

Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington

Saving Jobs in Hard Times

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WELLBEING

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Tony Coombs, a decorated former marine, sits in the Springfield office of his cyber-security company. Coombs has 600 employees and operates satellite offices in Norfolk and San Diego.

Springfield BridgeWalk Salutes Soldiers

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PHOTO BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION

SEPTEMBER 5—11, 2013

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NEWS

PHOTOS BY VICTORIA ROSS/THE CONNECTION



Virginia Senator George Barker (D-39) stands with Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee) during a Fairfax County Democratic Committee meeting last month.



David Balducchi, a national employment policy expert from Arlington, lobbies lawmakers to enact work sharing legislation.

Saving Jobs in Hard Times

Virginia lawmakers will push work sharing legislation this session.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

When Springfield business owner Tony Coombs felt the “mind-boggling impact” the \$87 billion in budget cuts would have on his IT and cyber-security company, he began preparing his 600 employees for the fallout.

He froze bonuses and pay raises; he cut some employees’ hours by as much as 50 percent; he consolidated where he could and he began leasing his Springfield office building on a month-to-month basis.

“I wanted to do everything I could to avoid laying off employees,” Coombs said. “There’s not someone here who doesn’t have some family connection, and a feeling of family is something we’ve always encouraged and embraced.”

But the sequester caused serious setbacks to his company and employee morale, and after a few months of treading water, Coombs considered layoffs.

“We had to rearrange our teams to use less people,” Coombs said. “That’s the worst thing for me because everyone knows my employees always come first.”

Coombs, who participated in Congressional business roundtables to keep his company moving forward, learned about a government program adopted in several other states that help employers keep experienced workers on the payroll.

CALLED WORK SHARING, more than two dozen states are now using the program—a kind of unemployment insurance in reverse—which comes with free federal dollars to keep workers in their jobs instead of supporting them after they’re laid off. Instead of getting a pink slip during an economic downturn, workers have an opportunity to stay on the job and receive unemployment benefits for the hours they lose.

And thanks to national employment policy experts such as David Balducchi of Arlington, work sharing is getting a new look from employers across the country and the state.

“With work sharing, an employee’s lost day of work doesn’t have to mean a lost day of pay,” Balducchi said. “The hours of all employees are reduced instead of sacking some employees. Employees receive

Virginia’s Potential Saving

According to David Balducchi:

❖ If Virginia enacted a work sharing law, the commonwealth is eligible for a U.S. Department of Labor planning and implementation grant of \$2,739,420. The cutoff date to apply for the U.S. Department of Labor grant is Dec. 31, 2014.

❖ Also, had Virginia enacted work sharing the commonwealth over the three-year period beginning with passing of the federal law in February 2012, it would have enabled Virginia to receive 100 percent of federal reimbursement of work sharing benefits. According to the center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR), the potential annual estimated saving in Virginia with federal financing of work sharing could reach \$14,506,300. CEPR says this is an annual saving.

partial unemployment benefits only for their lost hours of work. And employees keep working and don’t have to search for a new position in a bleak market.”

Balducchi has been crisscrossing the United States to educate lawmakers about work sharing and to help them enact legislation. In Washington State, for example, the program has paid dental technicians and plumbers at struggling companies. “The funds enable companies to hang on to experienced workers while they wait for the economy to improve,” Balducchi said.

State Senator George Barker (D-39), a proponent of work sharing, is urging fellow lawmakers to make Virginia the next state that adopts the legislation.

Barker, who said he is making work sharing legislation one of his top priorities for the 2014 General Assembly legislative session, worked with Balducchi and John Horejsi of SALT (Social Action Linking Together) to lobby other lawmakers to enact work sharing.

“Having been through the recession and recent slight increases in Virginia unemployment rates as federal sequestration takes effect, it is important that we give Virginia businesses all the tools we can to help them and their employees get through challenging times. This bill does that,” Barker said Tuesday.

The program, Barker said, is not a red state or blue state issue. In fact, the most recent states to pass some form of work sharing legislation this summer—Wisconsin and Ohio—are led by Republican governors.

“This is a bipartisan bill put forth by Republican Senator Bill Stanley from Franklin County and myself,” Barker said. “We have worked with the business community on this bill, including the Virginia Federation of Independent Businesses, the Virginia Chamber of Commerce, and Virginia Association of Manufacturers as well as with community organizations. We have addressed the questions and concerns

SEE WORK SHARING, PAGE 5

‘Shared Work:’ A Win-Win-Win Solution

Preventing layoffs, maintaining the well-being of employees and their communities and keeping businesses competitive.

BY MARK COOPER
TYSONS CORNER

PERSPECTIVES

How do we mitigate the devastating effects of layoffs on employees, employers and their communities? Is there a “win-win-win” solution?

There is most definitely such a solution and it is called “Shared Work.” Borrowed from a program called “Kurzarbeit” in Germany, a country considered one of the world’s perennial industrial economies who knows a thing or two about surviving business cycles, this concept can decisively help Virginia companies, both large and small, weather temporary downturns by keeping their skilled workforce intact and on the job.

I know. Before coming to Virginia, I was employed by and operated my own businesses in Germany from 1980 through 2008.

From Fortune 500 companies like Texas Instruments, my first employer, to global giants like Mercedes, Bosch and others, I have personally experienced the effectiveness of these programs. And they work. A survey conducted by the state of Bavaria’s Chamber of Commerce in July 2009, the depth of the Great Recession, revealed that 60 percent of respondents were able to avoid permanent layoffs, another 16 percent were able to come away with only minimal layoffs so that well over three quarters or 76 percent were able to keep all or most of their workforce through “Shared Work.”

How? By reducing the days worked per week from 5 to 4, as an example, the companies are able to reduce a sizable portion of their labor costs, in this case 20 percent, maintain their workforce and additionally avoid costly rehiring and retraining expense when business picks up. More importantly, communities keep their breadwinners employed, which in turn continue paying taxes and consuming local goods and services. This keeps the “doors



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Mark Cooper

open” which in turn keeps families together.

While the employee will see a reduction in gross salary or wages, through the clever use of unemployment benefits which the employer has been contributing towards previously, take-home wage reduction would be not as pronounced. And that extra day would be a welcome respite to those families where both spouses are working full-time and could restore some work-life balance in the interim; or the employer could decide to use the extra day for retraining and skill improvement.

How do we proceed? In the U.S., 26 states have already adopted such “Shared Work” policy. Our commonwealth has not, to date, but the General Assembly should consider this proven public-private solution. Virginia’s labor market, like many others, is still languishing. “Shared Work” can prevent layoffs, maintain the well being of employees and their communities and keep businesses competitive over the long run.

This is an intelligent, tested policy that can truly provide a “win-win-win” for all Virginians.

AREA ROUNDUPS

Robinson Band Goes to Indianapolis

The Robinson Secondary Symphonic Band has been selected as a featured band for the 2014 Music for All National Concert Band Festival, part of the 2014 Music for All National Festival, which will be held in Indianapolis in March 2014. Selection of featured bands was competitive; Robinson Band Director Andrew Loft submitted a recording of selections from the state concert band assessment for consideration. Robinson's Symphonic Band is made up of 60 students and will be one of 16 bands from across the country performing as a featured band. Students will begin rehearsing for the performance once the 2013-14 school year begins. Contact event liaison Andrew Loft at aeloft@fcps.edu.

Be Alert for Students

Now that school is back in session, Fairfax County police urge motorists to be even more vigilant for pedestrians and bicyclists. Commuters should expect increased congestion throughout the week and build extra travel time into their schedules.

Residents may also notice police officers posted in school zones and near bus stops to help ensure pedestrian safety, plus safe loading and unloading of students. Drivers are reminded that, when bus lights and stop signs are activated, vehicles must stop in both directions, unless they're separated from the bus by a median.

Citizens Can Be Trained For Emergencies

When emergencies happen, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members can give critical support to first responders, provide immediate assistance to victims, and organize spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site. CERT members can also help with non-emergency projects that help improve the community's preparedness and safety.

Fairfax County is offering two local CERT basic training classes this fall. Both will be held at the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Academy, 4600 West Ox Road in Fairfax. The first class is held on Mondays, beginning Sept. 9, and the second class, on Wednesdays, beginning Sept. 11. Each will have eight sessions from 7-10 p.m., combining classroom instruction with practice drills and exercises.

CERT basic training doesn't require any special physical strength or agility. Safety and preparedness is stressed throughout the course. This training is free and CERT furnishes personal protective equipment for the training that students will keep upon completion of the class. People who go through CERT training have a better understanding of the potential threats to their home, workplace and community and can take the right steps to lessen their impact.

Enroll at www.fairfaxcert.com. Register as a new volunteer and, when confirmed, log in and register for CERT class 73, 74 or 75. For further information contact the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Volunteer Coordinator's Office, 703-246-3926, TTY 711.

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.

TUESDAY/SEPT. 10

Call to Join from the Wakefield Chorus. Tuesday evening practices, 7:30-9:30 p.m., at North Springfield Elementary School, 7602 Herring Court, Springfield. The chorale is a group of men and women who love to sing who meet in the school cafeteria weekly to share that love and practice it. No audition is required. 703-255-3489.

WEDNESDAY/SEPT. 11

Small Group Seminar on Loss of a Loved One. 7-8 p.m. for 11 weeks on Wednesdays, at Sydenstricker United Methodist Church, 8208 Hoes Road, Springfield. The first

session will be for introductions and orientation. Anyone suffering from grief is welcome to participate; you do not need to be a member of the church or a Methodist. \$12 for the participant's guidebook; scholarships are available. 703-451-8223 or www.sydenstrickerumc.org.

TUESDAY/OCT. 8

Meet Candidates for State Delegate from Lee District. 7 p.m., at Franconia Government Center, 6121 Franconia Road, Alexandria. LDACO and League of Women Voters of Fairfax Area will co-host a meet and greet event for candidates for state delegate or their representative. LDACOva.org.

NEWS



Flanked by Fairfax County Fire Chief Richard Bowers and Local 2068 President John Niemiec, Joshua Jurack's boot is filled by U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly, Supervisors Penny Gross and Pat Herrity, and Del. Eileen Filler-Corn.

Firefighters Hit the Streets to Fill-the-boot

Connolly praised Fairfax County fire department as "one of the best in the nation."

Fairfax County Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics Local 2068 kicked off its annual Fill-the-Boot drive for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) on Wednesday, Aug. 28 at Fire Station 14 in Burke.

Year after year over Labor Day Weekend, the men and women of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department staff fill busy intersections across the county seeking donations to support MDA's worldwide research efforts, summer camps, medical equipment and families living with muscle-wasting diseases.

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) has been a partner with MDA since 1954 and is its largest national sponsor. Thanks to the generosity of Fairfax citizens and visitors, Fairfax County Local 2068 is the largest contributor in the Greater Washington area, having raised more than \$4 million for MDA clinics, family support, and other MDA efforts in the region. Each year, the Fairfax Fire Fighters come in first or second in funds raised among IAFF affiliates across the nation.

Fairfax County Fire Chief Richard Bowers and Local 2068 President John Niemiec were joined by dozens of fire fighters, paramedics and retirees, MDA families and elected officials including U.S. Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-11), County Supervisors Penny Gross and Pat Herrity, and Del. Eileen Filler-Corn.

Niemiec thanked the public for their strong support of the Fill-the-Boot campaign year after year.

Congressman Connolly said the success of the Fairfax County fire fighters and paramedics' Fill-the-Boot effort reflected their dedication to the public and to a fire department he described as "one of the best in the nation."

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



U.S. Rep Gerry Connolly (D-11) said the dedication of the men and women of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department help make it one of the best in the nation. Connolly was speaking to county firefighters, paramedics and others gathered at Fire Station 14 in Burke to kick off the annual Fill-the-Boot drive.



John Niemiec, president of Fairfax County Professional Fire Fighters and Paramedics, thanked Fairfax County residents for their generosity and support for the annual Fill-the-Boot drive for MDA.

NEWS

Work Sharing Gains Support

FROM PAGE 3

raised by legislators.”

UNDER THE BILL proposed by Barker, the legislation would establish a shared work program that provides employers with the option of reducing the hours worked by employees, while permitting the employees whose hours are reduced to receive partial compensation for lost wages. Program participation requires Virginia Employment Commission approval of a plan, which must provide that the reduction in hours of work is in lieu of a layoff of an equivalent percentage of employees and that employees' fringe benefits cannot be reduced or eliminated during the plan.

According to U.S. Department of Labor data, work sharing has saved 61,299 jobs in a combined 19 states in 2012. Some states, like Colorado and New Hampshire, saved less than 100 jobs, while California, Texas and Washington each kept between about 10,000 and 21,000 employed, according to a Justice Center report.

Balducchi said work share programs are gaining momentum with employers nationally because it gives them flexibility during an economic downturn. Instead of laying off highly-trained, experienced employees—which may save employers money in the short term—they have the flexibility to reduce hours and maintain a specialized workforce, which ultimately benefits employers in the long term.

For an employer like Coombs, who has invested significant time and money in training top-rated cyber-security employees, the program gives him and his employees some breathing room.

“If I have to lay off people, I’m not going to 7-11 and find the talent, training and security level my clients expect. ... This business revolved around a qualified team of people,” Coombs said.

The Department of Workforce Development estimates work-share programs will save the unemployment reserve fund \$4.9 million.

“We almost got it passed in 2013 and look forward to success next year,” Barker said, adding that he remains optimistic the bill will pass in 2014.

“We will rally the troops next year,” Horejsi said. “We are energized by the prospects for success for this commonsense legislation.”



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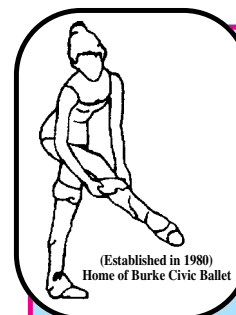
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OPINION

Later Start Times for High School

**It's past time to act;
let this year be the year.**

Tuesday morning, Sept. 3, the first day of school in Fairfax County, Dr. Karen Garza began her official day at 6:30 a.m. at Chantilly High School. While Garza was making herself available for interviews before the first class started at 7:20 a.m., many students were already on the school bus.

That means the students, and most likely their sleep-deprived parents, were rousted out of bed before 6 a.m., a time that is essentially the middle of the night for teenagers.

The science on teenagers, sleep schedule, health, learning and more all points in a single direction.

"The scientific evidence is irrefutable: chronic sleep loss and disruption in circadian

EDITORIAL

rhythms associated with early high school start times are associated with negative consequences including poor academic performance, increased sport-related injuries, and potential long-term increases in cardiovascular and metabolic (i.e., type 2 diabetes) health risks, said Judith Owens, MD, director of Sleep Medicine at Children's National Medical Center. "We know that delaying high school start times increases total sleep time and positively impacts academic achievement and school attendance. There are also documented mental and physical health benefits for students that include reductions in rates of depression and fewer drowsy driving crashes."

Children's National Medical Center's Division of Sleep Medicine has been contracted by the Fairfax County School Board to develop a plan to delay high schools' start time to 8 a.m. or later.

A 2011 survey showed that more than a quarter of 10th and 12th grade students were get-

ting less than five hours of sleep on school nights, about half of the recommended eight-and-a-half to nine-and-a-half hours of sleep for teenagers.

Sleep deprivation can also affect teen mood and ability to cope with stress. About a third of Fairfax County students surveyed in the last county student youth survey reported feeling depressed, with more than 15 percent reporting that they had considered suicide in the past year.

Fairfax County Public Schools, with a new superintendent supportive of later start times, is poised to do the right thing. It's time to make this the last year that high school begins at 7:20 a.m.

For more information see <http://smartschoolstart.wordpress.com/> and <http://www.sleepinfairfax.org/>.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS

Heading to Polls

To the Editor:

Thanks to The Connection and reporter Victoria Ross for the "Every Year is Election Year in Virginia" information in the Aug. 28 edition. I hope that readers will clip and save the article and then go to the polls and vote on Nov. 5.

I would like to add two points that were not mentioned in the article:

❖ Virginia citizens who have a current Virginia driver's license or ID card issued by the DMV can now register or update their registration information online by going to: <https://www.vote.virginia.gov>.

❖ The Fairfax County Office of Elections will need over 2,000 election officers to work at the polls for the Nov. 5 election. Persons with fluency in several languages are especially needed. Persons able to spend election day plus several hours for training to "help make democracy work" can sign up by calling the Office of Elections at 703-324-4735 or going to the office's website at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/elections/working.htm#electionofficer>.

The League of Women Voters of the Fairfax Area (LWVFA) will be at the Reston Multi-Cultural Festival at Lake Anne Plaza on Sept. 28 to register voters and provide (nonpartisan) election information. Stop by.

Therese Martin

LWVFA First Vice President

COMMENTARY

Dangers of Failure To Act

Our current and future standing in the international community is on the line.

BY JIM MORAN
U.S. REP. (D-8)

President Obama has sought Congressional approval to carry out limited surgical strikes in Syria against the regime of Bashar al Assad in response to his use of chemical weapons to attack Syrian civilians, which killed 1,429 people, including 426 children.

The Administration, led by Secretary of State Kerry, has presented what I know to be irrefutable evidence that the Assad government is responsible for this heinous attack.

I support the president's decision, but regret the fact that he chose to entrust this Congress, one of the most divisive and ineffective in history, to authorize force against the Assad regime for their use of chemical weapons. I hope the president calculated correctly, because our current and future standing in the international community is on the line. Should Congress vote down the Administration's effort, it will severely undermine America's future leadership role in foreign policy and cripple the Obama Administration's ability to respond to subsequent challenges, both foreign and domestic.

President Obama's request for authorization to attack the Assad regime rests on three considerations: (1) the ethical responsibility to react to what Secretary of State Kerry has called a "moral obscenity," Syria's clear violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol against the use of poisonous weapons; (2) The humanitarian doctrine known as "the responsibility to protect" civilians at imminent threat from their own government; and (3) The strategic imperative to establish a clear limit to the Syrian military's power,



and thus a deterrent against further use of chemical weapons.

That's not to say we should ignore the dangers involved with taking military action. The impact a strike would have on opposition fighters, our regional allies, and on civilian communities in Syria is of serious concern. We also want to ensure that we are not helping extremist groups like the al-Qaeda connected Al Nusra front gain strength due to our actions.

Should a vote in Congress fail, a U.S. attack may occur anyway. The president

has the authority to carry out limited strikes, similar to what Presidents Clinton and Reagan carried out during their time in office. But by rejecting the president's request for Congressional support, our ability to deter the use of weapons of mass destruction in the future, be they chemical or nuclear, will be diminished.

America is the only country in this world with the ability to stop the use and proliferation of such means of murdering civilians on a massive scale. I believe we have the concomitant responsibility to use that ability today if we want to bring about a more peaceful world for our children tomorrow.

What we decide to do now is transcendent of this specific situation and not confined to what we do with Bashar al-Assad. We must act in a way that represents our fundamental values and moral convictions, one that will endure through the inevitable subsequent challenges we are sure to face. The use and proliferation of chemical weapons is so abhorrent, so beyond the pale, that the world must act. In this case, our only option is military. We cannot fail to accept this responsibility today. The challenges and costs will be all the greater if we fail to act.

Springfield CONNECTION

www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

An independent, locally owned weekly newspaper delivered to homes and businesses.

**Published by
Local Media Connection LLC**

**1606 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314**

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Concerts From Kirkwood Kicks Off New Season

On Sept. 21, the first of four concerts for the 2013–2014 season features a debut performance of the Milan Piano Trio.

On Oct. 25, 2003 Concerts from Kirkwood presents its first concert in the sanctuary of Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in Springfield and has presented a collection of world-class performances every year since except for one year, during which the venue was being renovated. On Sept. 21, of this year, 10 years later, the tradition will continue with the first of four concerts for the 2013–2014 season featuring a debut performance of the Milan Piano Trio. The trio will present a program with a Latin theme beginning at 3 p.m. in the church sanctuary at 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield.

Led by locally renowned teacher and performer violinist Diana LeGrand, the trio, consisting of Ms. LeGrand, cellist Devree Lewis, and pianist Jason Solounias, brings together three local artists who have distinguished themselves with their solo performances not



Jason Solounais, pianist

only locally, but nationally, in Latin America and in Europe. Together they field a broad repertoire of classical, tango, rock and popular music that has placed each of them in high demand individually and which promises to make the trio an audience favorite as well. The Sept. 21 concert will feature a Latin theme with classical compositions by Brazilian Heitor Villa Lobos and others, as well as more contemporary favorites by Argen-



Devree Lewis, cellist

tine tango master Astor Piazzola. Of particular note is a special rendition of Piazzola's "Four Seasons of Buenos Aires" arranged for trio by Maestro Sergio Alejandro Busjle, himself an Argentine and conductor and music director of the Pan American Symphony Orchestra.

The trio is no stranger to Piazzola's music as LeGrand, the concertmaster of the Pan American Symphony and Lewis, the



Diana LeGrand, violinist

orchestra's principal cellist, have performed as soloists with both the full orchestra and smaller ensembles of the organization not only in the metro Washington area, but also in Beirut, Lebanon and Latin America. Notably, one Latin American performance was at the invitation of the president of Peru for an audience that included five heads of state from Europe, Asia and Latin America. Both LeGrand and Lewis are noted

for their artistic interpretations of the music, and with the addition of Solounias, make a powerful addition to the small ensemble offerings of the Washington and Northern Virginia area.

Rounding out the season is a Christmas concert featuring the Potomac Brass Quintet on Dec. 14, a St. Patrick's Day special concert on March 15, 2014 with acclaimed Celtic and pop group Keltish and a performance by classical guitarist Larry Snitzler on May 10, 2014. Each concert will begin at 3 p.m. and will be in the church sanctuary.

Concerts from Kirkwood was established as an outreach ministry of Kirkwood Presbyterian Church with the objective of providing world class music as a gift to the community. All concerts are free of charge with donations accepted. The series is supported entirely and exclusively by donations. Kirkwood is located at 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, which is two blocks east of the intersection of Rolling Road and Old Keene Mill Road in Springfield. For information call 703-451-5320 or go to www.kirkwoodpres.com.



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Corey Wallach, MD, completed his spine fellowship at the prestigious UCLA Comprehensive Spine Center which specializes in minimally invasive, motion preserving and traditional treatment for the neck and lumbar spine. He completed his residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, where he conducted research on biologic treatment strategies for degenerative spinal disorders, earning both national and international recognition for his efforts. He now serves as a medical director for the Inova Spine Institute.

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WELLBEING

How To Set Realistic Goals

Local experts say the key to success is setting achievable goals.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Laura Wheeler Poms, of Fairfax, set out to earn a doctorate degree and make a career change. As a wife, mother and working professional, the goal, she said, often felt lofty.

“Writing my dissertation at times felt overwhelming, especially if I looked at it as one huge project,” said Poms, who now holds a Ph.D. in industrial/organizational psychology and is an assistant professor of global and community health at George Mason University in Fairfax. “I set goals like writing one page or doing one analysis each day and I was able to get it done. I also gave myself little rewards along the way.”

While Poms set and achieved an ambitious goal, she and other psychologists say many people do not. Whether one desires to make a career change, set boundaries in an unhealthy relationship or lose weight, setting and achieving goals is difficult for some.

“The biggest reason people fall off the bandwagon is that they pick goals that are outside their behavioral repertoire, that are environmentally impossible or that they don’t have the skills to accomplish,” said Linda Berg-Cross, Ph.D., a therapist in private prac-



Laura Wheeler Poms



Amy Van Arsdale

“The biggest reason people fall off the bandwagon is that they pick goals that are outside their behavioral repertoire, that are environmentally impossible or that they don’t have the skills to accomplish.”

— Linda Berg-Cross, Ph.D.

tice and a professor of psychology at Howard University in Washington, as well as a Potomac, Md., resident. “If you say, ‘I’m going to exercise an hour a day,’ but you have a full-time job and children, you really don’t have time to exercise for an hour.”

Poms says that a person’s reasons for waiting to make a change could

affect his or her success or failure. “If your goal is motivated by guilt, fear or regret, you’re less likely to achieve that goal,” she said. “If someone tells you that you need to lose weight, unless that realization has come home to you, it is not very useful. ... If you don’t see the need, you’re not going to be motivated to accomplish it.”

To make lasting changes, experts say, one must be prepared for the work involved in making the shift. “Sometimes when people want to make a change, they are not quite ready,” said Amy Van Arsdale, Ph.D., assistant professor of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington and a therapist in private practice who lives in Fairfax. “And sometimes people want to make a change, but they aren’t sure how.

“Another reason that sometimes makes it really hard for people to make changes like setting boundaries with someone they love, is because that person might feel hurt, so the person who is trying to change backs down,” Van Arsdale continued.

Whether your goal is getting out of a toxic relationship, making a career change or maintaining an exercise plan, there are strategies that you can implement to maintain your perseverance.

“If someone starts to give up,” said Van Arsdale, “I recommend that they do a check-in and ask ‘What is going on that makes me want to quit?’”

Assessing how much control one has over the situation is another key tactic. “A person should look at what they can change and what cannot change,” said Van Arsdale. “When setting a boundary with another person, for example, a



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL/THE CONNECTION

When working to make behavioral or physical changes, experts recommend dividing one’s goals into small, gradual steps.

person could say, ‘Maybe I can change how often I call my mother, but I can’t control how often she calls me so I need to change how I respond, because I can only control myself.’”

Berg-Cross recommends small, gradual changes. “Make the teeniest changes you can think of that are part of your normal routine,” she said. “It is not making behavioral changes, it is fading from one behavior to another on a long continuum, little by little.”

Van Arsdale said that sometimes she asks clients to think in reverse. For example, “If I didn’t lose weight and I didn’t get in shape, what is the worse part?” she asks. “I am having problems with my mother and want to set better boundaries. [If] I don’t change set boundaries,

I will feel powerless, and I want to feel more powerful.”

Re-evaluate specific goals and tweak them if needed. “Sometimes people set goals that are too high,” said Van Arsdale. “If you set you goals to go to the gym five days a week and that it isn’t happening, instead go three times a week. Hanging in there and tweaking goals so that they work for you is better than giving up.”

Poms recommends a SMART (specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, time-based) model when setting and working to reach goals. “Set small, achievable goals and get excited when you meet your goals,” she said. “Accentuate the small things that you’ve done.”

Van Arsdale said, “Think how your life will change if you make

the change, but be realistic. Saying I want to lose 10 pounds is vague. Saying ‘I really want to be able to walk a 5K race with my friend’ is more doable.”

This strategy also works in interpersonal relationships. “You have to figure out what it is about the other person that makes you feel the need to set the boundary,” said Poms. “You have to figure out deep down what is the source of the irritation and then set a boundary, but you want to try to talk to that person first.”

Get support from friends and family for any challenging goal. Also, “Don’t set too many goals at once because it gets overwhelming,” said Poms. “You need practical solutions for dealing with things.”

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More than 300 runners—and walkers—participated in last year’s PVI Runfest.

Runfest 5K Race Returns to Fairfax City

The Paul VI Catholic High School (PVI) Runfest 2013 will be held on Sunday, Sept. 15, at 8 a.m. Last year’s race marked the successful return of PVI Runfest to the Paul VI neighborhood, with over 300 runners (and walkers) participating.

“If last year’s race is any indicator, then PVI Runfest 2013 should be competitive and fun; in fact, we’re expecting close to 500 participants,” said Maureen Ashby, race chairman. “Once again, we have a very enthusiastic and eager group of volunteers looking forward to continuing this race as a Fairfax City favorite.”

This year’s race will continue the

Runfest tradition of raising funds for PVI’s nationally recognized Options Program for students with intellectual disabilities. Additionally, a portion of the proceeds will benefit the PVI cross country and track programs.

The 5K course is a 2-loop route with a few gentle hills that starts and finishes in the PVI parking lot, located behind the school at 10675 Fairfax Boulevard. The course has just been re-certified by the US Track and Field Association.

For the first time in several years, this year’s race will be chip-timed for accuracy. There will be traditional top-finisher and age-group prizes and random prize drawings



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

This year’s race will be chip-timed for accuracy.

for all participants. All race registrations, with the exception of race day, can be submitted online at <http://tinyurl.com/pvirunfest2013>. The entry fee for PVI students and faculty is \$15 and \$25 for all others. Registration on

race day is \$35 for everyone. Full race details, including T-shirt and packet pickup locations, are available at the website above or by contacting Maureen Ashby at mmhpashby@verizon.net.

CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event. For more entertainment events in the county, go to: <http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2013/may/22/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 5

Gorguts. 6-11:30 p.m. Empire-Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Gorguts performs metal music. \$16.
www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1107

SATURDAY/SEPT. 7

Workhouse Education Open House. Noon-3 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse presents demonstrations, discounts on class registration, and more. Free. workhousearts.org.
Bad Mooka. 6-10:30 p.m. Empire-Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Bad Mooka performs songs of the rock genre. \$10.
www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1183.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/SEPT. 7-8

Cabaret Series: Cinemagic Memories. Sept. 7 at 8 p.m., Sept. 8 at 1 p.m. W-3 Theatre, Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse performs Academy Award-winning songs from the Golden Age of film. \$25. Doors open 30 minutes prior; cash bar available. workhousearts.org.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 8

The Dreaming. 7-11:30 p.m. Empire-Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. The Dreaming performs rock music. \$12.
www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1108.

THURSDAY/SEPT. 12

Zoogma. 8 p.m.-1 a.m. Empire-



Burke Centre Festival, Sept. 7-8

Crafty gals and guys will find many-a-ware from the offerings of arts & crafts vendors and in the shopping tents on Saturday, Sept. 7, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday, Sept. 8, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., at the Burke Centre Festival. Burke Centre Conservancy, 6060 Burke Centre Pkwy. Admission is free. 703-978-2928. Email: festival@burkecentre.org or administration@burkecentre.org. Website: www.burkecentreweb.com.

Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. \$12, open to ages 18 and up. www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1161.

FRIDAY/SEPT. 13

Anathema and Alcest. 6 p.m.-12 a.m. Empire-Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. Alcest performs metal music and Anathema plays atmospheric rock, bringing their successful-in-Europe sound stateside. \$20. www.ampedandalive.com/

[eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1176](http://www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1176).

SATURDAY/SEPT. 14

Opening Reception: "New Directions," by Toni Bragg and Lynn Goldstein. 6-9 p.m., at the Workhouse Arts Center, Studio Building 6, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Bragg and Goldstein will be featuring paintings that represent the ongoing growth and experimentation in their work; the exhibit is up Wednesday, Sept. 11 through Sunday, Oct. 6.

703-548-2900, www.tonibragg.com or www.lynngoldstein.com.

Second Saturday Art Walk.

6-9 p.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse Arts Center is proud to present featured artists and studio exhibitions for the month of September. An opening reception for all studio shows and featured artists listed below will be held campus-wide. Among the featured exhibits are watercolors by Toni Bragg, oils by Jill Brabant and art inspired by the Korean War Veterans Memorial.
www.workhousearts.org.

In Concert: Sunset Serenade.

7 p.m. Rizer Pavilion, Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Live performances of classic showtunes celebrate the end of the summer. Free, concessions and cash bar available. workhousearts.org.

Cool Cow Comedy. 7 and 9 p.m., W-3 Theatre at the Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Rahmein Mostafavi hosts five stand-up routines by touring comedians. \$15. <http://workhousearts.org/events/performing-arts/cool-cow-comedy-4>.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 20

Sixth Generation Concert. 8 p.m. Rizer Pavilion, Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The 1960s rock band performs retro hits. \$10-15; seating is provided but guests are welcome to bring chairs or blankets; beer, wine, and concessions will be sold; no outside alcohol.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 21

Milan Piano Trio at Concerts From Kirkwood. 3 p.m., at Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield. Jason

Solounias, pianist, Diana LeGrand, violinist, and Devree Lewis, cellist, play classical pieces with Latin flair as part of the free concert series. 703-451-5320 or go to www.kirkwoodpres.com.

The Gypsy Sons.

7-11:30 p.m. Empire-Alchemy Room, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. The Gypsy Sons, Jammboxx, and Fusebox perform music of the rock genre. \$10.
www.ampedandalive.com/eventdetails.aspx?eventId=1189.

SUNDAY/SEPT. 22

NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet. 2-5 p.m., at Waterford Springfield, 6715 Commerce St., Springfield. The theme of the evening is "Together We Stand" and guest speaker Rev. Dr. Kenny Smith and emcee Sheila Stewart of Radio-One DC, guide guests through the evening. \$65 for adults; \$45 for youth 16 and under. www.fairfaxnaacp.org/Freedom_Fund_2.php.

SATURDAY/SEPT. 28

Ballroom Social Dance. 7:30-10:30 p.m. McGuirewoods Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A Workhouse instructor leads an evening of social ballroom dance. \$5 for a mini-lesson, \$10 for the social dance.

SATURDAY/NOV. 2

Lorton Senior Center Advisory Council's Bake and Craft Sale. Lorton Senior Center, 7722 Gunston Plaza, Lorton. Baked goods and products made by local artists and crafters will be sold. Admission is free. 703-550-7195.

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.

Rally Day at 5500 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, provides free family fun, a BBQ, moon bounce, water slide, face painting and games for children, from noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 8. The festivities are open to the greater community. 703-352-1421 or www.livingsaviorlutheran.org.

The Guhyasamaja Buddhist Center, 10875 Main St., Fairfax City provides free classes to both newcomers and advanced practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. The center emphasizes working with the mind and learning how to understand the workings of the mind, overcoming inner causes of suffering, while cultivating causes of happiness. Under the direction of Lama Zopa Rinpoche, the center is a place of study, contemplation and meditation. Visit <http://www.guhyasamaja.org> for more information.

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 or www.fbtministries.org.

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

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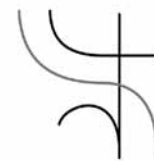
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NEWS

The Ft. Belvoir Fife and Drum Corps leads a contingent of soldiers, civic leaders and community participants across the bridge during the 12th annual Springfield Bridge Walk on Aug. 27.



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Saluting Soldiers

Twelfth annual Springfield BridgeWalk celebrates and affirms community support of Fort Belvoir's soldiers.

For just a few minutes every year, the hum of constant traffic halts on Veteran's Bridge in downtown Springfield as the Ft. Belvoir Fife and Drum Corps leads a contingent of soldiers, civic leaders and community participants across the bridge during the annual Springfield Bridge Walk.

"This evening's bridge walk is especially significant to all of us because we are honoring our good friends from Fort Belvoir by renewing the Army Community Covenant," said Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee) on Tuesday, Aug. 27.

"To me this walk symbolizes the renewal of the relationship we have with the Springfield community," said Col. Gregory Gadson, who in 2012 became the new garrison commander of Fort Belvoir, which houses 46,000 soldiers, civilians and their families.

In 2007, while serving in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom, Gadson lost both of his legs when he was injured by a car bomb. He also served during Operation Desert Storm, in Bosnia and Afghanistan.

Gadson, a 20-year Army veteran who has been awarded three Bronze Star medals and a Purple Heart, joined Supervisor Jeff McKay (D-Lee), Sen. George Barker (D-39), Del. Vivian Watts (D-39) and other community leaders in signing the Army Community Covenant, which affirms the community's support for the Armed Forces.

During the event, McKay recognized American Legion Post 176 Commander James Matlock and thanked him for all that the American Legion does for veterans and the community.

Other key officials from Fort Belvoir included Lt. Col. Brian Zarchin, Fort Belvoir Headquarters battalion commander; and Command Sergeant Major Carolyn Reynolds, headquarters battalion command sergeant major; and Ron Adelphi,



Crestwood Elementary students join the community celebration.

the U.S. Army Reserve ambassador for Virginia.

McKay also welcomed members of the Fort Belvoir Hospital, and the Mount Vernon Civil Air Patrol who joined the bridge walk this year, and thanked American Legion Post 176 General Manager Bob Eidsvoog, JP Forry, and others from Post 176 for their assistance in making the BridgeWalk happen.

McKay, who hosts the annual Lee District event, read the covenant to the crowd of about 130 people gathered on the grounds of Springfield's American Legion Post 176 after the ceremony:

"We the Community, recognize..."

*The commitment Soldiers and their Families are making every day.

*The strength of Soldiers comes from the strength of their families.

*The strength of Families is supported by the strength of the Community.

*The strength of the Community comes from the support of Employers, Educators, Civic and Business leaders and its Citizens."

Lt. Col. Deon Green led the crowd in singing the National Anthem followed by Supervisor McKay, who led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. During the signing, the Kings Park Concert Band played a medley of patriotic music, after which guests enjoyed light refreshments and door prizes.

—VICTORIA ROSS

BridgeWalk 2013 Participants and Sponsors

American Legion Post 176
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The Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
Fort Belvoir, including LTC Deon Green, (National Anthem soloist), the color guard, and sponsors

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Miss Israel Comes To Fairfax

The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia hosts meet and greet with Yityish Aynaw.

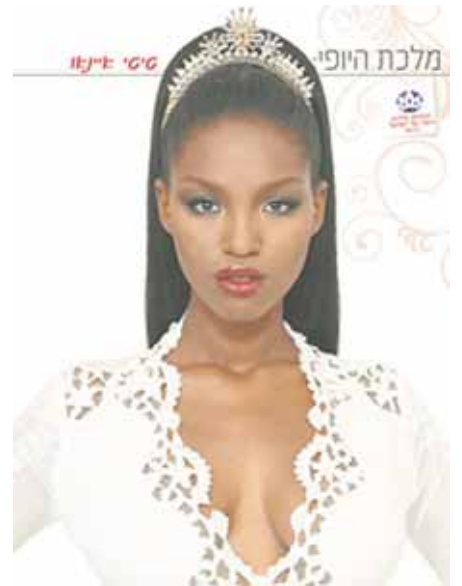
The Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia will host an evening with Miss Israel, Yityish Aynaw, the first Ethiopian-born woman to win the Israeli beauty pageant, on Tuesday, Sept. 24, at 7:30 p.m. at the JCCNV, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. The event is free and open to the public. Donations are welcome.

Ms. Aynaw, who will make a stop in Fairfax during her U.S. tour, will speak about her journey from growing up in a small Ethiopian village to becoming an Israeli beauty queen. Her message — welcoming and celebrating ethnic diversity — is compelling.

Aynaw was born in Chahawit, a small village in northern Ethiopia, near the city of Gondar. Her father died when she was young, and she lost her mother to a painful illness when she was 12. Heartbroken, she arrived in Israel with her brother to live with their Ethiopian Jewish grandparents. While still a child, Aynaw was suddenly faced with a new language, a new culture and all the rest of the challenges that come with starting a new life in a foreign country. Like the estimated 125,000 Ethiopian Jews who have gone in waves over the years to Israel, Aynaw experienced the same struggle to assimilate into her new environment. But she threw herself at it, not shying away from all that her adopted country expected of her, including mastering Hebrew and serving in the Israeli army after school.

"It (was) three of the most significant years in my life," says Aynaw about her time in the military. "There I learned a lot about myself; there I developed," she adds. "I was a girl of 19 and the army gave me structure."

After finishing her army service, Aynaw started working as a sales clerk in a clothing store.



Tall and beautiful, she long had her eye on becoming a model but she never thought about taking part in a pageant. Instead, it was a friend of hers who entered her name into the Miss Israel competition. Her win in February changed her life instantly. Within a matter of weeks, her name and image were splashed across newspapers and websites, both in Israel and abroad.

The publicity also caught the attention of one of her heroes: Aynaw was invited to an exclusive state dinner for Barack Obama in honor of his first visit to Israel as U.S. president.

Aynaw says she had never expected something like this would happen to her. "Suddenly I thought about the little girl who had suffered and the little girl whose only dream was to run and play the whole day. The pain I went through; I saw it all," she says.

This program is made possible through the support of the National Juneteenth Christian Leadership Council (NJCLC) (www.njclc.com), Rev. Ronald V. Myers, Sr., M.D., founder & chairman and sponsored through donations to the Myers Foundation (www.MyersFoundation.net). NJCLC sponsors the National and World Day of Reconciliation & Healing from the Legacy of Enslavement and hosts the 2014 Israel Juneteenth Reconciliation Tour.

SPORTS

Chess Champ Wins by Strategy

At the age of 9, Fair Lakes Crossing resident is ranked 4th nationally.

BY STEVE HIBBARD
THE CONNECTION

At the age of 9, Aasa Dommalapati, a fourth-grader at Greenbriar West Elementary, competed against the top chess players in Brazil and Canada during the summer months. She is currently ranked fourth nationally in the girls U-9 category.

Representing the U.S. for U-10 girls, she took third against nine challengers at the Pan American Youth Chess Championship in Brazil. Then it was off to Toronto in mid-August where she competed in the North American Youth Chess Championships and placed 22 out of 31. She was also part of a team of 80 players from the U.S. who played in Slovenia last year — her first international experience. She has qualified to play in Dubai at the World Youth Championship this coming December. The child wonder won her first national tournament in 2009 in Dallas while she was in kindergarten.

Since that time she has been tutored on Skype by Vempati Kameswara Rao, 33, from Hyderabad, India, who also uses the website MyChessGuru.com. He has a FIDE rating of 2088 in the Worldwide Chess Federation and is a national arbiter for chess tournaments.

He calls Aasa an “attacking” player. “I’m expecting her to become a Woman Grandmaster,” he adds. “That is a long-term goal. The short-term goal is World Youth Champion.”

Aasa also gets help from her dad Anand, who was chairman of the Greenbriar West Elementary Chess Club for four years.

BEFORE TOURNAMENTS, he often takes three hours of prep time to coach and prepare his children to win. “Usually we don’t know these people,” said Anand. “We get a basic idea of what to expect ... the coach can work with them to come up with an alternative solution and what to expect.”

For strategy, Aasa says she breaks down chess matches into three parts: openings, middle and end games. Her strategy is to use different tactics and attacks, she says: “We think of a plan and we just play it.”

If that doesn’t work, she says she tries another plan, and plays that. “And if he stops it, we think of another plan. And it goes on and on. And if he defends the plan, then we change it,” she adds.

During the Brazil tournament, she played nine rounds for almost four hours each. “I was expecting a little more, but I think I did pretty good,” said Aasa. “I played two U.S. players, from Washington state and California.”

Brother Abhinay, 14, is a freshman at Chantilly High who has been playing chess since second grade. He’s traveled all over the U.S. competing in state and national tournaments. He says he always learns something new with every chess game he plays. “I like to defend at first—then I like to attack when my



Mom Santhi, daughter Aasa, 9, brother Abhinay, 14, and dad Anand Dommalapati of the Fair Lakes Crossing community.

opponent is not expecting,” he said. “I don’t just attack or defend—I do both.” At Rocky Run Middle, he maintained a 3.9 GPA and was in the e-Cyber Mission Club and Model U.N.

The GBW Chess Club, which is coached by Paul Swaney, meets Mondays and Thursdays for students in grades second through sixth. An advanced club has 20 students who meet on Mondays.

“We group the strong with the strong,” said Anand, of the Fair Lakes Crossing community, of organizing the club. He is a certified USCF—United State Chess Federation senior tournament director. He also works as an employee for BAE Systems, Inc.

FOR CHESS PRACTICES, he’ll organize five minutes of fast games called a “Blitz” just for fun. He also organizes simul-chess or simultaneous chess, and “Bug House,” or team chess for fun.

“Basically by doing that they get to play the stronger players,” he said. “So when one tournament is over, you’ll have players with four to zero points. Those with zero points get moved into another section where they are paired with others with similar strengths.

The GBW Chess Club is now taking registration for the new school year, with 90 children maximum. They are split into two groups that play from September through January, and then February through June. The 90 are split into five or six sections, with about 16 children in each section, based on ratings. On Thursdays, students play four rounds in a tournament. Students with the highest scores win trophies and medals. During the entire season, the club plays three to four tournaments.



Woodson senior Eliza Fisher (11) finished with 31 kills against Robinson on Sept. 3.

Woodson’s Fisher Totals Career-high 31 Kills

Cavaliers beat Robinson in five sets.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

The Woodson volleyball team on Tuesday night, Sept. 3, dropped two of three sets to the Robinson Rams for the second time in four days.

There was no chance for recovery on Aug. 31 as Woodson’s 2-1 deficit meant Robinson secured a victory during a best-of-three tournament match. On Tuesday, however, the Cavaliers used intensity, positivity and career-best performance by senior Eliza Fisher to bounce back and win the regular season best-of-five rematch.

Fisher amassed a career high 31 kills as the Cavaliers won the final two sets to capture a 3-2 (25-19, 22-25, 22-25, 25-18, 15-9) victory over Robinson at Woodson High School.

“On fire. That’s all you can say,” Woodson head coach Len Palaschak said about Fisher’s performance. “She’s an amazing ball player.”

Fisher, a left-hander, tallied five kills in the fifth set, including the final two points of the match. She also totaled five aces during the contest.

“The thing about our team is when we get into ruts, we’re really good at bringing each other out of it,” Fisher said. “We’re constantly being posi-

tive. It’s very easy to get frustrated, but we’re always trying to uplift people and always try to have something positive to say.

“... [W]e were out for blood. We were mad that they beat us. ... We were just really pumped to play this game.”

Woodson’s Mackenzie Reed finished with eight kills, Dara Stevens had six kills, Bella Brahm had four kills and Kaelin Jennison and Jennifer Scott each had three.

Palaschak said Jenna Yost, who switched to the libero position late in the match, performed well. Yost will play for the University of Mary Washington.

“Jenna Yost did an amazing job,” he said. “She got to everything. She made a couple great saves.”

Woodson won back-to-back Patriot District championships in 2011 and 2012. Even though the Cavaliers are now a member of Conference 7 (same teams that were in the Patriot Dis-

trict, minus Lee) after the VHSEs six-class realignment, Fisher, a four-year varsity athlete, has her sights set on a three-peat.

“I would love to get another district championship,” she said. “Our banner is right over there and we got our very first district championship ever my sophomore year, we got another one last year [and] I’d love to continue the streak with my senior year.”

Woodson will host Oakton at 7 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 9.

“She’s an amazing ball player.”

—Woodson volleyball coach Len Palaschak about Eliza Fisher

Silence of the Court

Justices deny public access to shield personal conversations.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

The Virginia Supreme Court operates in silence, denying public access to audio recordings of its oral arguments. Unlike the U.S. Supreme Court, which denies video recordings but allows audio recordings, the commonwealth's top appeals court has a complete blackout on public access to proceedings. In a written response to questions from Connection Newspapers, the Office of the Executive Secretary of the Virginia Supreme Court explained that audio records were once public, but the installation of new equipment in January 2008 created new concerns for justices.

"The new digital recording equipment is more sensitive so that the recordings now include any confidential comments any justice makes to another justice during the oral argument," wrote Katya Herndon, director of legislative and public relations for the Office of the Executive Secretary. "Accordingly, the recordings, which are for the internal use of the justices, are no longer made available to the public."

That's unacceptable, according to several advocates for open government and freedom of the press. Virginia Press Association executive director Ginger Stanley said that she would raise the issue next month during a meeting of the Rights and Responsibilities Subcommittee of the Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council. During the meeting next month, members will be discussing whether or not to look at parts of government that are not subject to the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, which includes the State Corporation Commission and the Virginia Department of Corrections. Stanley said the August meeting would be an ideal opportunity to challenge the lack of transparency at the Virginia Supreme Court.

"I don't believe that new technology should stand in the way of transparency," said Stanley. "If this is new technology, then it should be able to block the parts that are considered private conversations."

THE LACK of transparency at the Virginia Supreme Court fits into a pattern of behavior for the commonwealth, which has a reputation for shielding basic information

from the public. Last year, the State Integrity Investigation ranked and graded each of the 50 states on government accountability, transparency and corruption. Virginia got an F, largely because police agencies use an exemption clause in the Virginia Freedom of Information Act to withhold basic documents — even in cases that are closed. Now advocates for open government say it's a mistake for the Virginia Supreme Court to operate in secret.

"It just seems unnecessary to allow the justices to make private comments like that that don't serve any function in the hearing and use that as an excuse to keep the entire thing confidential," said Gregg Leslie, legal defense director for the Arlington-based Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press. "If they really have that concern they need to have better microphones that are off unless the justice pushes a button to turn them on."

Some lawyers see the lack of transparency as a necessary and expected part of the court system.

"If a judge leans over to another judge and says something during the oral argument, to me that's part of the deliberation," said Ed Weiner, a Fairfax County attorney with 33 years of experience. "And I just don't think that the public should be invited into chambers during deliberations."

THE COURT is an infamously closed operation. No video records are allowed. No audio recordings

are permitted. Visitors to the court are not allowed to enter the building with a cell phone. The court does not even produce transcripts of the oral arguments. Some say the failure to allow public access to audio recordings is a mistake that should either be fixed with some kind of tweak to the recording system or by a new law forcing the courts to allow more sunshine into the dark corridors of power in Richmond.

"The recordings should be made public," said Del. Scott Surovell (D-44). "These cases are some of the most important cases in Virginia, and it's important to have as much sunshine on the public part of that process as possible."

That's a bipartisan view. Courts of Justice Chairman Del. David Albo (R-42) says the Virginia Supreme Court should allow public access to oral arguments or face an effort from the General Assembly to force transparency.

"They are denying the public recordings because they chose crappy technology," said Albo. "I just don't see why they shouldn't give them out. People are allowed to be there. It's a public forum."

"The new digital recording equipment is more sensitive so that the recordings now include any confidential comments any justice makes to another justice during the oral argument."

— Katya Herndon, director of legislative and public relations, Office of the Executive Secretary

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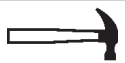
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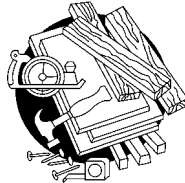
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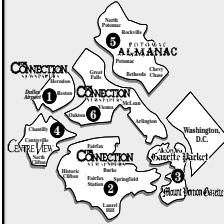
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Cathy DeLoach 571-276-9421



Gainesville **\$389,900**
Heritage Hunt 55+ (age 50+ ok). Investment Opportunity - leased until 2016. Want to live in HH but not ready yet? Consider buying at today's price and be ready to move in 2016. 1-level, 3BR, 2BA, Hdws, Gourmet Kitchen w/island, backs to trees! Call me for more info.
Amanda Scott 703-772-9190



Woodbridge **\$425,000**
Cool Pool! Stunning 3-level, 4 BR, 3 1/2 BA Colonial features upgraded kitchen and baths. 1st floor family with fireplace and French doors leading to ceramic deck and in-ground pool, and much, much more!
Barbara Nowak 703-473-1803
Gerry Staudte 703-309-8948



Springfield **\$1,125,000**
7,500+ sq. ft. of well thought out living space. MBR with 2 sitting areas, main level BR with full bath, gourmet kitchen w/island and breakfast area.
Ngoc Do 703-798-2899



Woodbridge/Lake Occoquan **\$825,000**
Waterfront with two docks and beautiful lot. Numerous renovations. 4/4/1 including a main floor bedroom with bath. 42" cherry cabinets and granite counters and island. Brazilian cherry hardwoods on the first floor. Stone gas fireplace in the family room and a brick gas fireplace in the lower level.
Lee Scalzott 703-250-0728



Clifton **\$624,900**
One Level Living! On 1.48 acre wooded lot with 4 bedrooms, 2 baths. All new SS kitchen appliances and remodeled bathrooms.
Dwight Bardot 703-888-8263



Manassas **\$498,900**
Premium 1/2 acre lot on cul-de-sac in Meadowbrook. 5/3/1 Col., 3 fin. levels, private suite with 2nd MBR, kitchen, LR, bath, W/O on lower level. Granite, hardwoods, office, patio & deck. Close to Quantico, Ft. Belvoir, VRE.
Mary LaRoche 703-919-0747



Stafford **\$291,000**
Great Starter Home! This SF detached home, located on a half-acre lot, features 3 BR, 2FB, large LR/DR with vaulted ceiling and sliding glass door to deck and spacious yard, plus 2-car garage and extra carport.
Barbara Nowak 703-473-1803
Gerry Staudte 703-309-8948



Fairfax **\$672,000**
Fantastic addition graces this colonial, sited on a cul-de-sac lot! You'll love the main house kitchen w/granite counters, SS appliances, checkered floor, HW floors throughout & finished LL. Delight in the huge addition w/its 2-levels of upgrades, including HW floors, separate kitchen & laundry, 2 full baths & dream bedroom with a sitting room. Huge screened-in porch co-joins both residences!
Catie Morales 703-278-9313



Lake Anna **\$325,000**
Winter water view, 3 bedroom 2 bath, open floor plan, oversized two car garage, full unfinished basement, 1.3 acres.
Jamie Brown 540-903-2500



Woodbridge **\$272,000**
Gorgeous 4 Year Young 3 Level Condo. House Has 3 Bdrms, 3 Full & 1 Half Bath. Granite Countertops, Hardwood Floors, W to W Carpeting, Custom Blinds, Crown Molding, Spacious Eat In Kitchen with Large Side x Side Fridge, 1 Car Garage, Samsung Washer/Dryer, Walk Out Lower Level, and Much More.
David Levent 703-338-1388



Woodbridge **\$179,900**
Mooring of Occoquan. Attention Investors! This lovely two bedroom one and a half baths is a great way to jump start your portfolio. With a tenant in place and ready to sign a up to a two year lease who could ask for more. It's centrally located across from a commuter lot, marina, shopping, and dining. It features large bedrooms, a great size kitchen, nice patio for those sunny days, extra storage, and more.
Jody Levinson 703-678-5639



Lake Anna Waterfront! **\$760,000**
Must see this 4 bedroom Landscaped Waterfront Home! Has everything you could want + beautiful trees, gardens, flowers & list goes on. Cross over the bridge on your lot to boat slip in common area.
Eileen Heusser 540-223-0296



Herndon **\$254,900**
Updated 3rd floor condo with almost 1000 sq. feet finished space. Hardwood floors in the living and dining room areas, upgraded kitchen, washer and dryer in unit. Walk to pool, weight room and club room. Minutes to Park and Ride on Monroe Street. New Metro coming in 2018.
Ellie Wester 703-503-1880



Alexandria City **\$196,000**
Great View, Great Space and Covered Parking Too! 1000 sq ft with eat-in kitchen, separate dining room, walk in closet, washer and dryer in unit, close-in location and fabulous view!
Cheryl Hanback 703-864-4321



Gainesville **\$549,000**
Custom 3BR/3BA with luxury appointments in award winning 55+ Heritage Hunt community. 2 MBRs, loft, gourmet kitchen w/6 burner gas stove, marble, granite, hardwoods, designer lighting, brick planters & patio. Call to view this unique home. See www.marylalroche.com.
Mary LaRoche 703-919-0747



Clifton **\$699,900**
Sited on 5.46 wooded acres, this updated 4 BR contemporary offers open living space with scenic views. Gourmet Kitchen, vaulted ceilings, and gleaming hardwoods throughout are just a few of this home's special features.
Carol Hermandorfer 703-216-4949

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