

Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

Nick Balenger throws out the first pitch during West Springfield Little League's Opening Day Ceremony on Saturday, April 6, in front of 750 fans.

The Comeback Kid

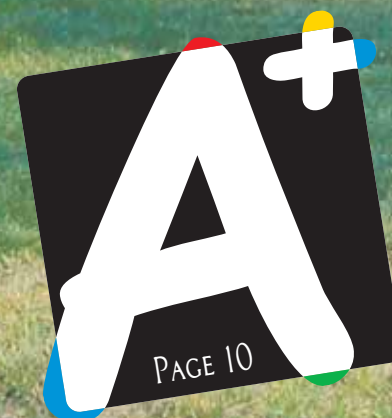
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PHOTO BY CHRISTINE BACHMAN

APRIL 18—24, 2013

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FAIRFAX STATION \$960,000

Stunning All-Brick Contemporary on private 7 acre estate! Open & airy w/huge rooms; hwd flrs on main & upper lvls; tongue & groove vaulted ceilings; gourmet granite cntr island Kitchen w/6-burner gas cooktop; Skylight Solariu foyer; 2,100-bottle wine cellar; In-ground pool & so much more! Visit today!



LORTON \$897,500

Stunning Craftmark home located in small enclaves of Oaks at Crosspointe. Over 6,000 sq. ft. of elegance on 3 finished lvls. 5 BR, 4.5 BA, 3-car side load garage; dual staircases; spacious sun room overlooking wooded backyard & more! Visit today!



ALEXANDRIA \$399,000

Beautiful 3 BR home on a large lot in a cul-de-sac of Hollin Hall Village. 1st floor with hardwood floors and sunroom addition. Great neighborhood off Fort Hunt Rd. Next to Hollin Hall shopping center. Don't miss this one!



WOODBRIDGE \$299,990

Light-filled TH w/ hardwood floors on main level. Kitchen features cherry cabinets, stainless steel appliances, granite countertops and center island.

Deck with stairs to patio and fenced yard. Bsmt has den/4th bedroom and spacious rec room with walk-up stairs. Large master bedroom offers walk-in closet, vaulted ceiling and luxury master bath w/ dual sinks, separate shower & soaking tub. Close to VRE.



SPRINGFIELD \$145,000

Great location! Walk to shopping, bus, slug lines and restaurants, 1.5 miles to Metro, easy access to major commuter routes and Ft. Belvoir.

Quiet and secure unit in rear of building overlooking pool & wooded area. Fresh paint with new carpet, kitchen cabinets/counters, lighting, and BA vanity. Newer windows. Condo fee includes heat, gas & water. Nothing to do but move in. Great value!



ANNANDALE \$495,000

WONDERFUL HOME IN PRIME WAKEFIELD CHAPEL AREA...Brick rambler on beautiful 1/2 acre treed lot...Woodson pyramid...Main lvl has hardwood under carpet...Sunny LR w/woodburning FP...Door from DR to large enclosed porch w/ door leading to carport...Lower lvl has large rec rm, powder room & den that can be used as a 4th BR...Great deck off kit. w/steps leading to patio & brick bar-b-que.



CLIFTON \$569,000

This is a quality-built brick home on a level lot that has been well-maintained and shows well. Nice floor plan. Some hardwood floors on the upper level. Newer appliances. Large recreation room and impressive fireplace on lower level. Lots of storage. Over 1,400 sq. ft on each of 2 levels. Priced to sell quickly.



BROAD RUN \$719,000

Beautiful, huge contemporary on 2.5 acres, perfect for entertaining - indoors & out. Maple floors on top 2 levels. Covered Trex deck as well as slate patio in outdoor living areas - including stone fireplace. Hi end kitchen with 6-burner stove. Entire top level is a master suite with luxury bath & sitting room. Lower level holds 3 BRs, 2 full baths, sauna & media/game room. Minutes to Route 66.



ALEXANDRIA \$449,950

Beautiful brick-front garage TH features new roof & A/C unit, completely redone kitchen w/stainless steel appliances, granite counters, upscale cabinets & custom tile backsplash, sep DR w/elegant moldings & new light fixture, LR w/crown molding & oversized SGD out to large deck w/lattice, rec room w/brick fireplace, bar area & oversized glass door to lower deck/fenced backyard. Walk to playground.



LORTON \$409,999

Stunning 3-level TH offers kit w/S.S. appliances, Corian counters, hardwoods, 42-inch cherry cabinets, double wall ovens, door to deck, new carpet, LR & DR w/crown molding, master bedroom w/tray ceiling & W/I closet, MBA has oversized shower w/double shower heads + dual sinks, rec rm w/fireplace, built-in bookcase, door to fenced rear yard w/covered patio, near VRE.



LORTON \$665,500

Immaculate stone-front SFH w/2-car garage, newer energy efficient HVAC w/ humidifier, gleaming hardwoods & elegant moldings on main & upper lvls, sunlit LR, FR w/FP, updated KIT w/granite countertops, ss appliances, an island & custom pantry, MBR w/sep vanity & full BA, huge rec room w/FP & wet bar, professionally landscape yard w/new AZEK deck. Close to Ft Belvoir, commuter routes & Kingstowne!



LORTON \$639,950

Beautiful brick-front colonial w/2-car garage backing to trees features new Trane HVAC, insulated garage door, newer ss fridge & microwave, newer front-loading W/D, plus an updated KIT, FR w/FP, breakfast rm w/ access to deck, library on main lvl, deluxe master BA, sizeable BRs, den on lower lv, terrific rec rm w/ w/o to patio. Close to VRE, Ft Belvoir, Lorton Town Center & Lorton Marketplace.



ALEX/KINGSTOWNE \$609,950

Spacious 4-level brick-front townhome w/4 bedrooms & 4.5 baths backing to trees on popular street in Kingstowne. Hardwood floors on main level, kit w/granite counters & stainless steel appliances, 3-sided gas fireplace, recessed lighting, rec room w/very high ceiling, master bedroom w/walk-in closet & bath w/separate Jacuzzi tub & shower. Walk to pool, gym, tot-lot & Town Center w/shops & movies!



SPRINGFIELD \$654,000

Gorgeous & totally updated home on quiet cul-de-sac features sand-in-place hardwoods on main & upper levels, kit w/new cabinets, Zodiac quartz counters & stainless steel appliances, new carpet on LL, 3-seasons sun rm w/vaulted ceiling, skylights & doors to outdoor oasis—fenced yard w/landscaping, pond & patio space, updated MBA & powder rm, FR w/FP & built-in bookcases, 5th BR/bonus rm & MORE!



LORTON \$629,950

Grand Colonial near Fort Belvoir features fresh paint, hardwood floors, new carpet, elegant moldings, recessed lighting and extra windows throughout, open kit w/Jenn-Air wall oven & D/W, island w/cooktop & SGD to deck w/stairs to rear yard, FR off kit w/FP, ML library/5th BR, generous MBR w/tray ceiling, 2 walk-in closets, MBA w/Jacuzzi soaking tub, separate shower, huge LL w/bonus rm, rec rm & walk-out...



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'We Have Not Forgotten'

Residents rally in Vienna to support stricter gun control measures.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Less than six miles from the National Rifle Association (NRA) headquarters in Fairfax, more than 100 people gathered on the Vienna Town Green Saturday, April 13, to urge Congress to support stricter gun control measures.

"We need to send a strong message to Congress that we have not forgotten Newtown. We have not forgotten Virginia Tech," said Pat Carol of Franconia, who attended the rally with her two teenage children. "... It's time to demand that [legislators] protect our children, instead of the gun lobby."

The event was part of a series of rallies this month co-hosted by Organizing for Action (OFA) — a social advocacy nonprofit that supports President Barack Obama — and Mayors Against Illegal Guns, a bipartisan coalition of 900 mayors co-chaired by New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg.

Both groups are calling for stricter gun laws, including background checks for all gun sales, gun safety training for all firearm buyers, and a ban on military-style assault weapons.

Vienna resident Sue Langley, a community activist with OFA of Virginia, organized Saturday's event, which began at 7 p.m. and ended with a candlelight vigil to remember the children of Newtown, and the estimated 32,000 Americans who die in gun-related deaths every year.

"The Senate will be in its final stages of debate this week, and by standing together we'll make sure they know how many people are behind them in passing legislation," Langley said.

THE EVENT included remarks from political leaders, gun control advocates and gun violence survivors.

"Eleven years ago my brother was murdered. He was 50 years old, and he had a wife and five children. He was shot during a robbery," said McLean resident Kathleen Murphy, choking back tears.

"This is personal for me, not politics," said Murphy,

"May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can change what others claim cannot be changed, and do what others claim cannot be done."

— John Horesji, coordinator of Social Action Linking Together (SALT)

ways looking for foreign enemies. The enemy I'm talking about is the NRA headquarters on I-66."

"It's been only four months since 26 children died in Newtown, and we've had 3,300 gun-related deaths," Mitchell said. "I have young grandchildren,

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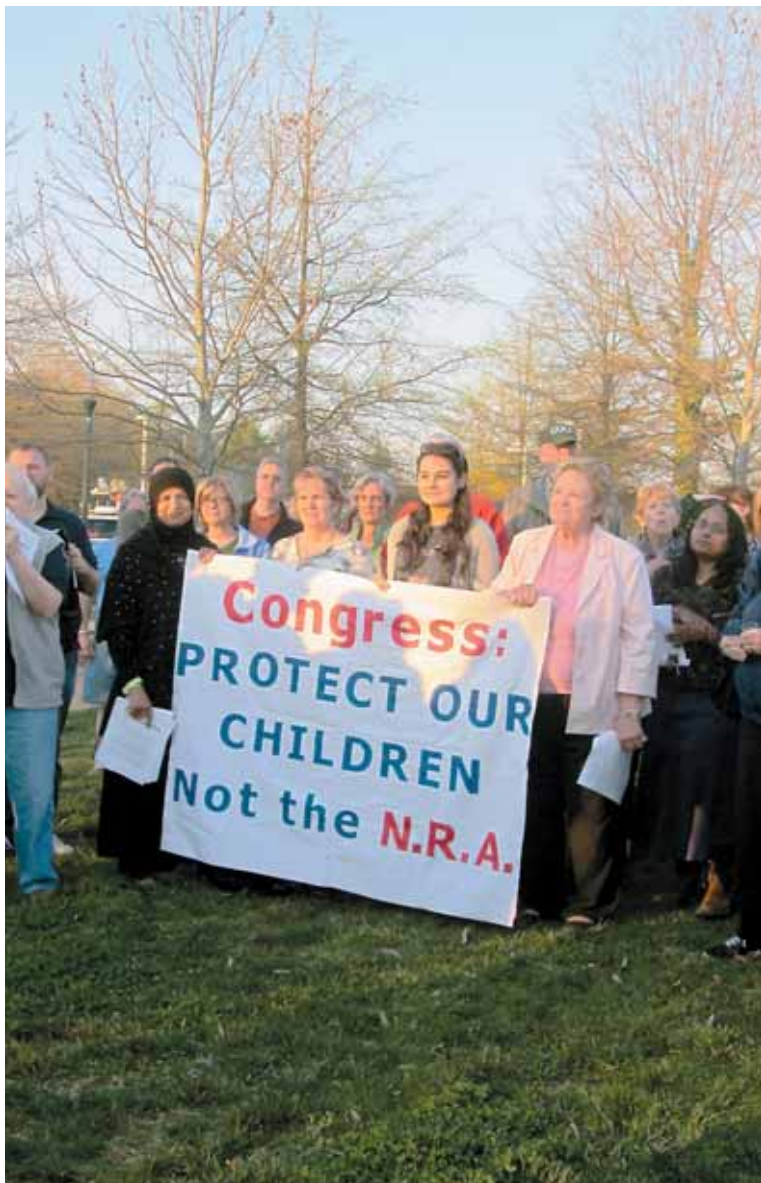


PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

Gun control advocates held a banner, "Congress: Protect Our Children, Not the NRA," during the Saturday, April 13, candlelight vigil in Vienna urging Congress to support stricter gun control measures.

VIEWPOINTS

What motivated you to attend the candlelight vigil?

— VICTORIA ROSS

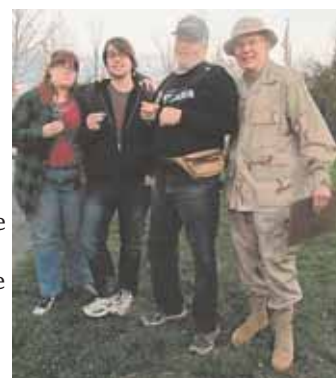
Klara Bilgin of Burke with son Alex

"I am originally from Bulgaria. When I travel abroad, people cannot believe that there are 32,000 gun deaths every year in America. They say 'you don't have a dictator; you aren't controlled by warlords, how can this happen?' We are moving in an awful direction ... we need to demand [measures] to reduce gun violence."



Hank Ronan of Fairfax (second from right), with Katy Ronan, Adam Ferguson and Earle Mitchell of Springfield

"What really [ticks] me off is that we do things like make people take off their shoes in the airport because one guy tried to light his shoe on fire, and yet we can't get background checks for guns? Some things are just common sense."



Jeanne Bierkan of Vienna

"I came here tonight because I want stronger background checks. I have two boys who grew up here, and I can't understand why we are still arguing about something that's just common sense."



Bob Hatfield of Vienna

"I'm here to support legislation that's before Congress. We need to bring Virginia into the 21st century, and see that it's responsible to have sane gun control measures and respect for the Second Amendment. The two are not mutually exclusive."



Raba Letteri of Reston attended the vigil with her husband Paul and sons Joseph, 13, (right) and Aaron, 9 (left).

"I came here from Lebanon to be safe. I saw the hatred and violence between Arabs and Jews. Now everything I hear on the news is about a shooting. I don't need to wait to lose one of my children to have a voice."





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NEWS

Hundreds Take Part in Reston Walk MS

More than 1,600 individuals and 50 volunteers participated in Sunday's Walk MS presented by Booz Allen Hamilton in Reston, benefiting the National Multiple Sclerosis Society's National Capital Chapter. Meteorologist Jacqui Jeras from ABC7-WJLA hosted the starting line program after participants warmed up with Zumba led by Nikki McNutt-Thiem from Full Out Fitness.

Walk MS Reston officially started when Cathy Onufrychuk, the event's top fundraiser from 2012, cut the ribbon to open the route.

Walkers enjoyed the sunshine and cool breeze during the 3-mile walk through Reston's scenic trails, crossing the finish line with a crowd of cheering volunteers and a celebration of live music from the Back-N-Time, lunch catered by Clyde's, and fun for the whole family.

Teams were made up of a variety of friends, family, co-workers, classmates and neighbors, joining the movement to end MS. "The

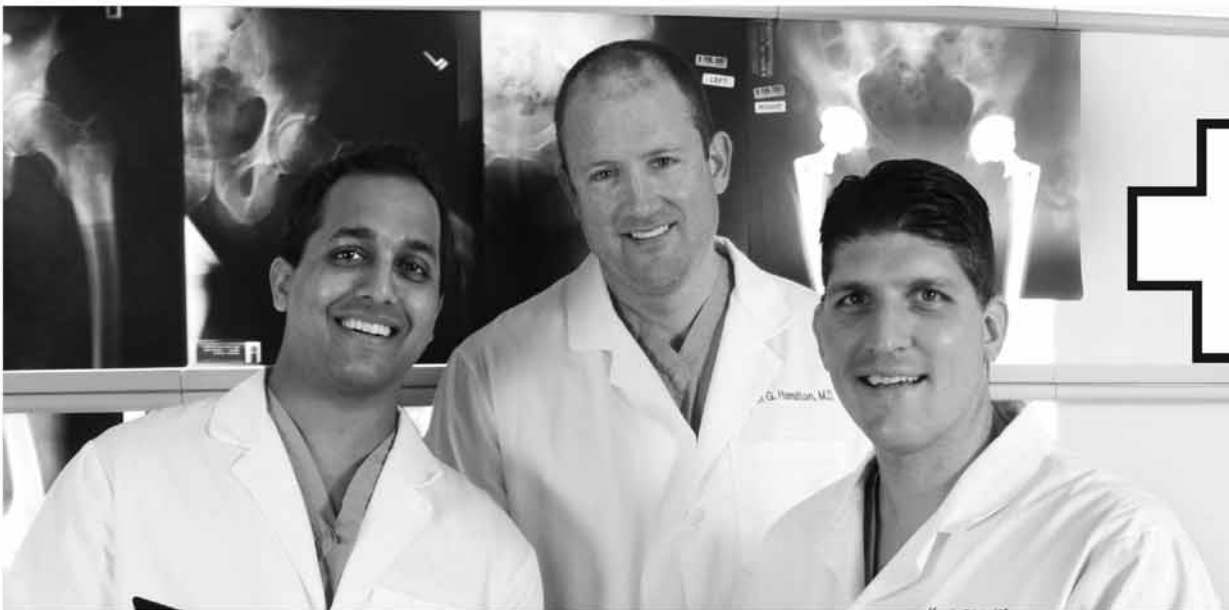


The Gerald Ramirez team from Springfield area included (from left): Evan Guerrero, Gladys Reyes, Soukayna Oukhouya, (all from Springfield), Timothy Siridavong and Warren Simmons of Lorton, young girls Savana Rushing and Layla Ramirez, Rose Ramirez (behind two girls), Diego Gonzales and Gerard Ramirez (far right), all of Springfield.

outpouring of community support for our mission was truly inspiring," said Chapter President Chris Broullire. "Funds raised will help local residents affected by multiple sclerosis as well as fund research initiatives to find a cure for the disease." Participants in Reston raised approximately \$209,000

prior to the event. Walk MS is expected to raise \$1.25 million between the six sites in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

For more information about MS or the National Capital Chapter, call 202-296-5363 or visit www.MSNationalCapital.org.



Ask the Joint Replacement Experts at Inova Mount Vernon Hospital. They Can Help.

FREE Community Lecture on Osteoarthritis and the Latest Advances in Joint Replacement

**Thursday, April 25, 2013
at 6:30 pm**

**Courtyard Potomac Mills by Marriott
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Living with the pain of arthritis can be exhausting. Surgical joint replacement can be a solution. That's when doctors from the Inova Joint Replacement Center (IJRC), a Center of Excellence for joint replacement, can make a difference.

A FREE community lecture to discuss osteoarthritis and the latest advances in hip and knee replacement surgery will be held in your area by one of our experienced joint surgeons. This is an opportunity for you to "Ask the Expert" any questions you may have.

IJRC is the largest joint replacement center in the metro-Washington DC area. Physicians practicing at the Center perform over 2,000 joint replacements annually. Patients from 31 countries and all 50 states have been provided joint replacements at IJRC.

Thanks to new techniques and medical advances, thousands of people are returning to the active lifestyle they deserve. This is your chance to join them.

This seminar is FREE but you must register by calling **1.855.My.Inova (694.6682)** or by visiting our Website at **inova.org/asktheexpert**



The Inova Joint Replacement Center has earned a Gold Seal of Approval™ by The Joint Commission for outstanding care in hip and knee replacement.

West Springfield Woman at Boston Marathon Carried to Safety by NFL Champ Joe Andruzzi

Friends and family pray for the Wittich family.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

The Wittich family of West Springfield was excited about attending the Boston Marathon, one of the historic city's prominent annual civic pride events.

On Saturday, April 13, Christine Wittich, a West Springfield High School student, posted several tweets about the upcoming trip. "Wittich invasion has commenced. Is Boston ready?" and "Yay for being that matching family," with a photo of mom Julie and sisters in matching blue t-shirts.

But after Monday's bomb blasts transformed the Boston Marathon into a scene of chaos and terror, leaving three dead and more than



West Springfield High School student Christine Wittich, standing next to her mom Julie (far right), posted this Twitter photo of her family on Saturday, April 13, in matching shirts, ready to attend the Boston Marathon.

100 injured, Wittich's tweets became more muted.

On Monday, she tweeted "Us three girls found our dad, Julie is at the hospital but she'll be fine. God is good. Continue to pray."

West Springfield neighbor Christine Bachman said she wasn't cer-

tain if Julie Wittich was a runner or a spectator, but after the bomb blasts—as she and other neighbors watched coverage of the attacks—she saw Julie on CNN being carried by New England Patriots Super Bowl champion Joe Andruzzi.

According to The Boston Globe

and other national news sources, Andruzzi was at the annual event to support a team running for his (Up) Beat Cancer Joe Andruzzi Foundation. His three brothers are New York City firefighters who aided victims during the Sept. 11 attacks, and Andruzzi stepped in to help injured bystanders.

"In some of the video I saw, her wonderful daughter was actually carrying her on her back before Andruzzi came along," Bachman said.

An MSNBC broadcast report caught that moment on tape. Christine and her sister Maddie are holding Julie and yelling for news reporters to help, while Andruzzi can be seen in a store window reflection running to assist.

Boston Globe photographer Bill Green captured a dramatic photo of Andruzzi cradling Julie Wittich, while her daughters walk on either side of him. The photo received a lot of attention, and Andruzzi released a statement Monday, April 15, saying he would prefer not to talk about his experience:

"Marathon Monday should be about uplifting stories, personal challenges and fundraising milestones, but today's bombings irrevocably changed that," Andruzzi said.

"While I appreciate the interest in hearing our perspective on today's horrific events, the spotlight should remain firmly on the countless individuals—first responders, medics, EMTs, runners who crossed the finish line and kept on running straight to give blood, and the countless civilians who did whatever they could to save lives. ... They were the true heroes. Our thoughts [and] prayers go out to all those affected by this senseless tragedy."

Annie Masterson Dipert, another Springfield neighbor, commented on Andruzzi's foundation Facebook page.

"I speak for legions of neighbors who are thankful for you carrying our dear Julie and leading her girls out of harm's way. We thank you for your selfless act," Dipert wrote.

County to Complete Road Projects

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Motorists, pedestrians and cyclists received a bonus Tuesday, April 9, when the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors reallocated \$11.2 million in existing funds to complete more than 12 planned pedestrian and road improvement projects.

According to Chairman Sharon Bulova (D-At-large), the board was able to shift money to several new or ongoing projects because the county came in under budget on two other major transportation projects—the Burke Centre VRE parking garage project and the Route 29/Gallows Road widening project.

The VRE project freed up \$3.9 million in federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) funds, and the project to widen Route 29 and Gallows Road to three lanes was finished with \$7.2 million in federal Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) dollars remaining.

The board also approved using \$1.65 million in Commercial and Industrial (C&I) taxes for three projects.

"The new projects will enhance safety, reduce bottlenecks and improve bike and pedestrian opportunities," Bulova said.

One of the biggest benefits to motorists will be the completion of three Mark Center "spot improvement" projects, funded by congestion mitigation money and RSTP dollars, as well as the Telegraph Road project, which will be funded by \$900,000 in C&I tax dollars.

PROJECT DETAILS

♦Telegraph Road: This project will add turn lanes, a raised median and sidewalk. It will improve conditions for drivers using Telegraph Road to access I-495 via South Van Dorn Street and at the bottleneck just south of the intersection before it splits to Telegraph Road and South Kings Highway.

♦I-395 southbound off-ramp to Route 236 westbound (\$500,000): To deal with anticipated additional traffic due to the Mark Center, this project will improve the signage on this off-ramp. It will alert drivers, in advance, that Quantrell Avenue, with direct access from the ramp, can be used to access Beauregard Street, Lincolnia Road and the plaza at Landmark shop-

ping center.

♦Cherokee Avenue/Route 236 (\$700,000): This project would build an exclusive northbound right turn lane from Cherokee Avenue onto Route 236. This could offer Mark Center commuters an alternative route to and from the south. This project is one of the Mark Center spot improvements.

♦Beauregard Street (\$50,000): Due to expected traffic impacts from the Mark Center, the westbound left turn lane on Route 236 at Beauregard Street could be channelized. This would prevent cars leaving the Landmark shopping center from accessing the left turn lane, crossing through three lanes of traffic in a short distance. Instead, it would shift those vehicles to another plaza exit, such as Beauregard Street.

Other projects funded in part by congestion mitigation money and RSTP dollars include:

♦Lee Road Culvert (\$1,582,000): These funds will fully fund the project to remove a bottleneck on Lee Road. By lengthening the culvert, the existing two-lane section will be widened to four lanes from 500 feet south of the culvert to Penrose Place.

♦Route 50 Pedestrian Improve-

ments (\$3,727,586): There are currently 11 projects identified along Route 50 between Jaguar Trail and Seven Corners at Olin Drive—three intersection improvements and eight sidewalk segment improvements. The total project estimate is \$8.8 million, and only \$1.9 million is currently funded. CMAQ monies, combined with available RSTP funds, will fully pay for these improvements.

♦Soapstone Trail (\$211,662): This additional money will fully fund the estimated cost to finish this sidewalk along the eastside of Soapstone Drive between South Lakes Drive and Glade Drive.

The available regional surface transportation dollars will go towards:

♦Walney Road Replacement (\$1,068,081): This money will allow the project to move into design-build implementation. This project will replace and widen the 70-foot Walney Road Bridge. This bridge, which crosses Flatlick Branch, will be widened to include five-foot bike lanes on both the north and southbound lanes, as well as a sidewalk on the west side and a shared-use path on the east side.

♦Hunter Mill Bridge Replace-

Projects that came in under-budget free up \$11.2 million.

ment (\$320,000): This money will cover the cost for the Virginia Department of Transportation's preliminary engineering of the preferred bridge concept. The current bridge's steel beams are corroded beyond repair. This bridge, which sits between Hunter Station Road and Lawyers Road, will eventually be rebuilt.

Commercial and Industrial tax revenues will be used for:

♦Stringfellow Road Park and Ride (\$600,000): This project adds about 300 new spaces to the existing facility, as well as expands the kiss-and-ride area. Originally estimated to cost \$5.5 million, the expansion is paid for with bonds approved in the 2007 referendum. However, an extra \$600,000 is needed for additional construction costs due to poor soil conditions under the parking lot and access road sites, as well as for the increased cost of the proposed transit building.

♦Route 29/Gallows Road Lighting (\$150,000): This project will install replacement light poles that are needed as a result of widening Route 29/Gallows Road. These light poles were not included in the original budget for the widening project.

OPINION

Value-added Evaluation?

TJ admissions illustrate growing gap between “haves” and “have-nots.”

More than 181,000 students attend Fairfax County Public Schools. So why do the 480 students who were accepted for next year's freshman class at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology seem so important?

Fairfax County Public Schools have a single elite magnet school, Thomas Jefferson, and TJ is frequently referred to as the top high school in the country. Dramatic disparity in the makeup of admissions at TJ is an indicator of disparity in early identification of students as gifted and talented, of access to advanced classes and enrichment, and in the basic education that the Fairfax County Public school system offers to all of its students.

❖ Fully 25 percent of students in Fairfax County Public Schools are poor enough to qualify for subsidized meals. Less than one percent of the incoming class at TJ is similarly economically disadvantaged.

❖ White students will make up just 25 percent of the incoming freshman class at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; 43 percent of FCPS students overall are white.

❖ Asian students will make up 66 percent of the incoming freshman class at TJ; 19 percent of FCPS students overall are Asian.

❖ Hispanic students will make up just 3.1 percent of the incoming freshman class at TJ; 22 percent of FCPS students overall are Hispanic.

❖ Black students will make up just one percent of the incoming freshman class at TJ; 10 percent of FCPS students overall are African American.

The local chapter of the NAACP and a group called Coalition of the Silence, led by former school board member Tina Hone, last year filed a civil rights complaint with the Justice Department alleging that FCPS is essentially running “separate-but-unequal” schools systems.

In a statement this month, Hone recently said there is “stark underrepresentation of Black and Latino students at the elementary and

middle school level who are identified as eligible to receive instruction at a Gifted and Talented and/or Advanced Academic Program center. ... Because so few Black or Latino students (or poor students) receive instruction through these centers and because the instruction in these centers is so robust, the pipeline of talented Black, Latino and poor students who are able to compete successfully for admission to TJ is choked.”

The underrepresentation of poor students is in many ways more disturbing than the racial disparities. While the concept of “value added” has been controversial in teacher evaluations

Demographics:

FCPS		Incoming TJ
African American:	10.4%	1%
Asian American:	19.3%	66%
Hispanic:	22.1%	3%
White:	43.1%	25%
Subsidized Meals	25%	1%

(the sample size is too small for that) FCPS could rightly be evaluated on the value added.

Are its top performing schools really based on the value that relatively wealthy families are able to devote to their children's education? Books, computers, tablets and more at home, enrichment programs and camps, tutors, and attention from well educated parents are the main ingredients to FCPS success.

Perhaps it is best to measure the value added by FCPS based on the performance of its poorest students, the 25 percent who qualify for subsidized meals, and who bring the smallest resources from home to the table.

The School Board has named a new superintendent, pending some final details. She is Dr. Karen Garza, currently superintendent of the Lubbock Independent School District, which serves approximately 30,000 students in Lubbock, Texas. Before that she served as the chief academic officer of the Houston Independent School District, the seventh largest school district in the country with more than 200,000 students. She faces tremendous opportunity here in Northern Virginia.

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Misreading of History

To the Editor:

That a few local schools are named for Confederate generals bothers Kiran Hampton [“Alarmed by School Names,” Connection, April 11-17, 2013]. The US Army and Navy have named forts and ships after Confederate heroes. The Veterans Administration provides headstones for Confederate graves. That wouldn't have happened if they were traitors. No Confederates were convicted of treason. Hampton's shame that Virginia fought with the Confederacy suggests a misreading of US history.

The 13 colonies seceded from the United Kingdom in 1776. Were our Founding Fathers traitors? The Confederate States of America (CSA) cited adherence to principles of that Revolution for opposing Lincoln. Treason is an attempt to overthrow one's national government. The CSA never tried to overthrow the US government. It merely asked to be left in peace. The North answered by invading the South, hence use of the

term “War of Northern Aggression” that Hampton calls ridiculous. The only thing ridiculous was the total war waged against Southerners. The ancestors of many of these same Yankee invaders were the traitors of 1814 at the Hartford Convention who promoted the secession of New England and a separate peace in the War of 1812 with America's enemy, England.

In 1861, people saw themselves as citizens of their state first and Americans second. Union army units comprised almost exclusively and fought as state militia units; the US Army was small.

In November 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president, with under 40 percent of the popular vote in a four-man race. Virginia voted for moderate John Bell. Lincoln did all he could to provoke the Confederacy into war. He rejected reconciliation by Confederate emissaries and the Washington Peace Conference chaired by ex-President Tyler of Virginia. It took six additional months for the commonwealth to move from being pro-Union to supporting secession. Virginia pursued a very deliberate approach. Between No-

vember 1860 and May 23, 1861, the Old Dominion exhausted every avenue to prevent secession and war: citizen meetings, calling a peace conference of the states, creating a state convention to debate secession, and efforts to mediate between the Federal Government and the CSA. As with adoption of the US Constitution, the Confederate states held special conventions to approve secession. Texas, Tennessee and Virginia opted for a statewide referendum on secession. In that referendum, Fairfax County and Virginia voted reluctantly, but overwhelmingly

for the ordinance of secession. On May 23, 76 percent of county voters endorsed secession, while statewide 80 percent favored secession. At 2 a.m. on May 24, Union soldiers crossed the Potomac. Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and J.E.B. Stuart fought to deliver our commonwealth from an invasion that had nothing to do with freeing slaves, but rather maintaining the forced economic dependence of the South upon the North.

Michael Shumaker
Fairfax

Thinking of History in Real Time

To the Editor,

Letter writer Kiran Hampton asks if she is “the only one alarmed by the presence of high schools named after Confederate leaders?” [“Alarmed By School Names, Connection, April 10-16, 2013]. In response, I would say, “Why yes, I believe she is.”

History cannot nearly be understood in 20/20 hindsight. To understand that period of our nation's history you must examine

and analyze the issues as if you were present during those times and not from the perspective of a person living a century and a half later. Obscured by today's political correctness is that the vast majority of people in the South at the time of the Civil War did not own slaves. In 1850, less than 6 percent of white Southerners owned slaves, leaving 94 percent who did not. To presume that

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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6

some 800,000 young, white Southerners left their homes, families, and loved ones to risk their lives defending the rights of a small, wealthy minority ignores significant other issues, such as states' rights, that had not yet been settled in our nascent republic.

If Ms. Hampton would like to participate in a present day history naming issue, I would call her attention to the Navy's politically-motivated decision to name a ship after the late Congressman John Murtha. The amphibious transport dock ship, now being constructed and scheduled for commissioning in 2015, will be named after a person known for his very public pre-trial condemnation of the Marines involved in the Haditha incident during the Iraq war, as well as his own ethical issues while a member of Congress. Further, all other ships of the class are named for American cities. As a matter of fact, I would like to see one of the area's new schools named after Lee's dependable corps commander James Longstreet, because he became a "reconstructed rebel," embracing equal rights for the newly freed blacks, unification of the nation and reconstruction.

Chris J. Krisinger
Colonel, USAF (Ret.)
Burke

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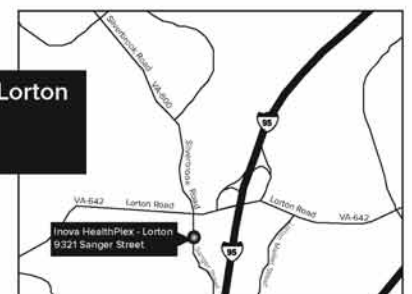
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Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. Deadline is Friday. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

SUNDAY/APRIL 21

Financial Fortitude Symposium.

1:30-4:30 p.m., at Antioch Baptist Church in Rooms 205 A-B, 6531 Little Ox Road, Fairfax Station. Guests speak on financial, estate, tax, college planning, retirement and investing; light refreshments served. RSVP by Saturday, April 20. 703-539-2813 or FinancialFortitude@fcacdst.org.

ONGOING

John Witt Chapter of the Colonial

Dames of the 17th Century. The patriotic, genealogical and heraldic society for women of lineal descendants of an ancestor who lived or served prior to 1701 in one of the original colonies in the geographical area of the present U.S. is accepting new members; the chapter meets four times yearly. jsmithtot@aol.com.

Mount Vernon Rep. Dan Storck Community Office Hours. 10 a.m.-noon, at Lorton Library, 9520 Richmond Highway, Lorton. School Board Member and Mount Vernon District Representative Dan Storck hosts drop-in community office hours the second Saturday of each month. Dan.Storck@fcps.edu or Barbara.Larsen@fcps.edu.



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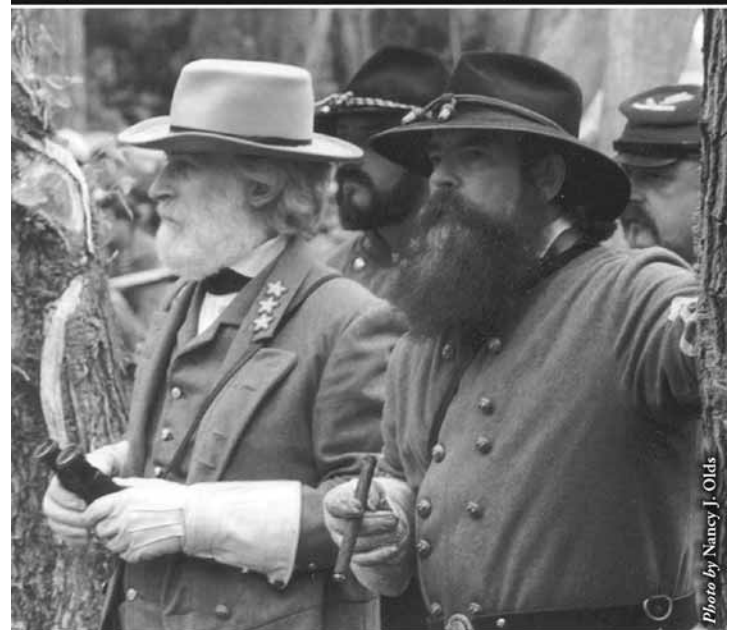


Photo by Nancy J. Olds

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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.

Knollwood Community Church Fellowship Center, 10000 Coffer 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.

Reverend Russell D. Heiland, Jr. has been appointed senior minister by the **Unity of Fairfax Board of Trustees**. During interviews at Unity of Fairfax, Rev. Heiland shared his enthusiasm for youth, family and campus ministries. He finds young adult ministry to be especially rewarding and invites church leaders to think, act and be outside the box.

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



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As the May 1 national college decision day looms, high school seniors like Jack Phillips and Elizabeth Cornick of St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School must decide which colleges they will attend in the fall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. STEPHEN'S & ST. AGNES SCHOOL

Countdown to College Decision Day

Local college counselors offer advice on making the right choice.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Marta Daniels recalls the day when her son Will received his first college acceptance letter.

"He was thrilled," she said. "It was a huge relief to know that he had been accepted somewhere." But elation soon turned to stress when Will learned that he'd been accepted into all five schools to which he'd applied. "We went from being relieved that he would be going off to college next fall to panicking over whether or not we would choose the best school for Will," said Daniels.

As the May 1 national college decision day looms, the day students must shell out hefty deposits to secure their spots at colleges and universities, students like Daniels are feeling pressure. Most college counselors agree that it's important to make sure the school is a good fit for the student academically, financially and socially, and local counselors share ideas for making the decision less daunting.

They urge students to do a thoughtful assessment of who they are and what they need to thrive in an academic environment. "From community college to the ivy leagues, every school has success stories," said Mike Canfield, director for undergraduate admissions at Marymount University in Arlington. "You can be successful at any school if it is the right one."

Brie Jeweler-Bentz, Psy.D., a psychologist at The School Counseling Group encourages students to ask, "Where to I want to be geographically? Do I need a large campus or a school with an urban campus? Will I go crazy in a small town? Do I want to paint my face and cheer on my Division I sports team?" The school's political and religious climates matter, she said, as does the local weather.

She also stressed that a school must be a good fit both socially academically. "A big rah-rah school is great, but academically will the student get lost in a big lecture hall with 400 other students?"

Michael Carter, Ph.D., director of college counseling at St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School in Alexandria, said that fit and balance also matter. "Does the student mesh with the school's programs academically and extracurricularly? Is there a good blend academically, socially and extracurricularly so that the student can have balance?"

One way to answer these questions is to spend time on campus. "Sit in the cafeteria, have lunch and look around at the students," said Jeweler-Bentz. "How do the students dress and talk? Do they have piercings, tattoos and nose rings? Does the school click for you? Does it feel like home?"

Randy Tajan, director of college counseling at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Md., said students should look at colleges through a new lens, that of admitted student. "What is student life like? What about access to professors? Can you be a student and an active citizen? They should think about again why they applied to those schools originally."

A school's atmosphere should not be underestimated, said some counselors.

"Given that our environment often affects us, for better or worse, is this school a good fit for my goals and values?" asked Michael Hude, college counselor at The Heights School in Potomac, Md. He said that students should also ask, "Does it foster an environment that will facilitate the type of growth I'd like both to experience [in college] and take with me for the rest of my life?"

Hude said that the cost of the school is an important consideration: "Will I be going into debt? Does the quality of the education and the school's reputation justify the expense and debt?"

Meg Mayo, director of college counseling at Connelly School of the Holy Child in Potomac, Md., agrees. "I think any type of scholarship money if awarded should play into a decision," she said. "I really worry about kids coming out of college loaded down with debt and not finding work right away."

Jeweler-Bentz adds the prospective students should take a look at those who have graduated from the institution. "Some schools have amazing [alumni] networks that can hook graduates up with job opportunities," she said. "It's also important to look at statistics on job and graduate school placement to see how good of a job particular colleges do with their students post-graduation."

Canfield said that once a student has selected a school, the next step is to connect. "Plan for orientation," he said. "Learn the process for registration. Check out the school's fan page on Facebook. Some schools host invitation-only closed social media sites."

Students should also start planning for life on campus. "What [activities are] they going to join when they get to campus? Students who are involved in campus activities or have a job on campus that is limited to 10 hours a week are significantly happier and do better in their classes than their counterparts who have neither," said Canfield.

26 Acts of Kindness campaign continues.

BY ANDREA WORKER
THE CONNECTION

April 1st marked the beginning of Robinson Secondary School's "26 Acts of Kindness"—a tribute to the 26 children and adults who were killed at the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting last December in Newtown, Conn. The Student Government Association (SGA) pulled out all the stops to make this "pay it forward" campaign a success, even providing t-shirts with space on the back for supporters to fill in each act of kindness performed, producing a promotional video that was uploaded to YouTube, and even establishing a Twitter site where do-gooders could post what good deeds they had done.

On Friday, April 12, the school took their kindness to the next level at a school assembly where 66 students and staff had some serious hair cuts—donating the lopped off locks to the charity Pantene Beautiful Lengths to make wigs for cancer patients.

BEFORE THE CUTTING commenced, Special Education teacher Megan Gaeta, the organizer of this charitable contribution, received a special proclamation from Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41) honoring the educator's receipt of a 2012 Virginia Lottery Super Teacher Award. The proclamation noted Gaeta's work with her special needs students who, in partnership with other Robinson students, cre-

ated the school's Packaged With Care program. Together, the students with and without special needs raise funds, then shop for supplies for community members in need, bringing hygiene supplies to shelters, school supplies for children, even crafts for hospitalized children.

The assembly then heard from Associate Principal Mike Mukai, who told the personal tale of how he had come to be the adopted parent of a 14-year-old boy when he himself was just a single 25-year-old, with only three years of teaching experience to his name. "People always say 'Wow, Mike, how you changed that boy's life!'" said Mukai. "It's really more the other way around. You do change lives with every act of kindness, but every act of kindness really changes your life—for the better."

The gathering was also inspired by Michael Ricucci, president and CEO of TerraRising Records, who told his own motivational story and spoke of his company's work to promote music therapy and support music education programs.

There was some comic relief in the form of a student "fill the packages for those in need" relay race, and then the scissors finally came out. Several hair styling teams, including a group from the Paul Mitchell School in Tysons Corner, donated their time and talent for the event. Many of the donors had a family member or friend make the first few cuts before the professionals took over and gave the newly shorn hair some style and shape. Some of the girls had been growing those tresses for years, so it was no surprise when a few tears were shed to the sound of the snip-



Ninth grader Savannah Willet of Clifton shows off her bag of donated hair. Her mom Megan Dygve sits beside her, having made the first cut. Savannah has been growing those lustrous locks since third grade.

Education • Learning • Fun

Robinson Students Make the Cut for Caring



Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D- 41) presents the proclamation for a Virginia Lottery Super Teacher 2012 Award to special education teacher Megan Gaeta at the 26 Acts of Kindness Assembly at Robinson Secondary School. Gaeta's class and the students who partner with them have donated countless hours of energy and time toward charitable activities like their Packaged With Care program.

Before, from left: Grandmother Miekko Oliver, Robinson Drama teacher Amy Hand, and her mother June Hand of Springfield pose for a pre-cut family portrait. Amy Hand made the decision to add her hair to the Acts of Kindness for cancer patients in honor of her grandmother, a survivor of recent cancer.

ping and the donations were finally zipped into plastic bags.

ROBINSON'S 26 ACTS OF KINDNESS campaign will end

officially on April 26 when all of those t-shirt-wearing, kindness-pledging students gather to take a group panoramic photograph to send to Sandy Hook Elementary

school, along with the story of their crusade to give kindness a place in daily life. Sixty-six new hairstyles walking the school halls will act as a daily reminder toward that goal.

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The Comeback Kid

Paralyzed after tragic accident, Nick Balenger throws out WSL's Opening Day pitch.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

“You always get a special kick on Opening Day, no matter how many you go through. You look forward to it like a birthday party when you're a kid. You think something wonderful is going to happen,” said baseball legend Joe DiMaggio.

And something wonderful did happen at Byron Field during West Springfield Little League's 42nd Opening Day ceremony on April 6.

Filled with 750 supporters on a sunny Saturday morning, the stadium fell silent as Nick Balenger wheeled himself onto the field.

Many fans held hands, held their breath, or crossed themselves in prayer as the 17-year-old pushed himself out of his wheelchair, took halting steps to home plate and threw out the first pitch.

“It was dead quiet, and then the crowd just erupted into cheers,” said Greg Adams, president of West Springfield Little League (WSLL). “I had heard stories that Nick was taking a few steps, but when you're there, standing next to him, watching him walk... it took my breath away.”

For Christine Bachman, watching Nick Balenger throw out the first pitch was nothing short of miraculous.

Bachman, a former attorney and self-described “baseball mom,” got to know Balenger last summer when he volunteered to help coach her son's All Star team.

“I was in awe that the boy I met in a wheelchair who was given such an uncertain prognosis was actually able to stand up and throw out the pitch just a few months later,” Bachman said.

“I also felt great admiration ... throwing a pitch 40 feet after a devastating spinal cord injury less than a year ago didn't just happen because Nick wanted it to. It is a testament to his fortitude, work ethic and resiliency. My son, Brian, actually caught the first pitch from Nick.”

BALENGER STARTED with WSL when he was 6 years old, as a Single A Diamondback, and finished as a 12-year-old with the Majors Red Sox.

The talented young athlete played three years of All Stars, and was a member of the 2007 10/11 state champions team.

“Like many kids in Little League, Nick's dad Steve managed and coached several of his WSL teams, and his mom Sylvie could always be found in the stands at Byron cheering him on,” Adams said.

“I would never trade those years for anything,” Balenger said. “Baseball was the foundation for our



Nick Balenger gets a visit from two of his best friends while he was in a hospital after his accident in Hawaii last July.

family's bond. Every practice I've been to, every game I've played got me one step closer to my high school dream.”

Last June, his dream became a reality. The Lake Braddock Bruins won their first baseball state championship.

Balenger, who was actively being recruited by many colleges, had the world at his feet. And he was looking forward to spending an “awesome” summer vacation with his family on the island of Maui, where he was born.

But his “dream” summer quickly turned tragic.

On July 25, 2012, his first day in Hawaii, he dove into a wave and broke his neck in two places. The accident left him paralyzed from the neck down.

“I was pulled out of the water by my dad. In an instant, [everything] was ripped away. Most of my family was 6000 miles away, my baseball career was over, the chances of me walking again were next to none and school was the least of my worries. I thought my life was over,” Balenger said.

Balenger said the next three days were a blur due to all the medication and surgeries, and on July 31, 2012, Balenger spent his 17th birthday in the same hospital where his life began.

After two surgeries to stabilize and fuse his spine, Balenger spent 19 days in an ICU on Maui, and 67 days as an inpatient at a rehabilitation hospital in Washington, D.C.

“He was initially given little chance of walking again, but he made it his mission to prove the doctors wrong,” Adams said.

Bachman said Balenger's resilience amazed her. “If his therapists told him to do something 10 times, he would say, ‘I'll do it 15 times.’ He never gave up.”

Two-and-a-half months after his accident, Balenger took his first steps. Two months after that, he began

SEE MIRACLE, PAGE 13



Jay Herriott with his daughters Leyanah (left) and Marissa.

PHOTO
CONTRIBUTED

Helping Homeless ‘Close to Home’

Springfield man launches the 25th Project Charity Golf Classic to benefit homeless.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

On Christmas Day 2001, Jay Herriott made a vow to himself.

“I spent the holiday away from family. It was the worst Christmas, and I vowed to myself this would not happen again,” Herriott said.

The next Christmas, Herriott went to Boston Market and purchased a complete meal for eight. He put the hot meals in the back of his Ford Explorer and spent the day handing out meals to homeless people in D.C.

In 2002, he got his daughters involved in the effort, and they delivered 14 meals to homeless individuals. In 2010, his family began giving out meals on the 25th of every month, and in 2012, the group delivered 455 home-cooked meals to homeless living in tents and makeshift shelters in the woods.

They named the organization The “25th Project,” because their efforts were initially limited to Thanksgiving and Christmas, and steadily grew into a gathering of volunteers every 25th of the month to aid the homeless in their community.

“After years of helping the homeless on Thanksgiving and Christmas, my daughters and I started to wonder what the homeless did throughout the rest of the year,” Herriott said. “During the holiday season it is easy to give, but what happens the other 10 months of the year? Over time we invited others to help out and it has just taken off from there.”

In addition to his daughters, Herriott enlists volunteers from Burke Community Church and a close-knit group of friends from the Burke Cigar Shop.

“On Christmas Eve, my church has a gift-wrapping party, and we'll wrap whatever we have, from tents and sleeping bags to flannel shirts,” Herriott said. “As The 25th Project has grown, we have expanded our goals and now provide tents, batteries, sleeping bags, tarps and other life essentials.”

This year, the grassroots organization is hosting its first charity golf tournament on April 26, at South Riding Golf Course, 43237 Golf View Drive from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Proceeds from the tournament will help raise \$25,000 needed to provide permanent housing for two individuals starting in January 2014.

“In just a few weeks, we will be playing a little golf, laughing a whole lot and raising money to help our homeless friends. The purpose of this event is to help get two of our homeless friends out of the woods and into housing on January 25th 2014,” Herriott said, adding that the funds will pay rent, utilities and some transportation costs.

“We want to help our homeless friends get plugged back into society where they are back to being productive members,” Herriott said.

For more information about The 25th Project and the golf tournament, contact Mike Mears at 202-734-1897, or visit the website at www.the25thproject.org.

Miracle on Byron Field

FROM PAGE 12

moving around his house, walking hundreds of steps in therapy and he began to walk up stairs.

Adams said the same tenacity and grit that served him well as a baseball player helped him defy the odds, and throw out the first pitch on Opening Day.

"As parents, we tell our kids that this game is about much more than a ball and a bat and that competitive sports prepare you for life, but Nick is the living proof. His parents say that his drive stems from a competitive desire to walk again," Adams said.

Balenger's story also illustrates the unique "Byron Experience" —the powerful bonds forged on the fields at Byron among the players and their families.

WITHIN DAYS of his injury, his two best friends, whom he first became close with when they played WSL together, flew to Hawaii to be by his side, and the WSL community quickly rallied around Balenger and his family.

Bachman and Sandy McIntyre, another "baseball mom," created a fundraising committee to help support Balenger and offset the costs of his medical expenses. Bachman also maintains Balenger's website, attends

therapy with him and volunteers with him through the Lorton Community Action Center.

"He inspires children just by showing them that you can face life's challenges with resilience and courage," Bachman said.

Serving as a role model is a natural fit for Balenger, she said.

"Our boys wore his number on their arms and in their hearts at regionals and have become true buddies to Nick just as he has become a role model for them," Adams said. "We are so pleased to have him kick off our season. ... Nick's achievements are reminders of all that is right and best about this game and our league."

When Balenger arrived back to Virginia, after three weeks in the hospital, he was welcomed by busloads of friends from Lake Braddock.

"My parents and family were overwhelmed by the community calling to see what they could do to help. I knew I wasn't in this alone," Balenger said.

"My family is stronger than ever. I will be going to school for the first time in January and although I am not playing baseball, I still have the mind and heart of an athlete."

To find out more about Balenger, go to www.nickbalenger.com.

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Photo prints will be returned to you if you include a stamped, self-addressed envelope, but please don’t send us anything irreplaceable.

OPEN HOUSES SATURDAY/SUNDAY, APRIL 20 & 21

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

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6012 Deep Lake Way\$759,990...Sat 12-6.....Clark Massie.....Tetra..703-391-6245

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5414 Clubside Ln.....\$449,000...Sun 1-4.....Suzanne Burch.....Century 21..703-328-5606

6028B Machen Rd\$419,900...Sat 1-4.....Helen Hong....Samson Props..703-850-1607

Chantilly

42344 Astors Beachwood.....\$800,000...Sun 1-4.....Chris Pezzana.....Weichert ..703-447-1662

Clifton

13100 Twin Lakes Dr\$1,272,500...Sun 1-4.....Marsha & Catie.....Long & Foster..703-618-4397

7380 Clifton Rd.....\$1,125,000...Sun 1-4.....Deborah Gorham.....Long & Foster..703-968-7000

13907 Stonefield Dr.....\$639,000...Sun 2-4.....Damon Nicholas..Coldwell Banker..703-502-8787

13904 Warm Springs Ct.....\$625,000...Sun 2-4.....Damon Nicholas..Coldwell Banker..703-502-8787

Fairfax

5102 Walport Ln.....\$550,000...Sun 1-4.....Kristi Morgan.....RE/MAX..703-909-4462

Fairfax Station

6207 Halley Commons Ct...\$1,199,000...Sun 1-4.....Helen Grozbean.....Keller Williams ..571-233-4287

7917 Wild Orchard Way.....\$960,000...Sun 1-4.....Pat Dewey.....Long & Foster..703-919-4952

8611 Woodwren Ln.....\$897,500...Sun 1-4.....Kathy Peters.....Long & Foster..703-915-2165

11501 Lilting Ln.....\$849,000...Sun 2-4.....Pat Fales.....RE/MAX..703-503-4365

7713 Stoney Creek Ct.....\$839,950...Sun 1-4.....Kathleen Quintarelli.....Weichert..703-862-8808

8001 Eddy Bend Trl.....\$795,000...Sun 2-4.....Carrie Shokraei.....RE/MAX..703-297-2109

6314 Youngs Branch Dr.....\$729,900...Sun 1-4.....Diana Khoury.....Long & Foster..703-401-7549

Franconia/Kingstowne

7505 Cadbury Row.....\$449,950...Sun 1-4..Tom & Cindy & Assoc.....Long & Foster..703-822-0207

4330 Gingham Ct.....\$399,950...Sun 1-4..Tom & Cindy & Assoc.....Long & Foster..703-822-0207

6500 Old Carriage Dr.....\$299,950...Sun 1-4..Tom & Cindy & Assoc.....Long & Foster..703-822-0207

Lorton

8960 Fascination Ct #316.....\$339,990...Sat 11-3.....Shawn Evans.....Long & Foster..703-790-1990

Springfield

8707 Middleford Dr.....\$724,900...Sun 1-4.....Michelle Gordon.....Long & Foster..703-489-1627

To add your Realtor-represented Open House to these weekly listings, please call Erin Peck at 703-778-9449 or E-mail the info to epeck@connectionnewspapers.com
All listings due by Tuesday at 3 P.M.

CALENDAR

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

THURSDAY/APRIL 18

21st Anniversary Fairfax County Volunteer Service Awards. 8-10 a.m., at the Waterford, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. One of the largest community-wide recognition events honors 154 volunteers with 400 guests expected in attendance; tickets available through April 12. \$40 for individuals; \$60 for corporate guests. www.volunteerfairfax.org.

Into The Woods. 7 p.m., in the Lee High School Auditorium, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. The Steven Sondheim musical centered on Cinderella and other fairy tale characters who learn that “Happily Ever After” isn’t necessarily as simple as it seems. \$10; \$5 for seniors and students. www.leadramaboosters.ticketleap.com.

FRIDAY/APRIL 19

Into The Woods. 7 p.m., in the Lee High School Auditorium, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. The Steven Sondheim musical centered on Cinderella and other fairy tale characters who learn that “Happily Ever After” isn’t necessarily as simple as it seems. \$10; \$5 for seniors and students. www.leadramaboosters.ticketleap.com.

The Phantom Tollbooth. 7:30 p.m., at Mark Twain Middle School, 4900 Franconia Road, Alexandria. A play based on the book by Norton Juster; Milo travels through the lands of Dictionopolis and Digitopolis to discover whether words or numbers are more important as he attempts to save the Princesses Sweet Rhyme and Pure Reason from the Land of Ignorance. \$5. sjlebowitz@fcps.edu.

SATURDAY/APRIL 20

John Marshall Library 50th Birthday. 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at John Marshall Library, 6209 Rose Hill Drive, Alexandria. Music, prizes, refreshments, Latin dance, a commemorative ceremony and a performance of “The Poet and the Rent,” starting at 1:30 p.m., presented by the Traveling Players Ensemble, are among the festivities at the family friendly celebration. Register. 703-971-0010 or www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library.

American Cancer Society Relay-4-Life. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., at Nova Medical Education Campus, 6699 Springfield Drive, Springfield. The second annual family friendly walk features face painting, a caricature artist, Zumba, a basketball challenge, a live DJ and food offerings concurrently available with health screenings for cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure throughout the day. \$10. 703-822-6598 or pmartinmattocks@nvcc.edu.

Standing Room Only. 11 a.m.-7 p.m., at the Vulcan Gallery, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A selection of 20 artist-customized bike seats. This show will transform the everyday and familiar seat into a work of art; what is usually seen as a tool for sitting and part of the bicycle unit will become an object of display and will be exhibited as such, standing on pedestals as purely an art object. www.workhousearts.org.

The Phantom Tollbooth. 2 p.m., 7:30 p.m., at Mark Twain Middle School, 4900 Franconia Road, Alexandria. A play based on the book by Norton Juster; Milo travels through the lands of Dictionopolis and Digitopolis to discover whether



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Back row (left to right): Randi Chambers, Courtney Cox, Brian Nguyen, Preston Taylor, Emily Kelly, Elizabeth Carlisle, Marco Valentin, Roger Wise, Danielle Payne, Kara Pepper. Front row: Raina Payne and Ellie Milewski.

Going ‘Into the Woods’ at Lee High

Four years of high school theater will come to an end for 11 seniors when Robert E. Lee High School presents the Steven Sondheim musical “Into the Woods,” April 18-20; the story centers on fairy tale characters who learn that “Happily Ever After” isn’t necessarily as simple as it seems. All three performances will begin at 7 p.m. in the auditorium at Lee High School, 6540 Franconia Road, Springfield. Tickets for “Into the Woods” are \$10, \$5 for senior citizens and students. Advance tickets can be purchased at a reduced price at www.leadramaboosters.ticketleap.com.



The Baker and the Baker’s Wife are Preston Taylor and Emily Kelly.

words or numbers are more important as he attempts to save the Princesses Sweet Rhyme and Pure Reason from the Land of Ignorance. \$5. sjlebowitz@fcps.edu.

Ignorance. \$5. sjlebowitz@fcps.edu.

MONDAY/APRIL 22

Kindergarten Orientation. 2-3:30 p.m., at Rolling Valley Elementary School, 6703 Barnack Drive, Springfield. Rising kindergarten students and their parents are invited to tour the school, meet the teachers, see the classrooms and meet other students. 703-923-2700.

TUESDAY/APRIL 23

Sam Oodle and His Sheep-TASTIC Adventure. 5 p.m., at Gum Springs Center, 8100 Fordson Road, Alexandria. Springfield native Devin Beasley will be present at his book release. www.amazon.com.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 24

MOMS on the Run. 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m., at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Pkwy., Springfield. Coffee, tea, homemade treats and perspective of Speaker Kelly White, who shares her thoughts on “taking the hard road” in the first years of child rearing so as to set the foundation for an enjoyable teen-parent relationship down the road; childcare included. \$7. MomsOnTheRun4@gmail.com.

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NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov or 800-552-3200.

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Residents Call for Stricter Gun Control Measures

FROM PAGE 3

who all live in Virginia. Newtown could happen here. When will we say 'enough'?"

The event began with a Franciscan blessing read by John Horesji of Vienna, coordinator of Social Action Linking Together (SALT).

"May God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can change what others claim cannot be changed, and do what others claim cannot be done," Horesji recited.

"From a faith perspective, Second Amendment rights need to be balanced with the Second Commandment 'to love thy neighbor as thyself.' The Second Commandment also refers to false idols, and we need to question our worship of the Second Amendment," Horesji said.

Del. Ken Plum (D-36) and Purcellville Mayor Bob Lazaro were the only political leaders to attend the event. Lazaro is a member of Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

"There's a Virginia Tech every week in this country," Lazaro said during his remarks to the crowd. "We have background checks for everything. It takes a four-day background check to adopt a dog. We need to demand criminal background checks for anyone purchasing a gun."

Lazaro cited recent independent polls that show more than 90 percent of Americans support background checks for all gun buyers. More than 80 percent of gun owners — including 74 percent of National Rifle Association members — support requiring criminal background checks for anyone purchasing a gun.

Under current federal law, only licensed firearms dealers are required to conduct background checks on potential buyers, according to a report from Mayors Against Illegal Guns. Around 40 percent of U.S. gun transfers are conducted by unlicensed "private sellers" who are not required to conduct a federal check, and who often do business at gun shows and on the Internet — indicating that about 6.6 million guns are transferred in the U.S. every year with no background check for the buyer.

"This 'private sale loophole' a people who are already prohibited from buying guns — including felons, domestic abusers and the seriously mentally ill — to avoid a background check by simply



VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

McLean resident Kathleen Murphy spoke about losing her brother 11 years ago to gun violence. She was one of several speakers during the April 13 candlelight vigil in Vienna urging Congress to support stricter gun control measures.

avoiding licensed dealers," according to the report.

Lu-Ann McNabb, a Centreville resident who was instrumental in starting the Angel Fund in memory of Reema Samaha, one of 32 students killed during the April 16, 2007 Virginia Tech shooting, also spoke at the event.

"During Reema's funeral, her mother said to look at her hands, because they were unscathed. But I kissed her forehead, and I could see the exit wound," McNabb said. "How can we continue to let our children be victims?"

Raba Letteri, a Reston preschool teacher, burst into tears after the vigil.

"I came here from Lebanon to be safe. I saw the hatred and violence between Arabs and Jews. Now everything I hear on the news is about a shooting. I don't need to wait to lose one of my children to have a voice," Letteri said.

THIS WEEK, the Senate is expected to consider several gun legislation amendments, including a breakthrough bipartisan agreement proposed by Senators Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Pat Toomey (R-Pa.) to expand background checks to online and gun show sales.

"The American people have made it clear where they stand," Langley said. "They want a response to the tragedies caused by gun violence."

For more information on OFA, go to barackobama.com. For more information on Mayors Against Illegal Guns, go to mayorsagainstillegalguns.org.



Several students with their biography boxes.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

History Day at Keene Mill

Keene Mill sixth graders celebrating their U.S. History Day engaged in several activities including: persuasive speeches, biography boxes and becoming a "living statue" by dressing as a person who was influential in early US history.

Three sixth grade students impersonating Stonewall Jackson, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.



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Robinson Coach Rike Reaches 500 Wins

60-year-old has coached Rams girls' soccer for 32 years.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Jim Rike became a high school head coach at the age of 24 when he took over the Falls Church boys' soccer program. He envisioned a career of considerable length, but as it turned out, he had no idea just how long he would stick around.

"I figured about 20 years," Rike said recently, "and I'd be done."

Rike has shown tremendous coaching longevity since his days with Falls Church. However, he sold himself short with the two-decade prediction.

Way short.

RIKE, NOW 60, is in his 37th season as a high school head soccer coach in Northern Virginia. Rike took over the Robinson girls' program after five seasons coaching the Falls Church boys' team, and has spent the last 32 years leading the Rams. Robinson has won five state championships under his watch, including the 1994 team that finished undefeated and ranked No. 2 nationally in the NSCAA/Umbro top 20 poll. The Rams at one point won six consecutive region titles (1994-99).

"I've enjoyed the kids," Rike



Robinson girls' soccer coach Jim Rike talks to the Rams during halftime of a 6-0 win against Mount Vernon on Friday, April 12. Rike reached 500 career victories earlier this season.

said, "and the experience."

While Rike had already accomplished plenty, the 2013 Rams helped him add another achievement to his resume.

Robinson defeated West Springfield 6-0 on April 4, giving Rike 500 career victories. The Rams were hoping to reach the milestone last season, but would have needed a deep postseason run in order to compile the necessary wins. Instead, Robinson's 2012 season ended with a loss to Yorktown in the Northern Region quarterfinals.

"Last year, they were aiming for it too, and we didn't get it so we were really motivated to get it this year," senior Savannah Miller said. "It was a really good experience. We all stormed the field and we could see how happy he was. It was wonderful."

After win No. 500, Robinson

beat South County 1-0 on April 8, improving the Rams' record to 5-1-1. The following night, however, Robinson lost its Concorde District opener to Chantilly, 7-1.

The lopsided loss to the Chargers was a reminder that the youthful Rams were bound to take their lumps.

"I really wasn't focused as much on [winning No. 500] as the kids were," Rike said. "We've got a really young team this year and we've had peaks and valleys, as you can see. We played so well against West Springfield—that was the 500th win—the kids were all fired up. And then, against Chantilly, it was 2-1 at half and we got down a couple goals early and the bottom just dropped out. You could just see it in the kids—it was like a deer in headlights."

"... Some of the parents came to me and I said you guys got a



Robinson senior Haley Roberson scored a goal against Mount Vernon on Friday, April 12.

little overconfident after West Springfield. I told you this is a rebuilding year for us. We've got a lot of young kids playing, we're starting three freshmen and there are going to be peaks and valleys and that was definitely a valley.

"I told the girls, you set two records this year: we got 500, and never in my life has a team I've coached ever given up more than three goals in a game and you gave up seven in one game. I said that's quite an accomplishment."

Robinson bounced back with a 6-0 victory against Mount Vernon on April 12. Miller, senior Haley Roberson, junior Alex Nagle, freshmen Katia Rabinowitch and Charlotte Hyland, and senior Annie Goetz each scored a goal for the Rams.

"He definitely cares about his players," Roberson said about Rike. "He goes above and beyond

to make sure that if how he's doing isn't working, he will adjust to how a player needs to play."

ROBINSON lost to Westfield 2-1 on Monday, April 15, dropping the Rams' record to 6-3-1 overall and 0-2 in the Concorde District. It brought Rike's career record to 502-131-55. Robinson traveled to face Centreville on Wednesday, April 17, after The Connection's deadline. Rike wrote in an email he's unsure how much longer he'll be coaching. For now, the Rams' next opponent is Oakton, which Robinson will travel to face at 7 p.m. on April 25.

"He's really dedicated," Miller said. "He cares a lot about us. We respect him a lot, he's very experienced [and] he knows what he's talking about. We look up to him because we know he's been through it all."

SPORTS BRIEFS

Lake Braddock Baseball Ranked No. 2 in Region

The Lake Braddock baseball team is ranked No. 2 in this week's Northern Region top 10 coaches poll.

The defending state champion Bruins beat Annandale 9-3 on April 15, giving them seven consecutive victories after a 3-2 start. Lake Braddock improved to 10-2 overall and 6-0 in the Patriot District. The Bruins faced T.C. Williams on Wednesday, April 17, after The Connection's deadline. Lake Braddock will travel to face Lee at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 19.

Madison is ranked No. 1 in this week's poll. Oakton is ranked No. 3, followed by Robinson (4), Centreville (5), West Potomac (6), McLean (7) and Fairfax (8). Stone Bridge and T.C. Williams finished in a tie for the No. 9 ranking. The Liberty District has four teams in the 10, most of any district in the region. The Concorde and Patriot districts each have three teams ranked.

Chantilly, Yorktown, Langley, Westfield, Washington-Lee and Herndon also received votes.

Lake Braddock Softball to Face South County

The Lake Braddock Bruins and South County Stallions are the top two teams in the Patriot District softball standings. Lake Braddock won the season's first meeting and remains in first place with an undefeated record.

Round two is approaching.

Lake Braddock will host South County at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23. The Bruins beat the Stallions 7-5 on April 3.

Lake Braddock defeated Annandale 19-0 on Monday, April 15, improving the Bruins' record to 9-0 overall and 6-0 in the Patriot District.

Lake Braddock outscored its first nine opponents 101-9, and its last four 55-0.

The Bruins faced T.C. Williams on Wednesday, April 17, after The Connection's deadline. Lake Braddock will travel to face Lee at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 19.

South County, which has won the last six Patriot District championships, started 9-1. The Stallions outscored their opponents 105-10 during their first 10 games, and 44-0



Alex Gransback and the Lake Braddock baseball team are ranked No. 2 in this week's Northern Region top 10.

during their last four.

South County faced Annandale on Wednesday, April 17, after The Connection's deadline. The Stallions will host T.C. Williams at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, April 19.

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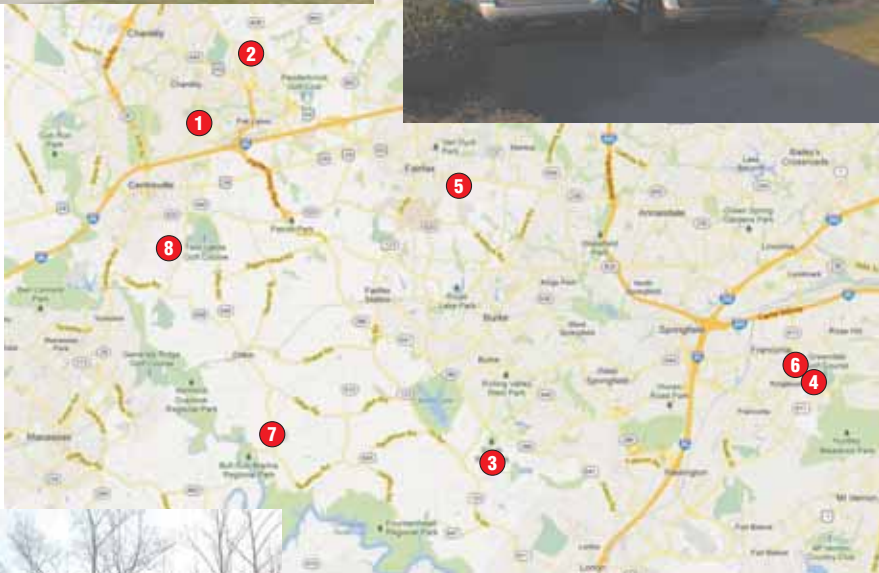


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