

Fairfax Reenacts Mosby's Raid

Bicyclists Pedal
Onward, Despite
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Fairfax resident and graphic designer Janet "Eli" Pastrick sits atop her horse, "Bob's Warlord." Pastrick performed as a member of Mosby's rangers, presented by the 4th Virginia Cavalry Company H Black Horse Troop.

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THE COUNTY LINE

Bicyclists Pedal Onward, Despite Legislative Losses

FABB promotes extended hours on W&OD Trail.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

As the weather gets warmer and the days get longer, Northern Virginia bicyclists are back on the roads and trails, despite the Virginia General Assembly's antipathy for bike safety bills this session.

"Between us, BikeVirginia, RideRichmond, WABA, RABA, TBA, and other groups across the commonwealth, we put a lot of energy into getting cycling-friendly legislation through during the 2013 General Assembly session," said Michael Gilbert, co-founder of RideRichmond on the VBF website. "Unfortunately, none of it came to fruition."

State Senator Chap Petersen (D-34), who introduced several unsuccessful bike safety bills this session, said he was baffled by the defeat of his "dooring" bill, which would have required motorists to open their doors safely when there is oncoming traffic. The maximum civil penalty for recklessly swinging car doors open was \$100. The bill generated the most attention—and optimism from bike advocates—when it sailed through the Virginia Senate and a House transportation subcommittee.

But the House Transportation Committee swung the door shut on "dooring" when it voted 7-7 on the question of reporting it to the full House, since a tie vote equals a loss in the General Assembly. On his blog—OxRoadSouth—Petersen said his bill was "logical, fair and simple."

"It simply stated that a driver, who is opening a car door near moving traffic, must be accountable for any accidents caused by that open door," Petersen said.

"Why is this relevant? Am I restricting personal freedom? Common sense? No, it's about safety. As bike lanes become more prevalent in our urban areas, 'dooring' has become a major threat to cyclists. ... Since drivers are in the best position to avoid 'dooring' accidents, that is only fair," Petersen said, adding that more than 20 states, including Maryland and D.C., already have this law.

But area bicyclists refused to be sidelined by these legislative defeats. Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling put out its newsletter this weekend, sharing the following in-



PHOTO COURTESY OF FABB

A group of local cyclists take advantage of the good weather during a ride to Tysons Corner. To find "bike-friendly" paths in Fairfax County, go to www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike/bikemap.

More Information

Want more information on how to bike locally? Check out these websites:

For a copy of Fairfax County's bicycle maps and trails:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/bike/bikemap.htm

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/trails/maps.htm

www.fabb-bikes.org/resources.html

❖To help plan your bicycle trip online:

www.ridethecity.com/dc

www.wmata.com/ridertools/tripplanner

❖To get involved in bicycle advocacy:

www.fabb-bikes.org

www.waba.org

(FABB is affiliated with the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, an advocacy group for the D.C. metro area.)

formation:

W&OD Trail Extended Hours

The W&OD Trail is now open from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. between Shirlington and Herndon. The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority recently installed signs along the trail showing the new hours and requirements for use after dark.

"This is good news for bike commuters and other people who need to use the trail at night," said Bruce Wright, chairman of FABB. "Most commuters currently ride on the trail after dark because they have few safe alternative routes. ... These new hours are experimental and could be expanded (or restricted) in the future. If you have comments, send feedback to NVRPA."

According to the Extended Hours of Use Requirements, cyclists are required to "wear reflective clothing that can be easily seen from the front and rear" and to have a front and rear light. Trail users on foot are also required to have front and rear reflective clothing and they "must carry a light or wear a flashing light."

Wright said FABB will be out on the trail over the next several weeks offering free lights to trail users. See the FABB blog for more details.

Bicycle Master Plan

The county Bicycle Master Plan was completed in July 2012. "We're hoping the plan goes before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors this spring," Wright said.

Parkway Trail Now Open

Due to construction of the Fairfax County Parkway overpass at Fair Lakes Parkway, the adjacent paved trail was dug up and closed for many months. Finally a replacement trail is taking shape. While parts of the new trail are not paved yet, the trail is now open between Route 50 and Fair Lakes Parkway. FABB tried to get the county and VDOT to provide a signed detour for trail users through a nearby neighborhood while the trail was closed, but despite numerous attempts, they were not successful. "The Parkway Trail is a major commuter and recreational trail that never should have been closed without a suitable detour," Wright said.

2013 Bike to Work Day

Registration is now open for



PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling Chairman Bruce Wright and long-time cyclist Kerie Hitt get ready to bike to their home in Reston after receiving an award from the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors last year.

Bike to Work Day on Friday, May 17. Several events will be held in Fairfax County: Burke VRE Station, Fairfax Corner, Herndon, the new Merrifield-Mosaic District, Merrifield-W&OD Trail, Collingwood Park (new), Reston, and Springfield Metro at Walker Lane, Tysons Corner Center, and Vienna.

"We plan to have FABB reps at each of these events to provide route information, answer questions, and to ask people to sign up for our e-newsletter," Wright said.

Upcoming Events

Many communities hold health and environmental fairs such as Earth Day, Arbor Day, and so forth during the spring, and we encourage everyone to ride your bikes and promote bicycling when you attend these events.

❖Wednesday, March 20—FABB Monthly Meeting

❖Tuesday-Thursday, April 9-11—Fairfax County Budget Hearings

❖Wednesday, April 17—FABB Monthly Meeting

❖Thursday, April 18—Vienna Green Expo

❖Tuesday, April 23—USGS and Freddie Mac Earth Day events

❖Saturday, April 27—Paul's Ride for Life, Clean Fairfax Earth Day event, and Be Fit McLean

❖Wednesday, May 15—FABB

Monthly Meeting

❖Sunday, May 5—Vienna Bike Safety Awareness Day

❖Friday, May 17—Bike to Work Day

❖Saturday, June 1—Tour de Fat

"Since 2006, Fairfax County has become more bike friendly with the adoption of the county-wide bicycle initiative, but cyclists still need better-connected bike routes, secure bicycle parking and education programs to help them travel comfortably and safely," Wright said, adding that passage of the Bicycle Master Plan is the group's primary goal.

"It contains a roadmap for making Fairfax a bicycle-friendly community. Implementing the plan will take a commitment from our community leaders to building a safe, connected bicycle network that will benefit all local residents."

"FABB is clearly focused on improving our quality of life and health by providing better opportunities for biking," said Supervisor Catherine Hudgins (D-Hunter Mill). "(The group) has already completed a key goal of informing the community and providing directions on how to improve biking opportunities with its wonderful guide."

Hudgins, who has backed many cycling initiatives, said she thinks cycling generally helps create more livable, healthy and sustainable communities by "connecting us as people."

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NEWS

The Goold family: (From left) are Adam, Cami, mom Lara, Ellie, dad Glen, Spencer and Emma.



PHOTOS
 CONTRIBUTED

Father Runs Marathon In His Son's Honor

**Fairfax teen is in
 remission from leukemia.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS
 THE CONNECTION



(From left) are Spencer Goold and dad Glen during Spencer's treatment. His dad and a dozen friends shaved their heads in solidarity with Spencer when he lost his hair to chemo.

This Saturday, March 16, Glen Goold is running in the Rock 'n' Roll USA Marathon in Washington, D.C., to raise money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. And fueling his every footstep will be the knowledge that his son Spencer is now in remission from this disease.

Spencer has caught up with his studies and is once again playing lacrosse, which he loves and at which he excels. And looking back at the past 18 months, this Fairfax teen has come a long way.

"In fall 2011, he was on a travel lacrosse team and was concerned with the usual things boys his age are—school and who he was going to ask to Homecoming," said his dad. "Then he started throwing up immediately after any physical exertion."

So the Goolds took their son to the doctor and, at first, it was thought he had allergies. But on Jan. 10, 2012, at age 16, Spencer was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia (AML) and given a 50-50 chance of surviving.

"Spencer's the oldest of five children, and it was shocking—out of the blue—that this was happening to our formerly healthy son," said Goold. "We asked, 'Why us? Why now? Why him?' Then we buckled down and tried to be as optimistic as we could. We also learned as much about AML as possible to fight the battle as best we could."

SPENCER WAS TREATED by Children's National Medical Center practitioners at Inova Fairfax Hospital, and Goold said they were fortunate to have wonderful doctors. Right after his diagnosis, Spencer was hospitalized until May 31, 2012, except for a few days between each of his four rounds of chemotherapy.

His type of leukemia had to be treated in the hospital because it was so aggressive. It was also critical to prevent him from getting any infections while his immune system was compromised.

"The hardest thing for Spencer was being cooped up in his hospital room," said Goold. "But he was

determined and a trooper through the whole thing. He had a good attitude, tried to stay positive and handled it all with grace. We couldn't have been prouder of him."

Family and friends rallied around Spencer. And when he lost his hair to chemo, his dad and a dozen friends shaved their heads in solidarity with him. Spencer also did his schoolwork so he could graduate this year with his class. He plans to attend college and, after what he's been through, he hopes to someday become a doctor.

"We've been fortunate that some good has come out of it," said Goold. "It changes your perspective on life. Little things that bothered you don't mean as much. And you learn to appreciate life for what it is and the blessings around us all the time."

GRATEFUL that his son has now been in remission for nine months, Goold—who'd previously done endurance training—is now actively raising money for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. That's why he's gearing up to run Saturday's marathon in Spencer's honor.

He's so far raised \$9,250 of his \$10,000 goal. And after this race, he'll train for a fundraising 100-mile bike race, June 1, on Long Island, N.Y. To donate toward his effort, go to <http://www.teamintraining.org/nca>.

"I got into it to raise awareness and funds for a cause I wholeheartedly believe in," said Goold. "I also want to provide hope for other people going through this."



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For more information, visit our event site.

<http://www.fairfaxbgcgw.org/index.php/rummage-sale>

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BULLETIN BOARD

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

FRIDAY/ MARCH 15

Ian Cook's Dare To Be Their Best Boss Ever. 8-10 a.m., at Leadership Fairfax Office, 8230 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 350, Vienna. A seminar to help bosses inspire employees to work their hardest and put passion into their work. Members: \$25; non-members; \$30.

SATURDAY/MARCH 16

Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon. Donate to the Josh Anderson Foundation for preventing teenage suicide by giving to their largest fundraising event and/or running in the marathon. www.active.com/donate/joshafoundation2013.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 20

Getting Your Ducks in a Row. 1:30 p.m., at Alzheimer's Family Day Center, 2812 Old Lee Highway, Suite 210, Fairfax. An elder law attorney leads a discussion on common legal needs such as powers of attorney, wills and estates, guardianships and trusts. RSVP. 703-204-4664.

Planning Commission Public Hearing: Home Child Care Facilities. 8:15 p.m., at the Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. A public hearing on the Home Child Care Facilities Zoning Ordinance Amendment; concerns number of children allowed to be cared for, parking, drop off and pick up areas, permit fees and conformance to use limitations in home child care facilities. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoningordinance/proposed/.

THURSDAY/MARCH 21

Saturday Night in the Suburbs. 7 p.m., at Woodson High School, 9525 Main St., Fairfax. A parents-only program that features a panel of students talking about what goes on with teens on the weekend.

TUESDAY/ MARCH 26

Virginia Search and Rescue Dog Show. 10:30 a.m., at the Pohick Regional Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Learn about wilderness safety and what to do if you get lost with David Wyttenbach and Virginia Search and Rescue K9 Sirius Black. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events/marchhasgonetothedogs.htm.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 27

Community Book Talk: Living Smart After 50. Noon-1:30 p.m., at Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. A talk on the eponymous book to help seniors prepare for and take advantage of the future. 703-569-3753 or LiveSmartAfter50.com.

FRIDAY/APRIL 12

Leading to Well Being: Facilitating Leadership for a Well-Lived Life. 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Mason Inn & Conference Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Notable scholars and industry leaders address innovations in leadership and well-being. Mason students: \$225; general: \$300. wellbeing.onmason.com or info@cct.gmu.edu.

MONDAY/APRIL 29


Kindergarten Orientation/Registration. 2 p.m., at Greenbriar East Elementary School, 13006 Point Pleasant Drive, Fairfax. Explore the option of enrolling your child; contact the office with questions regarding the registration process. 703-633-6400.



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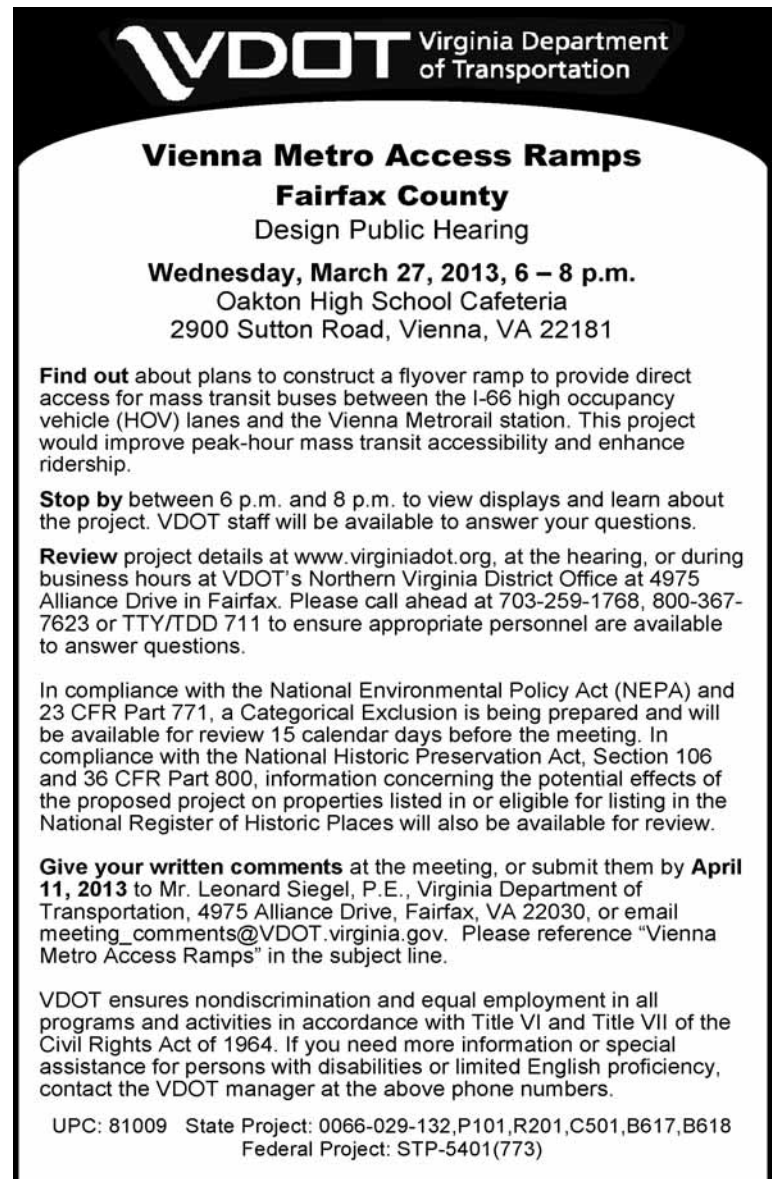


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VDOT Virginia Department of Transportation

Vienna Metro Access Ramps
Fairfax County
Design Public Hearing

Wednesday, March 27, 2013, 6 – 8 p.m.
Oakton High School Cafeteria
2900 Sutton Road, Vienna, VA 22181

Find out about plans to construct a flyover ramp to provide direct access for mass transit buses between the I-66 high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and the Vienna Metrorail station. This project would improve peak-hour mass transit accessibility and enhance ridership.

Stop by between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. to view displays and learn about the project. VDOT staff will be available to answer your questions.

Review project details at www.virginiadot.org, at the hearing, or during business hours at VDOT's Northern Virginia District Office at 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. Please call ahead at 703-259-1768, 800-367-7623 or TTY/TDD 711 to ensure appropriate personnel are available to answer questions.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771, a Categorical Exclusion is being prepared and will be available for review 15 calendar days before the meeting. In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 and 36 CFR Part 800, information concerning the potential effects of the proposed project on properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will also be available for review.

Give your written comments at the meeting, or submit them by **April 11, 2013** to Mr. Leonard Siegel, P.E., Virginia Department of Transportation, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA 22030, or email meeting_comments@VDOT.virginia.gov. Please reference "Vienna Metro Access Ramps" in the subject line.

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UPC: 81009 State Project: 0066-029-132,P101,R201,C501,B617,B618
Federal Project: STP-5401(773)

OPINION

Hybrid Hijinks

Discouraging innovation in high-tech Virginia.

Consider this as a possible scenario (although perhaps we should have saved this for April 1): Fewer people are smoking, and many of those who do are smoking less. Virginia's cigarette tax, the lowest of any state at 30 cents a pack, is a declining revenue source. Higher cigarette taxes are proven to reduce smoking. Under current logic in the commonwealth, there would be two courses of action to raise revenue: a) cut the cigarette tax, and b) charge non-smokers a fee to make up the difference and to compensate for the fact that they don't pay cigarette taxes.

This is basically the convoluted approach that leads to the \$100 annual hybrid fee as part of Virginia's proposed transportation plan, to help make up for the reduced tax on gas.

The annual \$100 surcharge for owners of hybrids vehicles should be stripped out of the transportation bill. Something that could add \$1,000 to the price of owning a car over a normal period of time discourages innovation and punishes people who are trying to reduce pol-

lution and dependence on oil.

It also seems likely that the greatest concentration of ownership of hybrid vehicles would be in Northern Virginia, so it's one more way to extract more money from our region.

To replace these funds, plus a little, why not charge an additional \$100 annual registration fee for any vehicle with a purchase price of \$40,000 or more? Or charge the additional \$100 for any personal vehicle with a miles-per-gallon rating of less than 25 miles per gallon highway, especially since the more gas your car burns in Virginia, the more of a break you are receiving on the gas tax reduction. Or charge a sliding fee based on the number of miles driven and the weight of the vehicle (hint: the fee would go up with the miles and weight).

Or raise, rather than reduce, the gas tax and index it to inflation.

Sober on Saint Patrick's Day?

Saint Patrick's Day has always been a holi-

day associated with alcoholic beverages.

You, and/or the young adults in your household, will naturally have a plan to celebrate without drinking and driving. Plan to have a designated driver. Plan to take public transportation home. Plan to party at home or at a friend's house where you can spend the night.

If all of those plans fall through, however, and you end up without a ride home when you've been drinking on Saint Patrick's Day, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program has a safety net for you, SoberRide — Saint Patty's edition.

WRAP's 2013 Saint Patrick's Day SoberRide program will be offered on Sunday, March 17, from 4 p.m. to 4 a.m. on Monday, March 18. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$30.00 fare), call 800-200-8294. You must be 21 or older to use the SoberRide service. Last Saint Patrick's Day, more than 600 potentially impaired drivers made use of this service. SoberRide has provided more than 57,000 free rides home to people who otherwise might have driven drunk.

See www.soberride.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Preserving Electoral Board Integrity

To the Editor:

Keith Damon wrote a letter to the editor (The Connection, March 8, 2013) in which he professes to be "upset" over a decision to remove Hans von Spakovsky from the Fairfax County Electoral Board. Mr. Damon misinforms Connection readers about a number of facts and omits others that are relevant.

First, contrary to Mr. Damon's implication that the Fairfax County Republican chairman gets to choose the Electoral Board member; that decision actually resides with the 14 judges chosen by the General Assembly to comprise the Fairfax Circuit Court. The majority of the judges, based on the statement the

court released, chose to replace von Spakovsky by appointing attorney Brian Schoeneman, another Republican and former General Assembly candidate. Both individuals were on a list of names recommended by the Fairfax Republican chairman.

Second, it is true that the Fairfax County Democratic Committee objected to von Spakovsky's reappointment. In fact, I objected to von Spakovsky's initial appointment to the board in 2010 when I was chair of Fairfax County Democrats, yet he still served a term on the board. Mr. Damon offers no evidence to support his assertion that Democratic objections to von Spakovsky unduly influenced the judges.

A quick Internet search can con-

firm that von Spakovsky is known chiefly for his nationwide efforts to suppress voter rights, especially among minority voters, in the name of fighting mythical challenges to the integrity of election administration. He works for a right wing organization funded by the notorious Koch Brothers. Further, while serving on the Fairfax Electoral Board he was responsible for removing multi-lingual voter registration materials from the Office of Elections, blocked the office from distributing the nonpartisan League of Women Voters pamphlet "Facts for Voters," and ducked meetings of the Electoral Board in the days before the 2012 presidential election that denied the board a quorum

and kept it from resolving open issues.

Finally, Mr. Damon neglects to inform readers of his own partisan motives. He belongs to the 11th Congressional District Republican Committee and frequently represents Fairfax County Republicans at Electoral Board meetings.

The integrity of our elections administration is too important to be trusted in the hands of someone who may have ulterior motives or seek partisan advantage. For that reason I am pleased that Hans von Spakovsky will no longer be on the Fairfax County Electoral Board.

Rex Simmons
Fairfax Station

A Call to Reduce Gun Violence

To the Editor:

Following the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School, a group of Northern Virginia residents, Concerned Citizens Against Gun Violence (CCAGV), has been taking action to reduce gun violence in our nation. In February, CCAGV launched a grassroots effort to gather signatures to show our representatives in Congress that their constituents want action on reasonable measures to reduce gun violence. The group also rated McLean area state senators and delegates on their gun safety voting record and hosted a forum with statewide and local public safety groups to educate the public on measures to reduce gun vio-

lence.

A recent poll conducted by Mayors Against Illegal Guns found that 88 percent of voters in the 10th Congressional District support background checks and CCAGV's results are consistent: 90 percent of the people we canvassed have signed the petition to our federal elected representatives urging them to support universal background checks for all gun purchases, limit magazine clip size to 10 rounds, and ban military-style weapon sales. More than 1300 of Frank Wolf's (VA-10th) constituents have so far signed this petition. (The houses we visit are not selected for voting history or party affiliation; our volunteers walk

neighborhoods every weekend and knock on every door.)

These results should not surprise anyone. Poll after poll shows that a majority of Americans want common-sense gun reform that reduces the number of illegal guns on our streets and keeps guns out of the hands of those who are a danger to themselves and others. People understand that, rather than a means of protection, a gun often is an instrument of escalation, accident, and suicide. Most people we talk to have not realized that some 40 percent of gun sales are made without any background check, enabling militarized assault weapons such as the AR-15 rifle used at Sandy Hook to be

purchased by virtually anyone. In the Virginia Tech massacre, Virginians witnessed the horrible consequences of weak gun laws that allow a person legally prohibited from purchasing a gun easily to obtain one.

Every week, we send an email to individuals in the community with information and actions they can take to support local and national initiatives to end gun violence. Anyone who would like to receive these updates or support the activities of the CCAGV is invited to email ccagv01@aol.com.

Margot de Ferranti
McLean

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CONNECTION

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Mason Alumnus Promotes Biking

Joe Paisley runs an online community for cyclists to network and share common interests.

BY ANN IBRAZ

With spring right around the corner, it's the perfect time to start thinking about pulling your bike out of the garage and taking a break from the congested automobile commute with a fresh change of scenery. But cycling aficionado Joe Paisley will not let cold weather keep him off the pedals. Even in 19-degree weather, Paisley keeps his enthusiasm for cycling alive and works to spread bicycle advocacy on and off the bike.

Paisley, an alumnus from the Communication Department of George Mason University, developed a biking interest in 2009 after returning home from a four-year deployment in the U.S. Navy. That interest quickly became a passion when he fused cycling and his education in public relations to bring to life an idea he came up with after taking a class in business and professional communication. In October 2011, he created the Pedal Collective website to promote an online community for cyclists to network and share common interests.

"Nothing like it necessarily existed at the time. It was sort of an epiphany for me," Paisley said.

THE PEDAL COLLECTIVE allows fellow cyclists to interact, map bicycle routes, share pictures, post blogs and create events. The site has attracted hundreds of cyclists across the country along with the Pedal Collective Facebook page, which has gained more than 1,000 followers since its inception in late 2011.

Paisley is channeling his time and effort to advance the Pedal Collective as an entrepreneurial venture. In a recent interview with a software startup company, he was asked to create a mini-documentary as a pitch for his website to submit to a national entrepreneurship summit in Tennessee. Paisley is currently working with Adobe and Flash programs to design graphics for an animated series and an informative book on cycling.

"Building a website has a lot to do with generation of content. It has to be something worthwhile, unique and comprehensive," Paisley said.

As an undergrad at Mason, Paisley actively worked to promote the bike culture on campus and throughout Fairfax. Last November he held The Felix 24, a 24-mile bike ride around Lake Accotink and Fairfax Cross



PHOTO BY ANN IBRAZ

Joe Paisley in front of a banner in George Mason University to promote the Pedal Collective Fun Ride and Happy Hour.

Country Trail, to replicate the distance that BASE jumper Felix Baumgartner experienced when he set the world record for his supersonic jump in October 2012. The event attracted 25 participants and raised more than \$75 in donations for a nonprofit cycling organization.

On April 28, 2012, Paisley hosted the Pedal Collective Fun Ride and Happy Hour, a 10.44-mile bike ride through Fairfax followed by a happy hour session at Brion's Grille. Paisley and an assembly of students held a public relations campaign on the Mason campus to promote the event and register participants. Local bike shops and independent public relations firm Commonwealth Consultants helped sponsor the ride through monetary and equipment donations. The event turnout resulted in 15 participants and raised more than \$60, which went toward the Tour de Cure for the American Diabetes Association and 1Love Bicycle Advocacy Tour.

PAISLEY PLANS to attend the United Bicycle Institute in Oregon this September to take classes in bicycle mechanics, maintenance and professional repair. He looks to a prospective career in bicycle manufacturing or starting an independent bike and repair shop.

Crazy about cycling or just want to learn more about bikes in general? Visit <http://www.thepedalcollective.com/> to check out videos, photos and information on upcoming biking events.

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Bryant Kincaid poses for Fairfax graphic designer Darrah Hannan. Hannan is working on a project using vector art to illustrate epic moments in history and needed inspiration to depict the downhill charge of the 20th Maine Regiment.



PHOTOS BY
TIM PETERSON/
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Reenacts Mosby's Raid

Civil War re-enactors kick off 150th anniversary commemoration.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Despite the brutal and bloody nature of America's Civil War, it's still an integral part of the rich history that comes with living in this area of the country. People seek it out, seek to interact with it and learn more of it—they love to see history being preserved as authentically, yet nonviolently, as possible.

This past Saturday morning as part of a commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, we were reminded of this as period-correct members of the 17th Virginia Infantry Fairfax Rifles and 4th Virginia Cavalry Company H Black Horse Troop staged Confederate John S Mosby's raid on Fairfax.

It was March 8, 1863. Mosby and his 29 "rangers" launched a surprise night attack and captured Brigadier Gen. Edwin H Stoughton, 60 of his men and a handful of horses at the William Gunnell House. They did so, incredibly, without unloading a single round.

"There were a lot of audacious maneuvers in the Civil War, and Mosby's was unique," said Bryant Kincaid, a Manassas-based member of the Coast Guard, volunteering Saturday as a Union infantry soldier. "It was daring; it's a reason why some people feel a romance for the Confederacy—cheering for the underdog."

Saturday's less deadly proceedings transitioned into a question-and-answer session with the crowd of onlookers, and eventually everyone was able to go up and meet the re-enactors face to face. Both Union and rebel horsemen amicably mingled among the civilians, showing there was no bad blood between them.



The William Gunnell House was the site of Mosby's raid in 1893. Following the reenactment, visitors had the opportunity to go inside and tour General Stoughton's bedroom.

The event kicked off a day full of opportunities to connect with the city's past: films, walking tours and scholarly lectures on Mosby himself, all provided for by the Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission. There was even a special visit from the Virginia Civil War 150 HistoryMobile traveling exhibition.



The 2013 Chocolate Lovers Festival was held March 2 at the City of Fairfax Old Town Hall. The annual event attracted thousands of people from around the region with samples of a variety of chocolate products from area businesses and featured a chocolate sculpture contest.

Chocolate Lovers Take Town Hall

PHOTOS BY ROBBIE HAMMER/THE CONNECTION

Thousands enjoy the annual event in Fairfax.



Brent Gibbons of Fairfax Station, Mackenzie Thode of Knoxville, Tenn., and Lynn Gibbons try samples of fudge while attending the 2013 Chocolate Lovers Festival.



The 2013 Chocolate Lovers Festival was held March 2 in the City of Fairfax at the Old Town Hall. The annual event attracted thousands of people from around the region with samples of a variety of chocolate products from area businesses and featured a chocolate sculpture contest.



Hope, on the right, shares a piece of chocolate with her friend, Isabela, while attending the annual Chocolate Lovers Festival at the Fairfax Old Town Hall on Saturday afternoon, March 2.



Three-year-old Nina of Centreville covers a banana with chocolate while attending the annual Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival with her parents.



The 2013 Chocolate Lovers Festival was held on March 2 in the City of Fairfax at the Old Town Hall. The annual event attracted thousands of people from around the region with samples of a variety of chocolate products from area businesses and featured a chocolate sculpture contest.

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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 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

Freedom Hill DAR Meeting. 10 a.m., at 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Betty Glover, co-author of well-known genealogical book *Lees and Kings*, a much-read book in heritage societies, speaks at the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting. info@freedomhilldar.org.
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.
Living With Kids and Dogs. 2 p.m., at Kings Park Library, 9000 Burke Lake Road, Burke. Author Colleen Pelar will discuss her book and how to be your dog's best friend; includes book signing. <https://va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/events/signup.asp?ID=189686>.
Fairfax Symphony Orchestra: Masterworks V. 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Conductor Christopher Zimmerman performs J. Strauss' Emperor Waltz and Tick Tack, Pizzicato, Trisch-Tratsch Polkas and Overture to Die Fledermaus; R. Strauss' Suite from Der Rosenkavalier, Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks and Salomé'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.

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.



Natalie MacMaster, acclaimed fiddler of Cape Breton.

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 Day 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

Rosebush Pruning Demonstration. Noon-2 p.m., at Joan and Art Von Herbulis' home, 10510 Oak Place, Fairfax. The Arlington Rose Foundation experts help show the community how to clean and sharpen pruners; observe, then practice with guidance. 703-371-9351.
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. www.theauldshebeenva.com.
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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.
Civil War Program. 4:30 p.m., at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church in the Fellowship Hall, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. The last Civil War program of the year presented by the Burke Historical Society features journalist and writer Carl Sell on his book *Thank God He Survived Pickett's Charge!*, a novel based on historical research about Sell's great grandfather; Danielle Clarke also speaks about her great-great-grandfather, a Union private wounded at Fairfax Station. www.burkehistoricalsociety.org.
Music from Oberlin in Oakton. 7:30 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Program includes various music by the Jazz Trio and Shostakovich String Quartet No.2; featuring Oberlin Conservatory students. 703-281-4230 or uucf@uucf.org.

THURSDAY/MARCH 28

Passaggio. 8 p.m., at the Harris Theater at GMU, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Playwright Michael Patrick Smith presents the story of a small town in Italy during the festival of the Madonna, during which the opera-loving mayor confronts town secrets. \$15 for students, faculty, staff, seniors and groups; \$20 for general admission. 888-945-2468 or cfa.gmu.edu.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Cast photo: (standing, from left) Director Charlotte Yakovleff, Helen Rusnak, Lynne Strang, Charles Hoffman, Fred C. Lash, Jolanda Janczewski, James Manchester, Terri Grimes-Marin and Teri Pierce; (kneeling, from left) are Stephanie Lawrence, Eric Rogotsky and Nichole Klocke de Rodriguez.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHARLOTTE YAKOVLEFF

Fairfax Residents Star In New Production

Clifton Dinner Theater presents "Murder Me Always."

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Mystery, intrigue and laughs are all on the menu when the Clifton Dinner Theater presents its new show, "Murder Me Always." And two Fairfax residents have starring roles.

Performances are slated for March 14-16, at the Clifton Town Meeting Hall, 12641 Chapel Road in the Town of Clifton. Shirley's Catering of Clifton is providing the dinner, all three nights, and wine and beer will be available.

Tickets for dinner and the show are \$35 for Thursday, March 14, and \$40 for Friday through Saturday, March 15-16. Doors open at 7 p.m. for cocktails; dinner and the show begin at 8 p.m. Tickets may be purchased at Clifton businesses T&K Treasures, Clifton Cafe, A Flower Blooms in Clifton, and The Clifton Wine and Tasting Shoppe.

"There's a play within the play," said Clifton's Lynne Strang. "It's a humorous murder mystery with lots of local references. The story's about a community theater group working on a murder mystery called 'Murder Me Always.' And in the middle of it, there's a real murder of a cast member. So then the task is to figure out who the real murderer is."

EACH ACTOR has a role in the show and in the play within a play; Strang portrays Felicia Fontaine. "She's a rather pompous, self-important woman," said Strang. "After the murder, all the actors become suspects, and a couple detectives try to figure out who did it."

She said the play contains music and humor and is fast-paced. "The audience will enjoy the action scenes, and it's also interactive," said Strang. "The audience members are the party guests; and later, they'll try to figure out amongst themselves who did it. And the set transforms so that the audience finds themselves in a completely different setting by the end of the production."

Teri Pierce of Fairfax portrays Trixie, initially an undercover police officer. But after the murder takes place, she begins investigating. "She's serious and wants to get to the bottom of what's happened," said Pierce. "I love my part because it's my first dramatic role. I've done community theater for over 20 years,

but always in musicals. So this is a new challenge for me."

She said all the cast members really like their parts and "it reflects in their work. They're really funny personas and I think that makes the audience enjoy it more."

Playing Detective Josie Mamet is City of Fairfax resident Terri Grimes-Marin. "She takes everyone in the show to the next step," said Grimes-Marin. "I love the 1940s time period, so I'm playing her as a throwback to then—like a cross between Humphrey Bogart and Catherine Zeta-Jones. So she's smart with an edgy attitude, and tough, but with a feminine flair. It's also a challenge because it's a lot of lines to learn, but life's about challenges. And I get to ask the audience questions and make a connection with them, and I like that."

Grimes-Marin is also delighted to be performing with the Clifton Dinner Theater again. "It's great fun to do this," she said. "This is my second show with the group and they're such nice people. I enjoyed myself immensely before, and I was thrilled that they asked me to audition. I was a theater major in college, and this is a great opportunity to do something I love and always wanted to do."

She said the audience will enjoy trying to figure out the whodunit, and the ending will be a surprise. Besides that, said Grimes-Marin, "The whole town hall is transformed for the show, and everyone's so enthusiastic about the food and the setting. It's just a joyful experience."

The actors have been rehearsing since early January, and directing the 11-person cast is Centreville's Charlotte "Charlt" Yakovleff. It's her third year directing this company and she says things are going wonderfully.

"The cast has been really dedicated about getting their lines and characters down," she said. "They've developed their characters well and brought them all to life. They also helped get their costumes together and gave me notes on how to enhance the production."

Excited to bring this show to local audiences, Yakovleff said they'll like "the zaniness of the characters and the evolution of the production, overall. They'll leave saying, 'Wow, that was a really unique concept for a play, with a good, creative twist.' I think they'll be shocked by the ending."

FAITH NOTES

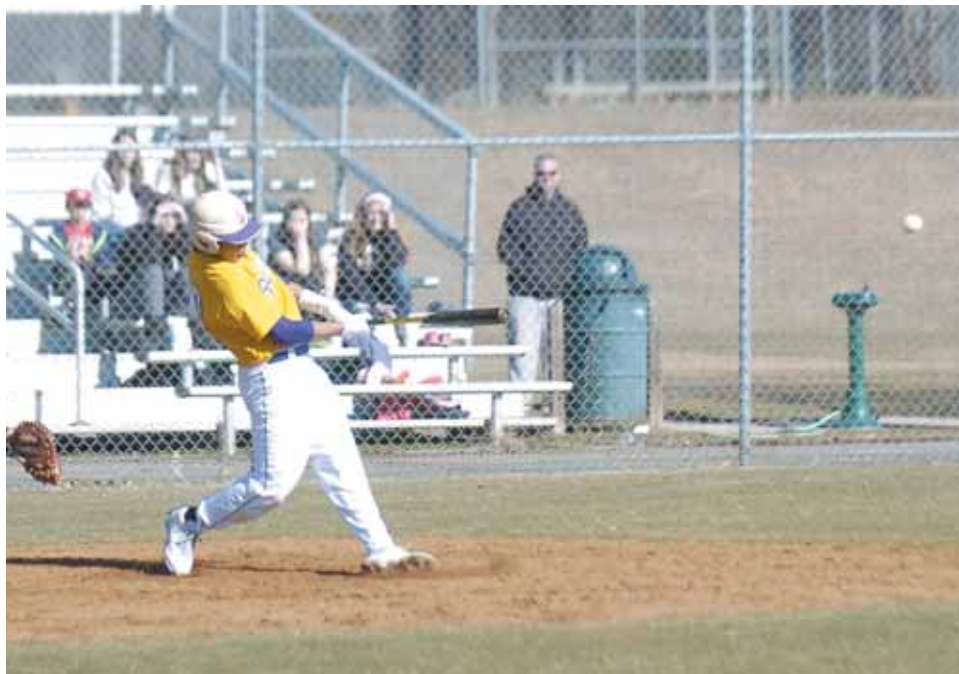
Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

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 through 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.

SPORTS



Senior infielder Alex Lewis is one of several Lake Braddock baseball players overcoming an offseason injury.



Lake Braddock sophomore Kevin Haswell pitches against Oakton during a scrimmage at Lake Braddock on Feb. 9.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

SPORTS ROUNDUPS

Northern Region Baseball Coaches Poll

Defending state champion Lake Braddock is ranked No. 1 in the season's first Northern Region baseball coaches poll.

The Bruins, who also won the Patriot District title and finished Northern Region runner-up, finished last season with a 26-3 record. Lake Braddock is led by senior outfielder Alex Gransback.

Madison is ranked No. 2. The Warhawks went 15-6 last season but failed to qualify for the region tournament, losing to Langley in the first round of the Liberty District tournament.

Defending Liberty District champion Stone Bridge is ranked No. 3, followed by defending Northern Region champion West Springfield (4), defending Concorde District champion Robinson (5), Oakton (6), Chantilly (7), South County (8), Westfield (9) and defending National District champion Yorktown (10).

The Concorde District has the most teams ranked in the top 10 with four. The Patriot District has three, followed by two for the Liberty District and one for the National District.

W.T. Woodson Field Hockey Camp

W.T. Woodson High School will host a field hockey camp for rising fifth through ninth graders July 22-26 from 4:30-8:30 p.m. on the school's baseball field. Camp cost is \$160 and the deadline to sign up is July 10.

For more information, contact Woodson head coach Meg Jarrell at margaretkjarrell@gmail.com or by calling 571-276-8555.

Robinson Boys' Tennis Scrimmages TJ

The Robinson boys' tennis team scrimmaged Thomas Jefferson to open the 2013 season.

Jefferson is one of the region's powers and has had an influx of talented freshmen to an already powerful lineup. However, the Rams played with great effort and intensity. Aaron Christian returns at the No. 1 position and played an excellent match to win 10-8. At No. 3, senior Jacob Schreiman out-steadied his opponent to top him, 10-6.

Senior Brian Bui moves up to the No. 2 spot from No. 3 in 2012. Another senior, Dylan Martin, started off slowly before falling 10-6 at No. 5. Sophomores Sam Wagner and Charlie Ferrell got their first varsity singles experience.

Doubles was another story as Robinson rebounded with wins at No. 1 and No. 3 and was leading at No. 2 when darkness fell. Austin Mathews joined Christian at No. 1 and both were very active at the net, dominating TJ in an excellently played match. Sophomores Wagner and Ferrell also played very well to win in a tiebreaker. Ferrell used his groundstrokes to set up Wagner's poaches. Newcomer Peter La joined Schreiman and were leading 7-4 as darkness fell.

Bruins Baseball Begins Title Defense

Several key Lake Braddock players suffered off-season injuries.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Members of the defending state champion Lake Braddock baseball team gathered in left field following Saturday's home scrimmage against Oakton. The Bruins would split into two groups and start running sprints.

Head coach Jody Rutherford didn't instruct his players to run for conditioning purposes. Think of the exercise as more of a wake-up call.

Lake Braddock is dealing with several injuries to key players. Elbow injuries to senior pitcher Thomas Rogers and senior infielder Mitch Spille; shoulder injuries to Spille and senior catcher Garrett Driscoll; and a broken leg suffered by senior infielder Alex Lewis are just some of the Bruins' ailments. Several athletes are being eased back into their roles to avoid further injury—something Rutherford said led to a lack of focus during Saturday's scrimmage.

"It's tough for them because they're not used to being [out of] the game," Rutherford said. "That's kind of the reason we're doing this running—because they're not in the game. They're always used to being in the game, so they don't know really how to handle it and they didn't handle it well today. I think they all feel like they're heading in the right direction, like they're all positive they'll come back. It's just tough [when] you live and die baseball and then you don't have it."

LAKE BRADDOCK enters the 2013 sea-

"I expect to win another state championship. I cannot say that the guys that really need to have that same mindset for us necessarily do."

—Lake Braddock baseball coach Jody Rutherford

son traveling a bumpy road as the Bruins look to defend last season's state championship—the first in program history. Along with losing 2012 Northern Region Pitcher of the Year Michael Church to graduation, Rogers, a Division I-caliber left-hander, underwent Tommy John surgery on his pitching elbow in August. If Rogers is able to return to the Bruins this season, he is unlikely to pitch, Rutherford said.

A back injury to sophomore pitcher Matt Supko, a neck injury suffered by Nick Balenger, which has the senior in a wheelchair, and other circumstances leave Lake Braddock entering the season with a pitching staff which did not throw a single varsity inning for the Bruins last season.

Senior Nick McIntyre, who transferred from Bishop O'Connell, sophomore Kevin Haswell and Driscoll are among those who will see time on the mound this season. Driscoll, a standout catcher for the Bruins, will pitch while recovering from a torn labrum in his left (non-throwing) shoulder.

"I think it's just accepting it," senior outfielder Alex Gransback said. "Just knowing it's a new year ... [and saying] all right, we have a few guys injured, but it's time to step up and rise above it."

Gransback was a member of the VirginiaPreps.com AAA all-state team and a Washington Post first-team All-Met selec-

tion last season. The Bruins will likely need his bat even more this season.

"He's playing really well," Rutherford said, "and he's back and fully healthy."

Lewis and junior shortstop Jack Owens are also key returning members of last season's state championship team, which also won the Patriot District title.

DESPITE FACING ADVERSITY early in the season, Rutherford said his expectations remain high for the Bruins—though the coach is unsure of how serious his players are about working toward another state crown.

"To be perfectly honest, my expectations haven't changed," Rutherford said. "I expect to win another state championship. I cannot say that the guys that really need to have that same mindset for us necessarily do. Whether it's because they're so focused on the injuries and recovering, or a lot of it has to do with complacency. We've had talks about it and it's not acceptable to me. If they're coming in with anything less than winning-another-state-championship attitude, they probably won't be playing for me."

Lake Braddock figures to have a target on its back this season. The Bruins are ranked No. 1 in the first Northern Region baseball coaches poll, and ranked No. 12 nationally in the latest MaxPreps.com top 25 rankings. Lake Braddock opened its season on Wednesday against St. John's, after The Connection's deadline (game was moved from Tuesday due to inclement weather). The Bruins will host Westfield at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 14.

"I think it's kind of fun," Driscoll said of getting each opponent's best shot. "They're going to come out fired up trying to beat us, giving everything they've got. It will be more interesting for us, but I'm pretty sure everyone's up for a good game [and] for a fight. It will just be, overall, more fun."

Time will tell if Saturday's sprints were enough of a wake-up call for the Bruins.

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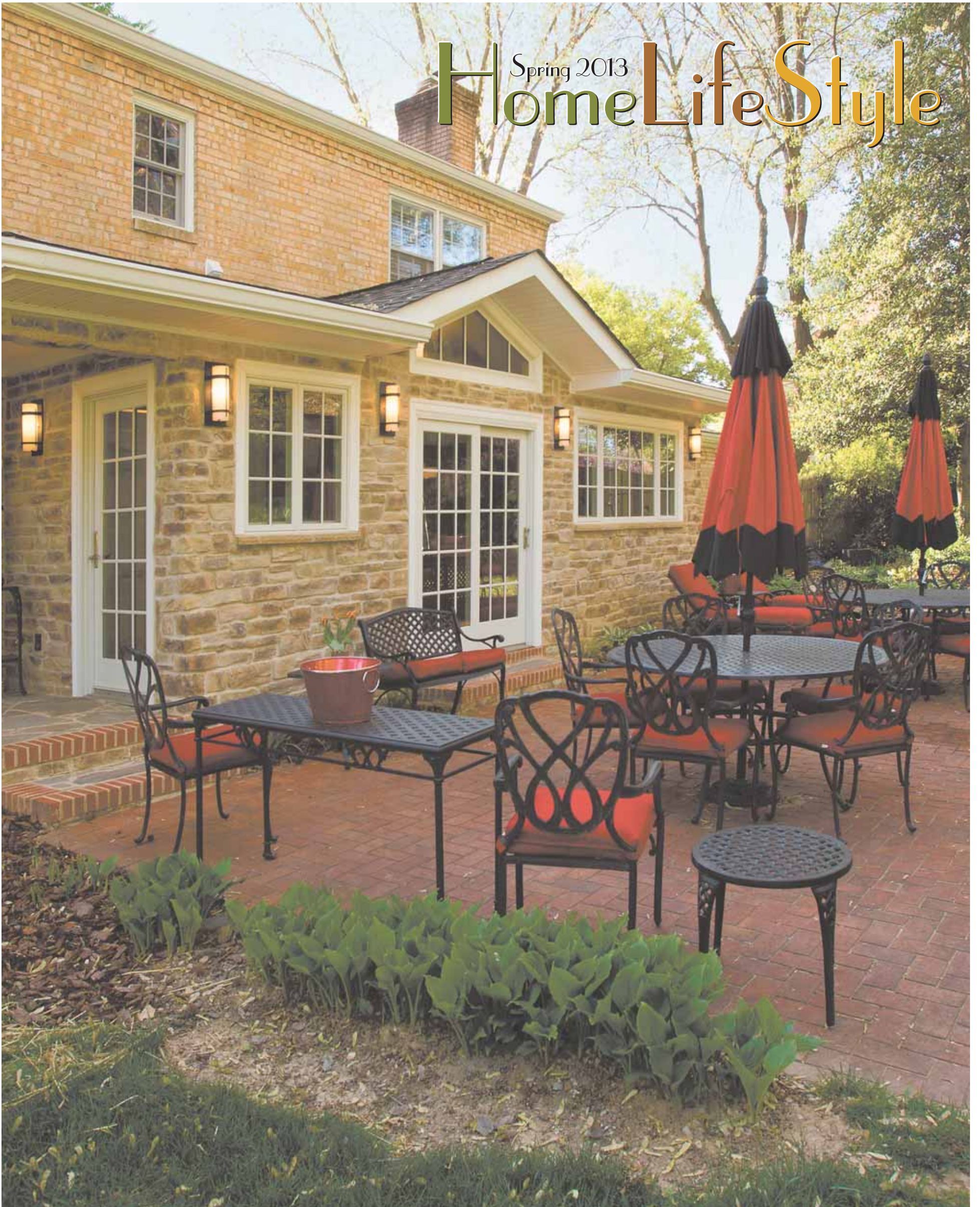
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PHOTO COURTESY OF NARI

This McLean kitchen by BOWA took top honors in the “Residential Kitchen Over \$120,000” category. The homeowners wanted to create a free-flowing, light-filled space.

The Region’s Best Home Designs

Local contractors get top honors for remodeling projects.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

From designing a kitchen with a concave glass tile backsplash to creating a backyard with a fire place and pool, some local home remodelers were honored recently with the National Association of the Remodeling Industry’s (NARI) 2013 Regional Contractor of the Year awards for design acumen. Winning projects ran the gamut from historic preservation projects to environmentally conscious conceptions.

A MCLEAN KITCHEN by BOWA took top honors in the “Residential Kitchen Over \$120,000” category. The homeowners were looking to create a free-flowing, light-filled space.

“Their kitchen was not as open as they would have liked,” said Josh Baker, founder and co-chairman of BOWA. “They wanted to make it more integrated and useful for the family.”

To accommodate a larger kitchen, the design team, which included BOWA’s George Hodges-Fulton, built an addition and added a sitting room, screened porch

and additional windows to allow an abundance of natural light to stream into the space. The new kitchen also included a butler’s pantry and a family dining area.

What is the key to turning one’s home into an award-winning, showcase house? Baker, who founded BOWA with his college friend Larry Weinberg, says an open dialogue is essential to a successful remodeling project. “The key is finding a person or company that you communicate very, very well with and whose process is in line with how you like to do business,” he said. “This is a customer service business. It is not just a construction business. The entire process is important, not just the end result.”

FAIRFAX-BASED FIRM RJK Construction, Inc. received top honors in the category of “Residential Addition \$100,000 to \$250,000” for a home in the Mantua area of Fairfax County. Company president Robert Kalmin says the homeowners’ goal was to blend their interior and exterior spaces. “They wanted to make their exterior landscaping a visual point because they entertain a lot,” he said. “The windows act as murals to the exterior landscaping bring the outdoors in and the indoors out.”

The owners requested an open floor plan that allowed guests to move freely between the kitchen and the backyard. “They were very specific about how they wanted people to meander from the outside to the inside,” Kalmin said. “We had to relocate the powder room so that people are able to use the

restroom without having to go anywhere else.”

An abundance of windows allows natural light to flow throughout the home. “The kitchen has red oak flooring and other colors and finishes that compliment the natural scenery outside,” said Kalmin.

HARRY BRASWELL of Harry Braswell, Inc. in Alexandria, was named Contractor of the Year in the “Entire House \$500,001 to \$1,000,000” category for the renovation of a home that had not been updated since the 1950s. “The house was outdated, too small for the family’s needs,” he said.

The renovation included a kitchen outfitted with cabinet-front appliances and porcelain sinks including an apron farm sink and an island sink in a pale aqua. “That color is carried throughout the house,” said project manager Gretchen Brown.

A concave glass tile backsplash surrounds the durable, brown-toned quartzite counter. “Quartzite doesn’t stain easily,” said Brown. “It is strong like granite, but is more expensive.”

The Braswell team also got a nod for energy efficiency for this project, which was named “NARI Green Project.” Brown noted that the team installed energy efficiency lighting and energy star appliances.

“The homeowners had specific criteria about wanting to meet [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design] certifica-

SEE DESIGNS, PAGE 4

80th Historic Garden Week, April 20-27

Historic Garden Week 2013 will feature approximately 200 private homes and gardens open on 32 separate tours throughout the state of Virginia over eight consecutive days. It is the largest ongoing volunteer effort in Virginia and represents the coordinated efforts of 3,400 club members. One hundred percent of tour proceeds are used to enhance Virginia’s landscape. For 80 years, the grounds of the Commonwealth’s most cherished historic landmarks have been restored or preserved with help from proceeds from Historic Garden Week including Mount Vernon, Monticello and the grounds of the Executive Mansion in Richmond. In addition to the amazing interiors and gardens on display, Garden Club of Virginia volunteers will create more than 2,000 spectacular floral arrangements to decorate the rooms. Visit www.vagardenweek.org.

SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2013

Old Town Alexandria
Sponsored by the Hunting Creek Garden Club and the Garden Club of Alexandria
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All eight private properties on the historic Old Town Alexandria tour are within an easy walk of each other, allowing visitors to enjoy strolling the quaint streets lined with charming townhouses and intimate walled gardens. The full tour ticket includes free admission to George Washington’s Mount Vernon Estate (entrance is normally \$15 per person), as well as six other notable historic sites in Alexandria on the day of the tour. Refreshments are offered from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the historic Lloyd House

SEE VIRGINIA GARDEN, PAGE 5



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GARDEN CLUB OF FAIRFAX

This home in the Vienna/Oakton area is featured on Virginia’s 80th annual Historic Garden Week tour in Fairfax County.

The Region's Best Home Designs

FROM PAGE 3

tion because they are dedicated to protecting the environment," said Braswell.

CABIN JOHN, MD., BASED firm Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc. received kudos in the "Residential Exterior, \$100,000 and Over" category for a backyard space that includes a pool and fireplace. "The homeowner wanted four separate living spaces in the backyard," said company spokeswoman Danielle Frye. "He wanted a dining room, a living room with a heat source, a place to sunbathe near his pool and a place to play cricket on his lawn."

Frye said the Wilder team, which included architect George R. Bott and lead designer Anthony Wilder, developed a backyard plan that replaced overgrown grass with flagstone and a badly worn fence with foliage to create a sense of privacy. "There is a sundeck and spaces for a sofa and dining table, but the fireplace is the focal point," said Frye. "We used really tall bamboo to shield the view from the hotel across the street."

A BETHESDA HOME ADDITION garnered a top prize in the "Residential Addition Over \$250,000" category for A.R.T Design Build Inc. with team member Grossmueller's Design Consultants, Inc.

"The client wanted to expand their one story house to have a separate area for [bedrooms] and create a more functional first floor with more communal spaces, the kitchen, family room [and] dining room," said Cindy G. McClure of Grossmueller's Design Consultants, Inc.

The design team added a new second floor to the home, which accommodates a laundry room, a master suite, two additional bedrooms and a bathroom. A stair tower and cathedral foyer cre-



PHOTO COURTESY OF MORGAN HOWARTH

This backyard oasis, designed by Anthony Wilder Design/Build, Inc., won a Contractor of the Year Award in the "Residential Exterior, \$100,000 and Over" category. The homeowner wanted a backyard space with a place to sunbathe near the pool, a dining room, a living room with a heat source and a place to play cricket.

ate an open floor plan and connect the first and second levels.

"Elements of the old house, like the wide

chimney on the front and the contemporary 1960 style were played upon and accentuated," said McClure. "The result is a

functional home that meets the needs of today's family, remained within budget and was completed on time."

"The key to a successful project is finding a person or company that you communicate very, very well with and whose process is in line with how you like to do business."

— Josh Baker, founder and co-chairman of BOWA



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NARI

Harry Brawell of Harry Braswell, Inc. in Alexandria, was named Contractor of the Year in the "Entire House \$500,001 to \$1,000,000" category for renovating a home that had not been updated since the 1950s.



This kitchen, designed by Grossmueller's Design Consultants, Inc. and A.R.T Design Build in Bethesda, Md., was part of a remodeling project that earned a 2013 Contractor of the Year award. The homeowner's goal was to create a free-flowing kitchen, dining and family room space.

Virginia Garden Week to Feature NoVa Gardens

FROM PAGE 3

and garden. Adding further convenience for tour visitors is the free King Street Trolley that travels from the Metro station down our main commercial street to the Potomac River every 15 minutes.

Tickets are \$40 and available at the Ramsey House Visitors Center at the corner of King Street and North Fairfax Street on the day of the tour. For advance tickets contact Mrs. Donald Rocen Virginia.rocen@comcast.net 703-684-3876. For more information, please contact Tour Chairmen Mason Bavin at mbavin@mcenearney.com, Twig Murray attwig@twigweb.com or Catherine Bolton at 4boltons@comcast.net

TUESDAY APRIL 23, 2013

Fairfax: Oakton/Vienna
Sponsored by The Garden Club of Fairfax
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Fairfax County communities of Oakton and Vienna have emerged from small rural towns into thriving family-oriented neighborhoods with homes and gardens reflecting a wide range of

architectural and personal style. Ticket price includes admission to the Cosby Home, the Unger Home and Garden, the Buster Home and Garden, the Kampa Home and Garden, the Rosenthal Home and Garden and Meadowlark Botanical Gardens.

Advance tickets are \$20 through April 9. Contact Marty Whipple at mwhip155@aol.com. For more information about the tour, contact Bonnie Rekemeyer at chezdarbon@aol.com.

ALL AROUND VIRGINIA

Saturday, April 20

Ashland/Elmont – The Ashland Garden Club

Old Town Alexandria – The Hunting Creek Garden Club and The Garden Club of Alexandria

Smithfield – Elizabeth River and Nansemond River Garden Clubs

Augusta County/Staunton – Augusta Garden Club

Orange County/Somerset – Dolley Madison Garden Club

Sunday, April 21

Nelson County/Albemarle – The Charlottesville, Albemarle and Rivanna Garden Clubs

Chatham – Chatham Garden Club

Monday, April 22

Nelson County/Albemarle – The Charlottesville, Albemarle and Rivanna Garden Clubs

Waterford – The Leesburg Garden Club and the Fauquier-Loudoun Garden Club

Tuesday, April 23

Oakton/Vienna – The Garden Club of Fairfax

Fredericksburg – The Rappahannock Valley Garden Club

Lynchburg – Hillside and Lynchburg Garden Clubs

Richmond – Chatham Hills/Windsor-on-the-James – The Boxwood, James River and Three Chopt Garden Clubs and

The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton

Williamsburg - Kingsmill Resort and the Colonial Area – The Williamsburg Garden Club

Petersburg – The Petersburg Garden Club

Wednesday, April 24

Harrisonburg – The Spotswood Garden Club

Martinsville – The Garden Club Study and the Martinsville Garden Club

Hampton-Newport News – The Huntington and the Hampton Roads Garden Clubs

Northern Neck/Northernumberland County – The Garden Club of the Northern Neck

Richmond – Laburnum Park – co-sponsored by The Council of Historic Richmond Foundation and

The Boxwood, James River and Three Chopt Garden Clubs and The Tuckahoe Garden Club of Westhampton

Virginia Beach – The Princess Anne and Virginia Beach Garden Clubs

Warrenton – The Warrenton Garden Club

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HomeLifeStyle

Demand for Incremental Improvements

Over time, some owners makeover the entire house — one phase at a time.

BY JOHN BYRD

If you compare the current home remodeling market to 2007, it's clear that homeowners are less likely to execute a top-to-bottom makeover in a single stroke than they were five years ago.

Home resales are rising again, but the belief that every dollar spent on a Northern Virginia home will be quickly recovered has been suspended — if only temporarily — as homeowners reassess.

For most local homeowners, a house is an asset of enormous personal appeal: an expression of identity and aspiration, periodically adapted to life's changes.

While the scale of the average project may be smaller, it's evident that many homeowners middle age or older have come to see the home as a long-term — even lifelong — work in progress, one that they take up passionately, and at regular intervals.

Veteran remodeler David Foster

calls these homeowners "incremental" improvers, and has come to see them as the primary focus of a home improvement enterprise he started 30 years ago.

As president of Foster Remodeling Solutions in Lorton, Foster regularly coaches his team on the importance of understanding what these homeowners need, what they are expecting and how to articulate their best options with clarity.

"Providing an experience that the homeowner will value unequivocally is probably our most important marketing activity," Foster said. "Our core belief is that there are many homeowners who will make a notable home improvement every two to five years, so we place a high priority on earning that person's trust. In this sense, there is nothing more important than outperforming expectation."

WHILE THERE MAY BE many reasons why a homeowner will remodel in stages, Foster observes that the typical incremental im-

prover has a pay-as-you-go orientation — often driven by evolving family requirements.

Vienna resident Kelly Grems, for instance, has executed four remodeling projects with Foster starting with a kitchen addition in 2003.

"We bought the house in 1995 when I was pregnant," Grems said. "My husband [Ed] and I had been living in a much smaller house in Maryland, but envisioned a traditional home that would offer our growing family lots of useful activity areas."

A kitchen with a sizable breakfast room was the first item on the "wish list," an assignment complicated by the fact that home's rear elevation backs into a woodland set-aside and a notably precipitous drop.

"The ground level decking was already in place," Grems said. "But David showed us a plan for an elevated breakfast room extension built on pilings that wouldn't require a ground level foundation. Turns out, this solution created a

welcome canopy for the ground level patio. And it was also a more sensible, economical choice for us at the time."

Grems says her first step was handing Foster a file of articles on kitchen interiors she had clipped from Southern Living; the Foster Remodeling design staff then took over, helping the couple visualize design ideas with the aid of a CAD computer program. The team also provided an array of relevant finish work choices, mostly pointing to readily available considerations on display in the company's showroom.

"The selection and pricing process was transparent, and really anticipated what we needed," Grems said. "When you're as busy as we are, you appreciate this quality of support."

Apart from budget considerations, Grems said taking a pause between projects allowed the couple to pay more attention to how the family is actually using the house, and to develop ideas that



The Pipers' new powder room includes a Mediterranean-style foot bath ringed in glass and mosaic tiling.

work for everyone.

The recently completed family room upgrade didn't become an



The plans for a kitchen remodel were complicated by the fact that the home's rear elevation backs into a woodland set-aside and a notably precipitous drop.

immediate action plan, for instance, because the family design process was fomenting slowly — again starting with magazine articles and other sources.

"We're particular; we let the look come to us piece by piece," she said.

In the end, Foster Remodeling designers created interior eleva-

tions that bear no resemblance to the original.

The half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by perfectly symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and Edwardian-style mantle.

"It's an entirely different mood from the sun room," Grems says,

"and perfectly satisfies another dimension of our lifestyle."

ON A SIMILAR NOTE, Sandy Nusbaum, of south Alexandria, attributes her periodic home upgrade inclinations to a gradual but decisive recognition that the four bed-

SEE PIECE BY PIECE. PAGE 11



The existing half-brick floor-to-ceiling backwall was replaced by perfectly symmetrical built-ins, crown molding and an elevated hearth with a marble surround and Edwardian-style mantle.



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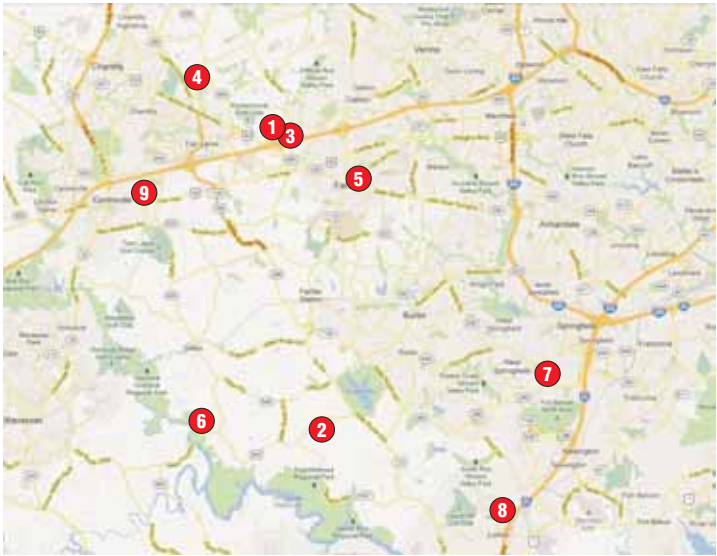
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2 10817 WINDERMERE LN	4	..	3	..	1	...	FAIRFAX STATION	\$1,275,000	...	Detached	..	11.01	22039	THE ENGLISH HILLS ESTATE	01/31/13
3 11391 AMBER HILLS CT	4	..	4	..	1	.....	FAIRFAX	\$1,160,928	...	Detached	...	0.83	.....	22033	.....	ESTATES AT FAIR OAKS	....	01/31/13
4 3510 ROSE CREST LN	5	..	4	..	1	.....	FAIRFAX	\$1,087,500	...	Detached	...	0.83	.....	22033	.....	OAK HILL ESTATES	.....	01/30/13
5 3871 LEWISTON PL	3	..	5	..	0	.....	FAIRFAX	\$1,025,000	...	Townhouse	...	0.09	.....	22030	.....	FARRCROFT	.....	01/23/13
6 12606 CLIFTON HUNT LN	5	..	4	..	1	.....	CLIFTON	\$920,000	...	Detached	...	5.31	.....	20124	.....	CLIFTON HUNT	.....	01/31/13
7 7438 SPRING SUMMIT RD	4	..	4	..	1	.....	SPRINGFIELD	\$800,000	...	Detached	...	0.44	.....	22150	.....	WESTHAMPTON	.....	01/31/13
8 8086 PAPER BIRCH DR	5	..	4	..	1	.....	LORTON	\$790,000	...	Detached	...	0.21	.....	22079	.....	LAUREL HILL LANDBAY	...	01/16/13
9 13509 LAMIUM LN	4	..	4	..	1	CENTREVILLE	\$781,000	...	Detached	...	0.25	20120	FAIRCREST SOUTH	01/04/13

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Recycle, Reuse, Remodel

BY JOSHUA BAKER
BOWA



Remodeling often affords an opportunity to re-purpose existing materials by donating to those less fortunate. Ask your remodeler if there is a plan or policy for saving materials for re-use rather than sending it to a land fill. Every project is different. And some materials are more easily removed and saved than others. Here are a couple of organizations that accepted used materials.

A WIDER CIRCLE

This organization provides basic-need items to families transitioning out of shelters and those living without life's necessities. A Wider Circle furnishes the homes of more than 1,000 children and adults each month. If you wish to donate furniture and other home essentials that are in good condition (no rips or stains), you can drop off items at their Center for Community Service in Silver Spring, Md. You can also schedule a pickup in most areas throughout greater Washington, D.C. Refer to their website for a full list of accepted items and their "wish list" of the most needed items at www.awidercircle.org. Some impressive 2011 stats:

- ❖ 13,000: Number of homes furnished
- ❖ 1,500,000: Pounds of furniture and home goods recycled
- ❖ 10,000: Number of volunteers who assisted

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY – RESTORE

ReStore is a resale business that sells new and used building materials and home items to the general public. All donations are tax deductible and donated by individuals, local retailers, building contractors and suppliers. Donated items are then sold at 50-90 percent off the retail price, with all proceeds benefiting Habitat for Humanity, an organization that provides safe and affordable housing to low-income families. ReStore accepts appliances, furniture, cabinets, roofing and flooring materials, exercise equipment, countertops, electronics, lighting and plumbing fixtures, among many others. All materials and items must be in good and working condition. Items may be dropped off at ReStore locations during their business hours or for larger donations you may schedule a pickup. For store hours and locations and for the complete list of acceptable items you can check out the following websites:

- ❖ Northern Virginia: Stores in Alexandria and Chantilly - www.restorenova.org
- ❖ Montgomery County: Store location in Gaithersburg - www.habitat-mc.org
- ❖ Loudoun County: Store in Purcellville - www.loudounhabitat.org/restore
- ❖ Fauquier County: Store in Warrenton - www.fauquierhabitat.org

GOODWILL

Founded in 1902, Goodwill accepts gently used clothing, furniture, housewares, working electronics, and other household items. These items are then sold at their retail locations, with the proceeds used to fund employment, job training, and placement services for the disadvantaged and those with disabilities. To view their full list of goods accepted, and for the list of donation centers and stores, visit www.dcgoodwill.org. You may also schedule a pickup online for larger items or multiple items you don't have the resources to transport.

SALVATION ARMY

Although the Salvation Army is involved in many community programs, proceeds from items donated to their stores will benefit their Adult Rehabilitation Centers, which help those who have lost the ability to cope with their problems and are unable to provide for themselves. Each rehabilitation center offers residential housing and work, along with individual and group therapy. This enables many to be reunited with their families and resume a normal life. Items commonly donated include appliances, clothing, furniture, and household goods. For more information on their donation program, please visit www.satruck.org.

BOWA HOME CLEANUP DAYS

As a thank you to the neighbors in the communities in which we work, from time to time BOWA hosts Home Cleanup Days. Home Cleanup Day is a great opportunity to donate and recycle gently used household items, toys and clothing, and dispose of any debris or other unwanted clutter. A BOWA employee will help folks unload their items and a Goodwill representative will be on hand to accept donations and provide receipts.

To find a BOWA Home Cleanup Day in your area, please visit our <http://info.bowa.com/communityblog/>.

Josh Baker is founder of BOWA, learn more at www.bowa.com.

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World's Fanciest Rummage Sale Coming April 7

Rumor has it that the "world's fanciest" rummag sale will feature some of the crystal light fixtures and other items recently replaced in the remodeling of the Ritz-Carlton Tysons.

Make your spring cleaning count this year. Donations are needed for the World's Fanciest Rummage Sale, benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Washington, Fairfax Region. Small items and clothing drop-offs can be brought to the front of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Tysons Corner and left with the Bell Staff. Please indicate that the items are for the Boys and Girls Clubs Rummage Sale. Donation receipts will be available at drop-off.

Have a really big item to donate? Contact Helen Kruger 703-748-4068 to make pick-up arrangements.

The sale will feature upscale, new or like-new items, including designer clothing and shoes, furniture, and home goods at ridiculously low prices.

In addition to bargains, the price of admission

includes a live DJ, delicious food and opportunities to purchase raffle tickets for prizes ranging from hotel stays, luxury dining experiences to spa packages, dinner with a celebrity, gift certificates, and more.

Sunday, April 7th, 12-4pm
The Ritz-Carlton, Tysons Corner, 1700 Tysons Blvd, McLean, VA 22102
Admission: \$5 per Person
Members of the Military FREE with Military ID
<http://www.fairfaxbgcgw.org/index.php/rummage-sale>

Suggested donations: Women's Purses, Shoes, Designer Apparel and Accessories, Jewelry, Outerwear, Men's Ties, Bicycles and Cycling, Ski Equipment, Golf Equipment, Exercise Equipment, Pool Tables, Table Tennis, Pinball, Darts, Foosball, Art, Pictures/Paintings, Small Appliances, Wines, Houseware, China/Serving Pieces, Decorative Accessories, Rugs, Furniture, Antiques

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

Home LifeStyle

All in the Family

BY JOHN BYRD
FOR THE CONNECTION

With solid planning and skillful remodeling, seniors convert personal residence into a multi-generational household.

More

Sun Design Remodeling frequently sponsors workshops on specific remodeling topics as well as tours of recently remodeled homes. Headquartered in Burke, the firm recently opened a second office in McLean. Call 703-425-5588 or visit www.SunDesignInc.com.

transitional zones suitable for easy everyday interaction.

TO ACCOMMODATE the elder Warrens, Durosko and team designed a 650 sq. ft. wing adjacent to a newly formed rear courtyard. The perfectly-integrated one-level addition features two large bedrooms, a master bath and large reach-in closets. A former family room now serves as the couple's sitting room.

By extension, Meg and the grandchildren inherit sleeping quarters in the existing bedroom wing — a configuration of rooms that affords everyone with the sufficient convenience and living space. Both families share the newly upgraded kitchen.

The makeover also allowed the Warrens to introduce a number of Universal Design features. Hallway widths in the new wing have been expanded to 44"; doors are 34" wide — compliant with American Disabilities Act requirements. The rear entrance has, likewise, been designed to accommodate a ramp, should a wheelchair be required in the future.

"We're just thinking ahead," Mary Warren said.

More recently, Mindy Mitchell — Sun Design's certified Aging-In-Place Specialist — followed Universal Design principals in renovating the original circa 1960s kitchen. Revisions included removing unneeded walls, widening doors and hallways and introducing roll-out cabinets with drawer pulls. There's also task lighting, easily maneuvered faucets and a multi-level island suitable for standing or sitting.

"The new kitchen feels significantly expanded, yet it's very efficiently designed — a great solution for a family like ours," said Mary Warren. "The changes have made life easier for everyone."



The multi-generational solution introduced by Sun Design Remodeling includes a one level seniors wing supplemented by a sitting area that exits through French doors to the newly formed courtyard. Hallways and doors in the new section are wheelchair friendly.

PHOTOS BY BRYAN BURRIS PHOTOGRAPHY



Initially, the Warrens were not sure if the existing three-bedroom split level could be converted to a larger home accommodating their new plans.

Challenging times demand creative thinking — so you don't have to look far to find homeowners executing remodeling projects with far-reaching objectives.

Take, for instance, the case of Mary and Harry Warren of Mount Vernon, both in their mid-70s.

Scrolling back a few years, the Warrens where weighing various retirement options when they learned that their daughter and three grandchildren would be moving back to Virginia from the midwest and might be amenable to participating in a three-generation household.

"There was really a lot for us to consider," said Mary Warren. "Harry and I thought that if we expanded the house to incorporate the extended family, we could eventually pass it on to the next generation. We could also make some changes that would help us to move around as we get older."

On the other hand: the more the Warrens scrutinized the existing property, the more they wondered if their vision was even feasible.

FOR STARTERS, at 1,500 sq. ft., the three-bedroom split-level the couple had occupied since 1994 was neatly centered on a small lot in a neighborhood with strictly observed set-back requirements.

To provide all three generations with the necessary space and privacy, the Warrens figured they would have to increase usable living space by 40 percent or more.

A carefully planned addition along the property's western side offered promising possibilities. But even if you could find the needed lot space, the floorplan configuration that would satisfy everyone's privacy requirements remained elusive.

It was at this juncture that the Warrens turned to Craig Durosko, founder and principal of Sun Design Remodeling.

"The program was certainly tricky," Durosko said. "The Warrens wanted a functionally independent suite that would include a luxury bath, lots of custom built-

ins and interior design improvements. Our thought was: if we could satisfy this requirement from the ground up, Meg and the grandchildren could take over half of the existing house as their own wing."

"We particularly liked the consideration to everyone's privacy needs," Mary Warren

said. "Their plan allows for independence where you want it."

Thus, stripped to its essentials, Durosko's solution called for converting the three-bedroom split-level into a five bedroom two-level structure that provides the Warrens with private quarters, yet also incorporates

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Renovating Everything, Piece by Piece

FROM PAGE 7

room colonial she has occupied for 28 years with husband Mike is the last single family residence the couple will ever own.

"We raised three children here, and when the last of them moved away, we looked at other houses in the area and even a retirement village in North Carolina," Nusbaum said. "That's when I renewed my appreciation for the many advantages of this house. I recognized that everything we wanted was already here; we just needed a few pointed improvements to take us into the foreseeable future."

Initially that meant introducing an open, "kitchen-centric" plan in the back half of the house, and creating an outdoor component — in the form of a 16-by-16-foot back screen porch — that allows for easy warm-weather circulation.

Replacing a wall between kitchen and dining room with a three-stool dining counter proved an effective starting point to delineating a more interactive entertainment space. The new surface is also well-positioned as a serving station for al fresco porch dining.

Although the needed structural changes were relatively minor, a new shelled-in niche for the refrigerator allows for additional storage. Maple cabinets with a Barton door style and honey-spice stain evoke a clean linear look within a softly lit ambiance. Likewise, the Silestone quartz surfaces in ebony pearl provide a tonal and textural contrast.

With a better rationalized kitchen in place, a few years later the Nusbaums began planning a follow-on phase: an extension of the rear family room, an open-air grilling deck and a layout that permits children, grandchildren and many guests to circulate freely through a now wide-ranging entertainment suite.

Then, just last year, the largely unused lower level was converted into a multi-purpose suite that serves as both an exercise room and guest accommodation.

"The built-ins include closets on either side of a new Murphy bed—one exclusively for guest use," Nusbaum said. "We also made the laundry room more functional and added a full bath with handicapped access."

Meanwhile, Nusbaum uses the re-made lower level for her daily

treadmill workouts: "It's a luxury having so many useful things exactly where you want them."

OF COURSE, CONSIDERATIONS to functional and aesthetic improvements aside, the long term remodeler also may venture into non-essential, even quite personal, "tweaks" to the existing property from time to time.

After comprehensive upgrades to their kitchen and master bath, for instance, Alexandrians Steve and Diane Piper decided that their eclectically re-designed powder room should include a Mediterranean-style foot bath ringed in glass and mosaic tiling.

The artfully-executed first floor facility — planned with an assist from Foster Remodeling Solutions' designer Sarah Wolf — includes a vessel basin with exposed copper piping, marble floors and a coffered ceiling with concealed lights.

The Pipers — who often travel internationally — say the foot bath is a pleasant convenience in the summer when they are often wearing sandals.

"I wouldn't say a footbath adds anything to re-sale value," Diane Piper said, "but we do plan to be in this house for at least another 10 years."

And speaking of personal vision: after re-doing the front elevation — and before remodeling the kitchen — the Baldinos of Springfield had Foster design a screen porch with a floor-to-ceiling stone hearth. The porch is closed on three sides and features a 15-foot cathedral ceiling with an overhead rotating fan. The project included an extensive flagstone patio, a privacy fence, a retaining wall and landscaping.

"We wanted space that brings us into the outdoors, and the fireplace keeps the porch surprisingly comfortable in cooler weather," said Nancy Baldino. "It's a great place to watch the game."

The Baldinos, who have lived in their circa-1970s split-level for 24 years, say that their four remodeling projects have always been focused and budgetable.


"We love the neighborhood, so the improvements are just a natural result of efforts to make the house feel even more like home."

Staff at Foster Remodeling Solutions periodically offer workshops on home improvement topics at the Lorton showroom. Call 703-550-1371 or visit www.FosterRemodeling.com.

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