that removing this specific provision will send a message to the 91,000 Virginians that drive these vehicles, including many in my district, that we applaud their effort to help sustain our environment while reducing our dependence on foreign fuel. I have spoken to the governor about this issue and followed up with a letter requesting that this portion of the bill not go into effect.

Additionally, the General Assembly passed the budget, which agreed on a way forward to expand Medicaid coverage to nearly 400,000 additional Virginians desperately in need of adequate health care options. Included among the approved budget amendments was a commitment to allow Virginia to opt into the federal Medicaid expansion program once it is determined that appropriate reforms are in place. With the federal government paying 100 percent the first three years and 90 percent thereafter, Virginia will save \$317 million over a five-year period on Medicaid costs.

I am now optimistic that we can focus more of our

efforts on improving our schools, creating new jobs, expanding economic development and furthering our reputation as one of the best states in which to raise a family and establish a business.

Q: What was your biggest disappointment this session?

A: Again, this session, little progress was made on many important issues such as education, women’s health rights, gun safety and voting rights.

My bill, HB 1774, which would have extended voting hours from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. for the benefit of commuters and all voters, did not advance out of subcommittee due to a lack of funding and registrars that said they are overworked.

In fact, a number of bills were passed that will make voting more difficult rather than easier for voters. Legislation was passed that requires photo identification in order to vote, which will negatively impact voters who do not have a birth certificate and will force voter registrars to purchase costly equipment to provide a substitute ID for those who request it. Another measure that passed requires the use of a federal scanning database to remove non-citizens from the voting rolls, even though this database has proven faulty and prevented some naturalized citizens from exercising their right to cast a ballot.

Additionally, my bill HB 2199 did not advance from the House Appropriations Committee after being referred by the Education Committee. This bill was intended to increase the numbers of students eligible for expedited retakes of the Standard of Learning tests given to the commonwealth’s public school students. Currently, only high school students are allowed to take retakes if they score within 25 points of the passing score. Students may not pass their SOLs for a variety of reasons, and they should be given a chance to retake them. Moreover, it is important to instill confidence, particularly in our younger children, who may be negatively impacted if they do not have the opportunity to retake a failed SOL test. This legislation was supported by the Superintendents Association, several County School districts including Fairfax, and the Virginia Education Association. It is my hope that this bill can advance next year using a different approach through a budgetary amendment.

Q: Describe your experience as a woman in the House of Delegates.

A: I serve with only 18 other women in the Virginia House of Delegates and I believe I am only one of two moms with school-aged children. I believe women can bring a different perspective and quality to the state capitol, one of consensus building, “getting things done” and cooperation. Our perspective, experience and ability to engage and inspire are unique characteristics which can be helpful in Richmond. With the recent women’s health issues debated over the past two years, it is even clearer to me the need to elect good, smart, quality women to the General Assembly.

In recent years, such outstanding women members of the General Assembly including Delegate Vivian Watts and Senators Janet Howell and Toddy Puller, with whom I am now honored to serve, have set a very high example for the 25 current female members of the General Assembly. In this regard, I have always strongly encouraged women, who are interested in becoming candidates to do so, and I frequently speak to such groups as the Girl Scouts about the importance of civic duty and the opportunity to serve their community and address major women’s issues.

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7023 Veering Ln.....\$559,950.....Sun 1-4.....Kathleen Quintarelli.....Weichert..703-862-8808

Centreville

6487 Trillium House Ln.....\$964,900.....Sun 10-4.....Jean Marotta.....Birch Haven..703-402-9471
6106 Kendra Way.....\$305,000.....Sun 1-4.....Ritu Desai.....Samson Props..703-625-4949

Chantilly

42344 Astors Beachwood \$830,000..Sun 1-4.....Vera Buonafede.....Weichert..703-501-5015

Clifton

6408 Foggy Hills Way.....\$639,500.....Sun 1-4.....Janet Gresh.....Keller Williams..703-636-3588
6417 Springhouse Cir.....\$629,999.....Sun 1-4.....Robin Jenks Vanderlip.....Keller Williams..703-966-4966

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11107 Hampton Rd.....\$1,295,000.....Sun 1-4.....Alice Gehl.....Weichert..571-426-4073
7131 Twelve Oaks Dr.....\$1,295,000.....Sun 1-4.....Pat Richter..Residential Preferred..703-239-1234
8610 Running Fox Ct.....\$899,999.....Sat 1-4.....Billy Thompson.....Samson Props..703-409-0340
6900 Winners Cir.....\$750,000.....Sun 12-3.....Ed Lang.....RE/MAX..703-818-9603
11134 Robert Carter Rd.....\$689,900.....Sun 1-4.....Christine Shevock.....RE/MAX..703-475-3986

Falls Church

3324 Stoneybrae Dr.....\$699,500..Sat 10-1/Sun 1-4.....Dana LaFever.....Weichert..703-609-3479

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6153 Gardenia Ct.....\$384,950.....Sun 1-4.....Tom & Cindy & Assoc.....Long & Foster..703-822-0207
6572 Osprey Point Ln.....\$424,950.....Sun 1-4.....Anita Mason.....Weichert..703-627-6624
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