

# Springfield CONNECTION

Franconia ♦ Kingstowne ♦ Newington



West Springfield senior Caroline Alcorta won the Group 6A state championship.

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# Local Performing Arts Studio Expands in BIG WAYS to Serve Community Better

## Introducing the New Metropolitan School of the Arts

By: Jacqueline Doherty

**Metropolitan School of the Arts adds the area's first exclusive secondary school for performing arts—and more—to its line up.**

### Exclusive secondary school for the performing arts

On September 3, 2013, the sun gleamed overtop the historic brick buildings onto the dew covered grassy quad of the newly constructed Metropolitan School of the Arts in Lorton, VA. The glistening effect was a perfect welcome for the twelve incoming high school students who shape the inaugural class of The Academy. (The former Metropolitan Fine Arts Center moved their Fairfax Station location on Silverbrook Road to the Workhouse Arts Center on Ox Road in June 2013 in preparation for the launch of the Academy).

The Academy at Metropolitan School of the Arts is a fully accredited secondary school serving performing artists in grades 7-12. "Our goal is to be the fourth arts centered boarding school in the United States, modeling after Interlochen, Walnut Hill and Idyllwild," states Melissa Dobbs, President and Founder. "We are at the very beginning stages of our long term plan, but the train has left the station. We are on the path to fulfilling this vision for our community."

### Accredited academic curriculum customized for young artists

Each morning, students engage in classic school subjects like math, science, history, English and foreign language. Metropolitan School of the Arts has a contract with a virtual school that delivers a customized academic curriculum for each of their twelve students. The curriculum is taught and administered by on site teachers and academic experts. "We currently offer four different math classes, three languages, four science courses and three English classes," says Academy Director, Nicole Zuchetto. "Our academic program provides a mastery-based, progressive learning environment that provides the flexibility and rigor required by the unique needs of performing arts students. We offer a blended program that integrates arts and academics into a unique educational experience that speaks directly to the hearts and minds of young artists." In addition to the college prep courses, honors and AP classes are options as well.

### Professional arts training for the serious student

The comprehensive arts program includes a weekly private piano and voice lesson, daily dance class in ballet, modern and/or jazz, yoga, music theory, group chorale and acting fundamentals. If that seems like a lot, students also participate in a OneVoice workshop with Robbie Schaefer from famed music group, Eddie from Ohio. In this workshop, students learn to use their gifts to make positive contributions to their world through the power of giving, sharing and love. Theater Chair Matt Bassett explains, "We are a training program for serious young artists. We dive deep into the process of the performing arts so students leave here equipped with the skills they need for the professional world." Performing opportunities are also available for students throughout the year.

### Local and national support from highly regarded professionals

Local and national artists are catching wind of the great things happening here in Northern Virginia. Guest teachers are making their way onto the Metropolitan School of the Arts campus. In February, MSA plans to welcome Tim Federle, Broadway performer and author of *Better Nate than Ever*, for a workshop and seminar.

### What are the students saying?

Lexi Rhem, a sophomore, explains, "We're not like any other school. We are all motivated students who work hard on our academics so we can work hard and focus on our passion and what we love. I am so thankful to have this opportunity." Cayli Dobbs, a freshman, says it all, "This school has changed my life. Period."

### Interested in being a part of history?

Auditions for the upcoming school year are approaching. "We plan on accepting 50 students for the 2014-2015 school year, however, that number will depend on the number of applicants we receive and the audition process," says Dobbs. Auditions will be held in February 2014. If you are interested in auditioning, please contact Nicole Zuchetto, Academy Director, at 703-339.0444 x 3, or e-mail [nzuchetto@metropolitanarts.org](mailto:nzuchetto@metropolitanarts.org).

### NEW PROGRAMS for the NEW YEAR

#### New Kingstowne studio location!



"We're not like any other school..."

In September of this year, Metropolitan School of the Arts opened an 11,000 square foot, state of the art performing arts studio location in the Kingstowne neighborhood of Alexandria, VA, next to Jungle's Gym, behind Kohl's and Walmart. They moved from their former location of 14 years in the Landsdowne shopping center in order to offer additional programming for the community.

Studio Director Lesley Shearer says, "The studio programs have grown faster than anticipated since opening in 2001. This is attributed to our wholehearted dedication to providing the highest quality performing arts training to each student who enters the door." Every year, the studio has added additional members to its teaching staff and has upgraded facilities by purchasing new pianos and regularly renovating the studios. Metropolitan School of the Arts

offers training to over 1,000 students each week at two locations in Alexandria and Lorton, VA.

#### More classes and lessons in more studios

Metropolitan School of the Arts now offers over 300 weekly classes and music lessons in 9 state of the art dance studios and 6 state of the art music studios spanning over 20,000 square feet of training space. The studio programs include everything from youth and adult dance classes in ballet, tap, jazz, contemporary, hip-hop, Irish, hula and social dance to music lessons for all ages in piano, voice, guitar, violin, fiddle, and drums. Theater classes in acting and music theater are also offered alongside a fully comprehensive adult fitness program offering yoga and barre fitness classes. The studio ballet program is affiliated with the Royal Academy of Dance in London, whereby students have the opportunity to participate in internationally accredited ballet examinations. Shearer explains, "Now, we can offer more simultaneous classes and lessons to busy families to save hours of commuting time between activities."

#### Qualified faculty and staff for all ages and levels

Metropolitan School of the Arts has over 70 faculty members in dance, music theater and fitness. Many of the faculty members have master's degrees in their field of work and all have professional performing credits, national and international producing or directing experience or similar backgrounds. Metropolitan School of the Arts students have gone off to perform on Broadway, national tours, local and regional theater, professional dance companies (Mark Morris) and have been accepted into the most prestigious colleges and universities, including Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, New York University (Tisch), Pace University, Elon University, Marymount Manhattan, Fordham University and The Juilliard School, among others. The studio accepts students from beginning through advanced levels and ensures that students are matched to teachers who best relate to them and meet their individual needs and goals.

#### A new after school program with a twist

In response to a colossal request from community members, Metropolitan School of the Arts recently introduced MetroClub. MetroClub is an arts focused after school program (based in the Alexandria location) that includes safe and convenient transportation from select area schools. Each day, students engage in an enriching arts lesson in dance, theater, music, visual art or yoga. Healthy and nutritious snacks are offered and focused academic support is built in so members work on their homework (and sometimes finish it) before the day is over. The emphasis is on learning to enjoy the arts and to have fun in a safe and encouraging environment. MetroClub currently offers space for 20 students per year.

**ENROLL TODAY!** Metropolitan School of the Arts is now accepting registrations for the current session. Registration for summer camps and classes begins February 1. For more information, please visit the school website at [metropolitanarts.org](http://metropolitanarts.org) or call 703.339.0444.

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Delegate Dave Albo (R-42) speaks on the floor of the Virginia House of Delegates.



## Albo Looks at Year Back, Year Ahead

Q&A with  
Del. Dave Albo (R-42).

**Q: What do you think was a major success of 2013?**

**A:** The transportation bill was not only the most important bill of 2013, but the second most important bill we've passed in my twenty years in the General Assembly. We found a solution that lets us keep 100 percent of our money.

**Q: What are some transportation priorities in your district?**

**A:** Right now we've got a problem with Rolling Road. It's the same two-lane road that it has been since the 1800s. It hasn't been much of a problem until the National Geospatial Agency went up about a year and a half ago and brought 7,000 jobs, and now things are becoming a real nightmare. My main goal right now is repavement - some residential roads haven't been repaved in 15 years.

**Q: What do you think will be most important in the upcoming General Assembly session?**

**A:** I'm sure the ethics thing is going to be a big issue. The problem with the ethics thing is, number one, it is already illegal, there's a guy sitting in prison for taking gifts, so I'm not quite sure that there's a lot we need to do because it's already illegal. There are some improvements we can do, such as better transparency. On education, I know that the Republican Caucus is looking to do some revamps on the SOLs. A lot of us, including me, feel like there is too much testing right now. The concept is still pretty good, I still want to make sure that teachers are accountable to teach the kids, but a lot of us feel like it's been a little bit out of control. We're looking at extending some of the testing back, giving the teachers a little more time to spend on other things. On higher education, Tim Hugo and I are still in the battle of the century against these schools to add more in-state slots.

**Q: What issues do you think people in your district are most worried about?**

**"The stuff that I want to happen is not going to make headlines, which is 'General Assembly Passes a Balanced Budget, and Dave Albo's roads get repaved.'"**

— Del. Dave Albo (R-42)

**A:** People are most concerned about jobs. The weird thing about that is, I'm the first person to tell you that the government doesn't create jobs. If it did, the Soviet Union would still be in business. What we do best is we create an atmosphere that makes businesses want to come here. That's why we passed the Transportation Bill because no new business is going to come here if it takes their workers an hour and a half to get to work. The other reason they come here is for schools. One of the reasons why we're trying to do this revamp of the SOLs is because a lot of people don't think they are working like they used to. What we're trying to do is to create an atmosphere where people want to come and start businesses. The other issue, is an issue about being a Northern Virginia delegate, and that is having Southern Virginia take our money is also another constant battle.

**Q: What do you think you can expect from Governor elect Terry McAuliffe?**

**A:** No one knows. Don't want to rag on the guy, because he seems like a decent guy, but when you run a campaign that is entirely negative, I have no idea what he is for. All I know is that he doesn't like Ken Cuccinelli. So we don't know what his agenda is going to be. The only thing I heard is that he wants to expand Medicaid, which would be highly problematic.

**Q: What headline would you like to see in 2014?**

**A:** I would like to see no headlines. The stuff that I want to happen is not going to make headlines, which is "General Assembly Passes a Balanced Budget, and Dave Albo's roads gets repaved."

— JANELLE GERMANOS

## On Sharon Bulova's 2014 Radar Screen

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova discusses the issues she sees taking center stage in the county in the coming year.

"The following items are on my radar screen for the year ahead:

The Silver Line, Phase 1, will open for passenger service through Tysons Corner to Wiehle Avenue in Reston. Construction for Phase 2, extending Metrorail from Wiehle Avenue to Reston Town Center, Route 28, Herndon, Dulles Airport and to the Ashburn area of Loudoun County will begin.

Construction associated with rezonings in Tysons will take place throughout 2014. 'Pop-up' activities and uses will provide vibrancy to Tysons while permanent uses are beginning to fill in.

The newly redeveloped Springfield Town Center in the old Springfield Mall area will open in fall of 2014.

A new state administration will begin as Gov. Terry McAuliffe is sworn in as the 72nd Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Fairfax County has asked the General Assembly to prioritize Medicaid expansion and state funding for pre-K through 12th-grade education when they meet this winter.

During 2014, Fairfax County and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) will be advancing transportation priorities in Northern

Virginia, putting new state transportation funding to work in order to address congestion and traffic safety.

On Monday evening, June 9, my office will be hosting a new Evolution program: Evolution of the Workplace. We will trace the trends and expectation of workers in Fairfax County, beginning when Fairfax was one of the largest producers of dairy

products in the commonwealth through the modern, 'work/lifestyle' balance younger workers look for.

Back by popular demand will be our second season of Evenings on the Ellipse Concerts in the Government Center's "back yard." Concerts and wine tastings are free, thanks to corporate sponsors. I'm looking forward to balmy nights and great music already."

❖ NOTE: Bulova's State of the County address will debut Wednesday, Jan. 15, at 7:30 p.m. It will air on Channel 16 and may be watched online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/chairman/> starting Jan. 16. The address will immediately follow her annual Chairman's New Year Reception, on Jan. 15, from 4:30- 6:30 p.m., at the Government Center.

"The Chairman's Reception is my opportunity to say thank you to the many county employees, volunteers and active neighbors who help make Fairfax County the exceptional place it is to live, work and play," she said. "All active/engaged constituents are welcome to attend."



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Sharon Bulova

**"The Silver Line, Phase 1, will open for passenger service through Tysons Corner to Wiehle Avenue in Reston."**

**Sharon Bulova, Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors**



## NEWS

# Holiday Cards, Homemade

Keisha Powell demonstrates how to make professional looking holiday cards at the Richard Byrd Library in Springfield on Saturday.



Keisha Powell, a paper craft expert, passes around a holiday card that she made and was demonstrating it's creation to several local residents at the Richard Byrd Library in Springfield on Saturday.



Christine Rand, of Fairfax, makes holiday cards during a demonstration class at the Richard Byrd Library in Springfield on Saturday.



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ROBBIE HAMMER/  
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## NEWS

# Greenspring Residents Help Homeless Animals This Holiday Season

In the first two weeks of December, residents at Greenspring retirement community in Springfield coordinated a drive to collect donations for the Fairfax County Animal Shelter.

"Campus animal lovers donated over \$500 and four grocery carts full of goods including blankets, towels, cat and dog food, and grooming supplies, among other items," said Greenspring's resident D.O.G. club president, Jan Madden. "All donations will go directly to the support of the animals being cared for at the shelter."

To kick off the drive on Dec. 4, Cindy Sbrocco, Volunteer Coordinator with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, visited Greenspring for an interview on the community's daily live television show. She was able to share with the community what items the shelter needs all year, as well as during the holiday season.

"The Fairfax County Animal Shelter staff and volunteers appreciate all that the Greenspring residents have done for our animals and continue to do," said Sbrocco. "We could not function without the support of the community and are thrilled that Greenspring residents have been so very generous to the animals here at the shelter."

Greenspring is a pet-friendly community that is home to a variety of dogs, cats, and birds. There is a "bark park" on campus where dogs and dog owners regularly interact, as well as a variety of



PHOTO BY JESSICA MCKAY

**Volunteer Coordinator with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, Cindy Sbrocco (left) and Greenspring resident, Joan MacKenzie, were interviewed on Greenspring's daily live television show on Dec. 4.**

opportunities for dog training, pet therapy, and enrichment programs.

About Greenspring: Greenspring is situated on a scenic 108-acre campus in Springfield, Virginia. The community is home to nearly 2000 residents, many of which reside in the 1404 independent liv-

ing apartment-style homes. At Greenspring, over 200 resident-run and resident-driven programs promote an engaged, fulfilling lifestyle that is reflected in resident satisfaction levels that exceed the industry average. Additional information about Greenspring can be found at [www.ericksonliving.com](http://www.ericksonliving.com).

## BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto: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/JAN. 16

**Are You 50 or Better?** 12-2 p.m. St. Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church, 5222 Sideburn, Fairfax. Sharon Bulova, will discuss current issues affecting the lives of seniors in Fairfax County. For reservations, call Faye Quesenberry (703) 620-0161 by Jan. 10.

### 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. [j.smithtot@aol.com](mailto:j.smithtot@aol.com).



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## Looking to Hear from Readers in New Year

**A**s local, weekly newspapers, the Connection's mission is to deliver news readers need close to home, to help readers enjoy great local places and events, to advocate for community good, to call attention to unmet needs, to provide a forum for dialogue on local concerns, and to celebrate and record milestones and events in community and people's lives.

To succeed at any of that, we need your help.

If you know of a person or an organization doing important work, something newsworthy or something that might make a good feature story, let us know. We want to know if someone in your family or your community published a book, became an Eagle Scout, raised money for a good cause, accomplished a feat like running a marathon or having an art show. Send us a photo and tell us about it.

We publish photos and notes of a variety of personal milestones and community events, including births, engagements, weddings, anniversaries, awards and obituaries.

We are also interested in events at your church, mosque, synagogue, community center, pool, school, club, etc. To have the best chance of getting an event included in our calendar ahead of time, email us the details of the event (who, what, where, when why) at least two weeks ahead of time. Email to [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:south@connectionnewspapers.com). Events generally must be open to the public and either free or at nominal cost to be included in calendars.

After your events, email us a photo and a note so we can consider including it in our coverage. Be sure to include the names of all the people who are in a photo, and say when and where the photo was taken.

We also publish notes about news and events from local businesses. Notes about openings, new employees, anniversaries are welcome.

In covering the issues, we strive to provide a voice for our readers. We look forward to hearing from you.

### EDITORIAL

The Connection Newspapers are published by Local Media Connection LLC, an independent, locally owned company. The publications and websites include the Alexandria Gazette Packet, the Mount Vernon Gazette, the Centre View, the Potomac Almanac and individual Connection papers and websites serving McLean, Great Falls, Vienna/Oakton, Oak Hill/Herndon, Reston, Springfield, Burke, Fairfax, Fairfax Station/Clifton/Lorton, Arlington, Centreville, Chantilly/Fair Oaks, Alexandria and Mount Vernon.

The publications and websites have won hundreds of awards for news and community coverage just in the past few years, including the Virginia Press Association Award for Integrity and Community Service for coverage of efforts to prevent and end homelessness, and Best in Show for information/art for coverage of local parks.

The operation of these community-serving publications is entirely funded by advertising. The papers are delivered free to homes and

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— MARY KIMM,

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## Community Leaders Share New Year's Resolutions

— JANELLE GERMANOS

### Del. Dave Albo (R-42)

"My New Year's resolution is to learn the song Moves like Jagger on my guitar, because my boy, who is eight, likes that song."



### Del. Eileen Filler-Corn (D-41)

"With regards to the General Assembly, I just hope to have a productive session and we'll cross party lines and being able to come up with good legislation that helps our constituents and moves Virginia forward. Personally, I hope to be able to continue to have more time to spend with the family."



### Supervisor John Cook (R-Braddock District)

"To look for solutions to complex problems and concrete ways to make our communities stronger and even better places to live."



### Paul Gilbert, Executive Director, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

"I'm always making plans. I have not come up with my resolution. But what I try to do is whatever my plan is, put it in a positive. I'm not going to say, 'In 2014 I will eat less potato chips.' Instead, in 2014, I will focus on something positive rather than something negative. One thing I am planning to do is to do more hiking. Every time I do, I think, 'why I don't do this a lot more?'"



### Supervisor Jeffrey McKay (R-Lee District)

"My New Year's resolution is to make sure I keep the right grounding between my responsibilities to my constituents and my responsibilities to my family, and that's tough. It's the toughest thing about this job. Making sure you have that work, life, balance is really important. I need to make sure I stay focused on that balance."



### Del. David Bulova, (D-37)

"This time of year, every year, you have to remind yourself to step back and ask what is the most important thing in your life. That is family and especially the kids. While being in the legislature means being down in Richmond for two months out of the year, it also makes you really cherish what you have. That is my annual New Year's resolution to make sure you are taking time to spend with the kids."



### Brian Bauer, Marketing and Communications Director, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

"To be more consistent with my gym plan. What I have a tendency to do, and what I may probably do again, is in January go to the gym, and kill it for three months, and hurt my ankle or something. I need to come up with a more consistent, realistic, plan and stop going through these cycles."



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## NEWS

# ONC Volunteers Bring Holiday Happiness

Sunday, Dec. 15, was delivery day for the more than 700 local families receiving Christmas gifts, wrapping paper and cookies from the all-volunteer, nonprofit group, Our Neighbor's Child (ONC). Although most of the gifts went to families in need in western Fairfax County, Daniel Padilla of Springfield – a former senior airman in the Air Force – was more than happy to lend a hand. “In the military, we learned to help other people,” he said. “So I’m just doing this to help out.”

PHOTO BY  
BONNIE HOBBS/  
THE CONNECTION



**Volunteer drivers Genesis Argueta of Dumfries and Daniel Padilla of Springfield get their delivery assignments and directions to the homes.**

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## WELLBEING

# Spiritual Wellness in the New Year

What is it and how does one achieve it?

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

As we begin a new year, many are focused on their spiritual health and well-being. In fact, the National Wellness Institute names spiritual wellness as one of the seven dimensions of overall wellness. It's essential in life, say experts.

Lisa Jackson-Cherry, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Counseling at Marymount University in Arlington, who specializes in pastoral counseling and pastoral integration, believes spiritual well-being doesn't always have to do with religion.

It's about being connected to something greater than one's self. "It doesn't have to be a higher power," she said. "It can be your

community or nature, but the key piece is that there is a connection to something other than yourself."

Elizabeth Rees, the associate rector at St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Mount Vernon, said, "I would say at its heart, spiritual well-being is knowing ourselves to be loved and cherished by God and then living into that truth."

Kathy Judd, Alexandria-based meditation teacher and director of No Place Like Om, said, "Spiritual health and well-being is when you ... feel just as, if not more, connected to what you can't see as to what you can. It's about knowing that there is an animating force that drives the show and seeing all the ups and downs of our human experience as just like that — a show."

Some say that expectation management is a factor in spiritual wellbeing. "If there is a gap be-

tween expectation and reality, there can be a ... lack of contentment," said Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt of Congregation B'nai Tzedek in Potomac, Md. "When we set our expectations lower in terms of what we expect from others, we are less likely to be disappointed. It is appropriate to set our goals high, but our expectations lower. Goals motivate us, but when we have expectations, we set ourselves up for disappointment."

**WHILE SPIRITUAL WELLNESS** can mean different things to different people, experts said there are common factors that can help one achieve it, such as engaging with others. "When we think about spiritual health or well-being, we think about people being at peace with themselves and others," said Jackson-Cherry.

"In my opinion," she said, "once

people become connected with other people and not so consumed with themselves or their own tragedies or pain and they give of themselves to others, share their gifts, often they experience contentment."

"Community is a big one, and also what you pay attention to and consume," Judd said. "If you're

constantly tuned in to the news cycle and people who are negative and arguing, you're going to see the world from a certain viewpoint. ... If you take time to be in nature, read uplifting things, eat [the right] foods, and surround yourself with a community of people who are loving, supportive and want to bring out the best in you, you'll

have a very different experience of the world."

Rees believes self-love is also a component of spiritual well-being. "In adult education here at St. Aidan's, we've been listening to the talks of [scholar, author and public speaker] Brené Brown and talking about what she has to say about vulnerability. I have definitely found in my own life that when I dare to share the truth about my struggles with the people around me, it creates a new space for growth and depth.

"Until we learn to love and forgive ourselves, it's almost impossible to love and forgive others," she said. "For me, the Christian story in general, and the Church community in particular, is the place where that comes together and makes sense."

Prayer is an important part of many religions. "Spirituality is found both within the context of meditation and reflective time, which could be prayer, as well as being part of a larger community," said Weinblatt. "That is why people can find contentment in prayer and places of worship and as well as in other contexts."

Jackson-Cherry said, "When I'm working with clients, I find that people who have the healthiest spiritual well-being are people who have a sense of purpose in life or have a meaning in life. They might not have achieved it, but they are working toward it. Having a sense of purpose or meaning in life leads to contentment."

So how does one find a sense of purpose and meaning in life? "We've talked about this question a lot," said Rees.

"What comes up most frequently is the idea of finding ways to live in the present, slowing down and finding God present in the moment. ... Hearing where other people are finding God, and taking the time to look

for God acting in my own life and share that with others makes me much more aware of God all around, and helps me to remember that God is also acting in and through the people around me."

Judd said there is work involved in achieving spiritual well-being. "It takes practice, just like anything else," she said. "Yoga and meditation are extremely valuable. Spirit is nothing more than an energy field, so if there is a lot of static in the field, it's going to be hard to hear messages that are there. So anything you can do to calm the 'talk radio' in your head will make it easier to listen. When you learn to listen, you are able to be lead, to be called, to find your calling."

**LIVING IN THE MOMENT** is also a factor that can lead to contentment and spiritual well-being. "I think trying to ... find as much love and joy in it as possible is a huge piece," Judd said.

"Also, worry less about what others think and be more willing to live and love greatly. Developing gratitude, as something that runs through all of our life, not just as something that comes when life seems to be going really well, is important too."

Rees said keeping a journal is a useful tool in developing gratitude.

"One spiritual exercise that helps me sometimes is to practice gratitude by prayerfully journaling about the things for which I am grateful," she said.

"Sit down and write 100 things for which you are grateful."

You start with the big and obvious things, but then also find yourself digging deep for the small but ever-present graces of life. ... Journaling in general can be a great for spiritual well-being."



Connecting with others is an important part of spiritual well-being say experts.



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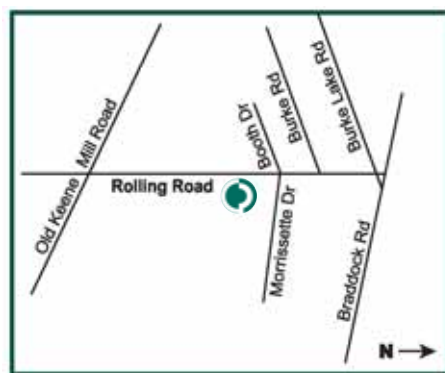
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## WEEK IN SPRINGFIELD

### Homeowner Injured

On Friday, Dec. 20, at 3:47 p.m., officers were called to the 9500 block of Parsonage Lane for a stabbing. The 37-year-old homeowner found an unknown man in the garage. The suspect allegedly stabbed the victim and fled. The male victim was transported to a local hospital with non life-threatening injuries. The helicopter and K-9 units assisted in the search for

the suspect who has not been located.

The suspect is described as Hispanic in his late teens and approximately 5 feet 6 inches tall. He was wearing a green sweatshirt with a blue undershirt.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

### Bank Robbery in Franconia Area

On Saturday, Dec. 21, at noon, a man entered the Wells Fargo Bank at 6110 Franconia Road and demanded cash from a teller. An undisclosed amount of cash was handed over and the suspect fled. There were no injuries.

The suspect was described as black, approximately 6 feet tall and 220 pounds. He was wearing a green reflective vest, white hard

hat, sunglasses and gray sweatpants. Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

### Bank Robbery in Hayfield Area

On Friday, Dec. 20, at 10:30 a.m., two men entered the BB&T Bank at 7716 Telegraph Road and ordered the employees to lie on the ground. Both men were armed with handguns and one man de-

manded cash from a teller. An undisclosed amount of cash was handed over and the suspects fled. There were no injuries. One suspect was described as Hispanic in his 20s or 30s and approximately 5 feet 8 inches tall and 150 pounds. The second suspect was described as black, in his 20s or 30s and approximately 5 feet 9 inches tall and 180 pounds. Both suspects were wearing gray jackets and masks over their faces.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at [www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org](http://www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org) or text "TIP187" plus your message to CRIMES/274637 or call Fairfax County Police at 703-691-2131.

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**Cox Virginia employees Jessica Prihoda and Teresa Truong deliver gifts to the Fairfax County Department of Family Services/Foster Care Division.**

## Gifts to the Children in Foster Care

Cox Communications employees in Fairfax County donated 137 gifts to 58 children through the Fairfax County Department of Family Services/Foster Care Division.

Children in Fairfax County's foster care program range in age from infant to 18-years-old

and are in the program because they need a safe home where they can build their confidence and feel a sense of belonging. Unless gifts are donated to the program, many of these youths will not receive any holiday gifts at all and need everything from winter clothes to educational toys.

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# Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Promises 'Intense, Personal, Intimate Experience'

Concerts at GMU's Harris Theater to celebrate the 100th birthday of Benjamin Britten.

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

**H**ave you heard? The next performance of the Fairfax Symphony Orchestra (FSO) chamber series, will be in a special location; the Harris Theater at George Mason University. It will give audiences an intimate setting to encounter first-class classical music. As a unique treat, there will be an after-performance event bringing the music, the musicians and the audience even closer together.

According to FSO Music Director Christopher Zimmerman, the new venue for the Jan. 18-19 performances "will allow for an intense interaction" between audience and the FSO. He selected music that "reflects this in its emotional charge and content; that is, a concert which leans more towards the intense, personal and intimate experience."

Zimmerman wove together a musical concert to celebrate the 100th birthday of Benjamin Britten, one of the 20th Century icons of classical music with compositions by Edward Elgar and Dmitri Shostakovich. "It occurred



PHOTO BY BARRY WHEELER/COURTESY OF FAIRFAX SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

**Fairfax Symphony Orchestra Conductor Chris Zimmerman.**

to me that the focus on him [Britten] could be deepened by pairing him" with other major modern composers.

The performance will include Britten's "Serenade for Tenor, Horn, and Strings" with William Hite, Tenor, Shostakovich's "Chamber Symphony in C Minor," Britten's "Simple Symphony" and Elgar's "Serenade for Strings."

Describing the concert in visual imagery Zimmerman called

Britten's "Serenade" a "rich and multi-layered" poem. "The music is highly expressive and concentrated atmospheric: the sense of night, sleep, shadows, farewell and other nocturnal elements are omnipresent, as well as the opposite allusions to greetings and love."

The Britten "Simple Symphony" is a "hugely precocious and fun early work...Bright, sparkling, youthfully energetic with unam-

## Where and When

Fairfax Symphony Orchestra performing at the Harris Theater, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances Saturday, Jan. 18, 2014 at 8 p.m., and Sunday, Jan. 19, 2014 at 2 p.m. Tickets: \$25-60. For information call 703-563-1990 or visit: [www.fairfaxsymphony.org](http://www.fairfaxsymphony.org).

biguous emotions," said Zimmerman.

Zimmerman said the Shostakovich "Chamber Symphony" was "one of the most direct and simply-stated of all his works, capturing the horrors of Stalinist-Soviet repression and the composer's life within that, in all its sorrow and hopelessness." Elgar's "Serenade for Strings" was described as "strongly wistful."

The Harris Theatre, with its 460 seats, is noted for a "live" acoustical sound well suited to music events such as an FSO chamber performance.

When asked to sum up how music can affect a listener, Zimmerman said, "in both the sounds and what lies behind them, [music] heightens and enriches our perception of life." He added that musical entertainment can be like poetry, "there are no hard and fast rules. It's not cool or uncool, it's not fashionable or unfashionable." Just open yourself to it. Let it resonate inside you. Enjoy.

## Benny is Back!

Arriving soon for your entertainment.

BY DAVID SIEGEL  
THE CONNECTION

**J**ack Benny was a classic comedian of stage, screen, radio and television. He spanned decades and generations. He is even considered a forerunner of what is now called situation comedy. Some suggest that the comic styles of Jerry Seinfeld and Kelsey Grammar ("Frasier") have Benny-like qualities.

Soon there will be a golden opportunity to see him again. Well, not "the" Jack Benny, but award-winning actor Tim Newell in a one-man performance of "Mister Benny" at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia in a

production for all audiences, non-members and members alike.

"Mister Benny" is the life and times of Jack Benny dramatized by playwright Mark Humphrey. The play shows Benny at the peak of his career, preparing to go on for a television special in 1950. And then later in 1965, preparing his TV series finale. Along the way, the play highlights Benny's relationship with other comics and lets the audience in on how Benny developed some of his famous sketches and routines.

Benny was known for his comic timing, his supposed "stinginess,"



**Tim Newell as Jack Benny in 'Mister Benny.'**

## Where and When

"Mister Benny" performed at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Performances: Friday, Jan. 10, 2014, 2 p.m.; Saturday, Jan. 11, 8 p.m. and Sunday, Jan. 12, 2 p.m. Tickets: \$29, \$24 for JCCNV members and seniors (65+), \$19 students and groups (10+). Call JCCNV Box Office at 703-537-3000 or visit: [www.jccnvarts.org](http://www.jccnvarts.org)

his recurring 39th birthday, and his off-key violin playing. He was especially known for his ability to create laughter with a silent pause accompanied by a silent look of complete exasperation. His facial expressions and hand to cheek were priceless.

Newell indicated that he is "always reviewing video clips, just to study his [Benny's] mannerisms." He is constantly seeking new Benny material to keep the show fresh. "I always manage to find new things whenever I'm playing Jack; discovering different ways to say something, or gesture a certain way."

For those who remember Benny, Newell promises that "they can expect to be taken back in time, for one. It's a wonderful journey."

He promises that "All in all, they can expect to have a really good time."

And for those who never heard of Jack Benny, Newell suggested that they will "have a good time" becoming familiar with a man who helped create what is now television sitcom.

"Jack's style was unique...his timing, his takes, his quiet ways." noted Newell. He was "the forefather of the sit-com: he was the central figure, surrounded by a brilliant supporting cast, and always the brunt of their jokes; hence the deadpan stare, or the hand to the cheek, or the exasperated, "Well!" Classic!

Get yourself ready, Jack Benny is in the house. Cue up "Love in Bloom."

## CALENDAR

Send notes to the Connection at [south@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto: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/sep/26/fairfax-county-calendar/>.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 31

#### The Ultimate 80s New Years Eve.

9 p.m. Empire, 6355 Rolling Road, Springfield. \$20.

#### The Ultimate New Year's Eve Experience.

7 p.m. - 1 a.m. Hyatt Fair Lakes Hotel, 12777 Fair Lakes Circle, Fairfax. Live entertainment, music, food, and more. Tickets: \$159 per person.

#### Cool Cow Comedy Presents:

##### The New Years Eve Special.

7 p.m. & 9 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Admission: \$35. With powerful stand up comedy and hilarious sketch comedy, Rahmien Mostafavi (DC Improv, Kennedy Center), Jon Mumma (DC Improv, Sirius XM), and Danny Rouhier (106.7 The Fan, DC Improv) will take you toward midnight with side splitting comedy. For tickets, visit: <http://www.workhousearts.org/events/performing-arts/cool-cow-comedy-presents-nye-special-show>.

### TUESDAY/DEC. 31-

#### SUNDAY/JAN. 5

#### 100 Under 200: 100 Artists Exhibiting Work Priced Less than \$200.

Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Free flowing and ever changing; the exhibit will have new art on view each week.

**From the Fire.** Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Five diverse ceramic artists challenge themselves to create personal work for a joint firing in "From the Fire", an educational exhibit of 30 works and concomitant photographs and text.

### FRIDAY/JAN. 3 & SATURDAY/JAN. 4

#### Cabaret Series: Welcome to the Speakeasy.

8 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A raucous ramble through the Jazz Age as talented performers tackle the tunes inspired by the gin-joint atmosphere.

### SUNDAY/JAN. 5

#### Cabaret Series: Welcome to the Speakeasy.

1 p.m. Workhouse Arts, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A raucous ramble through the Jazz Age as talented performers tackle the tunes inspired by the gin-joint atmosphere.

### ONGOING

#### Workhouse Farmers Market.

3-6 p.m., at the Workhouse, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Every Thursday on the quad is a producer-only market for discerning shoppers featuring locally grown fruits and vegetables, locally raised meats and poultry and local foods from breads to salsas and sausages. [www.smartmarkets.org](http://www.smartmarkets.org).

#### Smart Markets Springfield.

10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Springfield Mall, 6417 Loisdale Road, Springfield. Through Nov. 23, the market is open every Saturday with goods, wares, produce and farmers. [www.smartmarkets.org](http://www.smartmarkets.org).



# SPORTS

## Top Sports Moments of 2013

**T**he year 2013 provided several exciting moments in local sports. For Woodson, the boys' basketball team's epic comeback earned the Cavaliers a Northern Region title. West Springfield's Caroline Alcorta had a memorable senior cross country season. Lake Braddock's boys' basketball team won its first district title since 2002, South County's girls' track team won a pair of state titles and the Edison girls' basketball team won a region championship.

Here is a look at the top moments in Burke/Springfield/Fairfax/Fairfax Station sports for 2013.

### Woodson Boys' Basketball Wins Region Title

Trailing Wakefield by 19 points entering the fourth quarter of the Northern Region championship game, it appeared the Woodson boys' basketball team would have to settle for the state playoff berth it clinched by winning in the semifinals.

Twelve minutes and one furious comeback later, Woodson was heading to states with the program's first region championship in the school's 50-year history after a 75-70 overtime victory.

Wakefield led by as many as 22 points in the second half and held a 52-33 advantage entering the fourth quarter. But Woodson, which had struggled offensively for three quarters, opened the fourth with an 11-0 run, cutting the Warriors' lead to eight. The Cavaliers, a strong outside-shooting team, continued their comeback with a barrage of perimeter shots. A Peter Murray 3-pointer cut the Woodson deficit to five. Forty seconds later, Alex Boock's 3-pointer cut Wakefield's lead to 55-52. Murray made another 3-pointer with 1:20 remaining, tying the score at 59-all and the game went to overtime.

In the extra period, Damian Bell's 3-pointer gave Woodson a 62-61 lead — the Cavaliers' first lead since the 5:33 mark of the second quarter. After a Wakefield free throw tied the score at 62, Woodson's Tommy Stepka knocked down a 3-pointer with 2:10 left in overtime, giving the Cavaliers a lead they would not relinquish.

How did the Cavaliers pull it off?

"It's funny because I've been asked that several times," Woodson head coach Doug Craig wrote in an email. "Our kids were just so confident. I remember them coming into the huddle between the third and fourth quarters. Our kids were absolutely not panicked, unnerved, or distraught. There was just a sense of resolve. They just knew they were going to get back in the game, even with how well Wakefield had played. Our kids had a supreme confidence that we could shoot our way back into the game because we had been a team all year that could score points in bunches. We talked



PHOTO BY ED LULL

**West Springfield senior Caroline Alcorta won the Group 6A state championship.**

very calmly about what we wanted to do. Then went right out and got the lead down from 19 to 10 points in 1 minute, 48 seconds. From there we could just feel the confidence in our huddle. I'd never seen a team just handle that adversity so well. They really weren't fazed a bit about being behind."

In the final 12 minutes, Woodson outscored Wakefield 42-18. The Cavaliers outscored the Warriors 26-7 in the fourth quarter to force overtime.

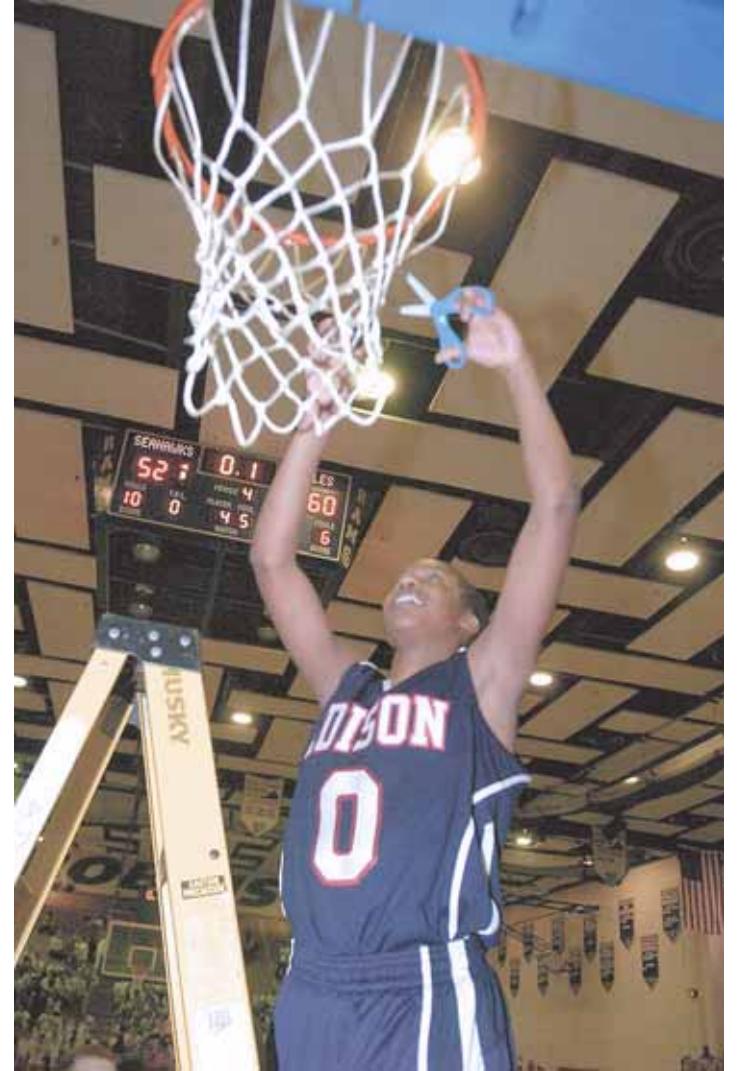
Murray and Boock each scored 19 points for Woodson. Stepka scored 12 points, and Eric Bowles and Bell each had 11. Murray was named tournament MVP while Stepka and Boock made the all-tournament team.

"Damian Bell, who was perhaps our 10th or 11th guy on the depth chart, hadn't played much the last month of the season. We were going so bad offensively and Damian could really shoot it. We went to him in the last minute of the third quarter through the end of the game. We were looking for a spark and he scored 11 points in the last 13 minutes of the game. He hit a 3 and all of a sudden the confidence spread like wildfire. In the fourth quarter and overtime, we hit like nine threes by four different players. All of a sudden guys that were struggling all night seemed to find their confidence. It really all began with the 3

Damian hit in the last minute of the third quarter. He'll be the guy I will always laud to future teams about staying prepared to play. Biggest game in school history and he hasn't played in a month and comes up huge and really propelled us."

After the game, the Cavaliers paid tribute to former Woodson coach Red Jenkins.

"After the game in the locker room was pretty special and no one got to see it," Craig wrote. "It was the school's 50th anniversary and our first region championship. We had won 19 district titles and been in the regional championship game several times without winning. So many great teams and players (Tommy Amaker, Pete Holbert, Greg Williams, etc.) at Woodson through the years that never quite got it done. After the game our players and coaching staff invited several people in the locker room that had been a big part of Woodson basketball over the years. We had two of the three former head coaches (Red Jenkins and Mike Pflugrath), two former DSA's (Tom Casey and Phil Turner), a couple of former assistant coaches, as well as our principal and current athletic staff. The team presented the regional championship trophy to Coach Jenkins and asked him to accept it on behalf of all the players, coaches, assistant coaches, managers that had been so close



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

**Jada Graves and the Edison girls' basketball team won the Northern Region title in 2013.**

and had never quite got it done. Fifty years and so much history, we were so fortunate that Coach Jenkins and others could still be there to be a part of it. A lot of people over the years put in work to get the program there. Our kids really understood how important it was to the school community and wanted to share the moment with some of those people."

Woodson went on to reach the state semifinals.

### Spartan Harrier Alcorta Produces Fantastic Senior Season

Caroline Alcorta's senior cross country season was one to remember.

After the West Springfield harrier won the Conference 7 championship on Oct. 30, Alcorta won the 6A North region title on Nov. 6 with the third-best time in the history of the Burke Lake Park course (16:31). After committing to the University of North Carolina, Alcorta went on to win the Group

SEE TOP MOMENTS, PAGE 13

WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM



# Top Moments of 2013

FROM PAGE 12

6A state championship on Nov. 15 at Great Meadow, finishing with a course-record time of 17:13.

Next, Alcorta won the Foot Locker south regional on Nov. 30 in Charlotte, earning her a trip to nationals. On Dec. 14, Alcorta earned All-American status by placing third at the Foot Locker Cross Country Championships national meet in San Diego. She finished with a time of 17:31.

"I think my favorite part of the XC season for Caroline was her winning states," West Springfield head coach Chris Pellegrini wrote in an email. "It was the first individual XC state championship in our girls' history, and she looked relaxed and comfortable the whole time."

Pellegrini noticed Alcorta's level of confidence grow.

"I think one of the reasons why Caroline has had such a great fall was because she has gained a lot more confidence from her previous seasons of running," Pellegrini wrote. "Her mentality heading into each race has been excellent, and she's provided the other girls on the team a great example of the type of approach that is successful. This type of approach has allowed her to just go out and execute the race plan, rather than worrying too much."

"Her performances at Foot Locker South and Foot Locker Finals in San Diego were really gravy at the end of the season, and it was nice to see that she can match up well at the highest levels."

## Edison Girls' Basketball Wins Northern Region Championship

The Edison girls' basketball team stumbled out of the gate in the 2013 Northern Region championship game, falling behind South Lakes 20-5 at the end of the first quarter and trailing by as many as 17 points.

But thanks in large part to then-freshman Jada Graves, who scored a game-high 23 points, the Eagles battled back and won their first region title since 2007, beating South Lakes 60-52 on Feb. 23.

South Lakes' 6-foot-2 center Abby Rendle finished just shy of a triple-double, totaling 14 points, 12 rebounds and nine blocks. But Rendle didn't stop the 5-foot-9 Graves from being aggressive on offense.

"I'm not scared of anybody," Graves said after the game. "I was going to take it and try to get her in foul trouble. If she blocks it, [I'm] just going to go again."

South Lakes led 50-47 with 4:27 remaining in the fourth quarter, but Edison answered with back-to-back 3-points from Megan Hendrick and Lindsey Krisak and closed the game on a 13-2 run.

"I remember vividly when it hit me late in the game that we were going to pull off



**Tommy Stepka and the Woodson boys' basketball team won the Northern Region championship in 2013.**

CONNECTION FILE PHOTO



**The Lake Braddock boys' basketball team won the Patriot District title in 2013.**

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

the win!" Edison head coach Dianne Lewis wrote in an email. "South Lakes was a very good team and I knew the game could go either way. And when it was apparent we were going to get the win, I was trying very hard not to smile until the buzzer went off. But, I was just so happy for the girls. No one expected it from them and that's why the win was most special."

Edison finished the season with a 24-5 record after falling to Colonial Forge in the state quarterfinals.

"Last year's team consisted of six players new to varsity basketball (five freshmen)," Lewis wrote. "Another three players played the previous year but were still trying to find their role on the team. Early in the season was a challenge; I would teach a new drill and we would have a question and answer period longer than the drill! But what I realized about them is that they wanted to

learn and they were not afraid to compete against the best! There are no drills to teach passion for the game, and that's what they had. It was very refreshing!"

## Lake Braddock Boys' Basketball Wins Patriot District Title

In back-to-back February nights, the Lake Braddock boys' basketball team knocked top seed and eventual region champion Woodson out of the Patriot District tournament and defeated South County to win the district title.

Lake Braddock defeated South County 50-40 on Feb. 15, giving the Bruins their first district title since 2002. Lake Braddock trailed by two with 3:05 remaining in the

game, but closed the contest on a 15-3 run.

"(My) fondest memory of the moment would have to be the sheer joy on our guys' faces," Lake Braddock head coach Brian Metress wrote in an email. "Having been beaten badly by Woodson at Woodson earlier in the year and again on our own home court toward the end of the season, the upset of them in the semis, followed by then beating one of our arch rivals, South County, really made it special for the guys."

Lake Braddock's Will Gregorits scored 21 points in the district final and was named tournament MVP. A.J. Alexander finished with 16 points.

"The most important reason for our victory, I think, was that we had a gritty group of guys who every day at practice just came out and tried to get better," Metress wrote. "We were a much better team at the end of the year than we were at the beginning. At the beginning of the year we were a team finding it hard to win consistently, but by the end of the year we were a team which was tough to beat night in, night out."

Lake Braddock finished the season with an 18-8 record and reached the region quarterfinals.

## South County Girls Win Indoor, Outdoor Track Titles

The South County girls' track team captured the school's first team state championship when it won the indoor title in the winter.

What did the Stallions do for an encore? Win the outdoor title.

South County won the girls' indoor track state championship with a score of 52 on Feb. 23 in Hampton. The Stallions won the outdoor title with a score of 50 on June 1 in Newport News.

"The most memorable moment was the fact that it was the school's first team state championship and to come back in the outdoor season and win the outdoor state championship is even better," South County head coach TD Holsclaw wrote in an email, "because to duplicate and keep the team focused for that period of time is an accomplishment. Our ladies had a mission and they accomplished it with a lot of pressure on them."

Felicia Majors led the way for South County, winning individual state championships in the pole vault and long jump during indoor, and the 400 during outdoor, along with placing high in several other events.

"I would say the most important reason we were able to win is that we had a very talented athlete in Felicia Majors and when she was tired or down because of another performance, the girls grouped around her for overall moral support to keep her focused," Holsclaw wrote. "We also had other athletes that stepped up in individual events and relays."



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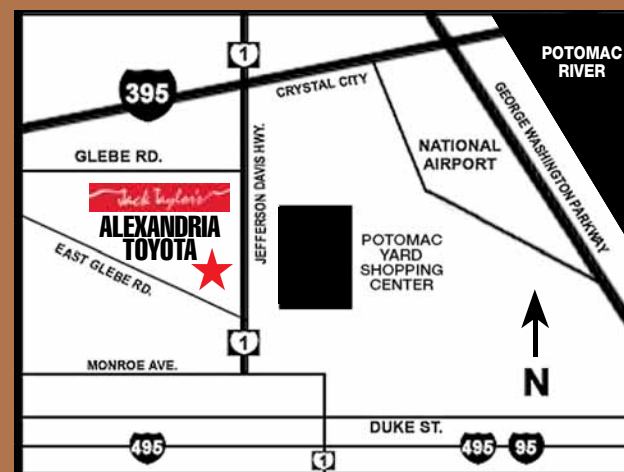
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Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) meets with a constituent. Herrity believes transportation will continue to be a big issue in 2014.



Supervisor Jeffrey McKay (D-Lee) gets a sidewalk level view of the neighborhood at the Jefferson Manor walking town meeting with civic association president Chris Soule.

# Supervisors Make Predictions for 2014

## Q&A with Supervisors Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) and Jeffrey McKay (D-Lee).

### Herrity: Balance the Budget

**Q: What were some successes of 2013?**

A: Transportation updates. The Fairfax County Parkway will have interstate level traffic in the next 10 years, if not already. We need to work on the long-term solution. I was able to get the Board of Supervisors to pass the requested corridor improvement study. We've got the study underway for the Pope's Head Road interchange on the parkway, and those are both really big things. I also asked the Board to take a look at Braddock Road and changing it into a primary road.

End of the illegal signs in the median. This year we approved the agreement with VDOT that allowed us to enforce cleaning up the signs. Both political parties have been good about not putting signs up.

**Q: What are some major issues that need to be addressed in 2014?**

A: Transportation. We will focus on expanding the express-lane type project in the I-66 corridor. The environmental impact study is done, so that opens us up to the possibility of express-lane type project in the corridor which is what I think we need to do as quickly as we can. Transportation needs to be important. We need to look at moving the parkway forward, getting the Pope's Head interchange done, getting the corridor improvement study done. We need move forward on an express lanes project for I-66.

50+ Action Plan. The other big thing we are looking for is to launch the revision of our 50+ Plan, to prepare for the age wave that is kind of almost here already. It includes everything from home-share to creative transportation solutions. You've got a lot of elderly who live in single family homes. If you can match these with young professionals that are looking for places to

live, it's a win-win in terms of being able to provide additional housing, and at the same time, you are enabling older adults to stay in their home longer. It's kind of a unique, creative concept to solve two problems that we have: people that want to stay in their homes and young professionals. It makes a lot of sense compared to paying too much to get a one bedroom apartment somewhere.

Residential Studio Units (RSU). I have been leading the fight against the RSU's in suburban neighborhoods. One reason is density. When people buy in suburban residential communities, they are buying to get away from density. They also say they are for policemen, firemen, and teachers, but our starting policemen, firemen and teachers can't even qualify for them, because they make too much.

**Q: What are some of your priorities for 2014?**

A: The budget is the big thing- making sure that we don't balance the budget on the backs of our taxpayers. We've got to address the pension issue. On our commercial tax base, it's making sure we maintain the tax and regulatory environment that keeps us one of the best places in the country to do business.

**Q: How do you think Governor-elect Terry McAuliffe will impact the community?**

A: I think it remains to be seen. It's too early to tell what kind of governor Terry McAuliffe is going to be.

I'm hopeful that we stay pro-business and that he maintains the pro-business stance and we can keep the job and economic growth that we've under Gov. McDonnell, as well as the fiscal responsibility and surplus. If we can keep that moving forward, that would be my hope. He made those promises.

**Q: What is one headline you would like to see in 2014?**

A: Express-lanes Project Approved for I-66.

### McKay: Revitalization in Lee District

**Q: What are some things you are looking forward to in 2014?**

A: Revitalization. Locally in my district next year we hope to see the Springfield Mall reopen. It's the most important redevelopment story in the county in my mind. It's a huge turn of events to finally get the mall fixed, and I mean fixed, because it was entirely broken before. This is a big deal for Springfield. It sets a positive course for a lot of other things in Springfield that we wanted for a long time to happen. It's a big revitalization story.

Along the same lines, revitalization success in other parts of my district: In the Kingstowne/Franconia area, clearly the construction of the Wegman's and its shopping center is huge. Down on the Route One corridor, there is robust redevelopment activity around the Huntington Metro station that is really helping to transform the Route One corridor.

Transportation. There are also some big transportation stories: Mulligan Road or Jeff Todd Way, which is a new road being built that connects Route One to Telegraph Road. One of the biggest challenges Route One Revitalization has faced for a long time is it's not connected very easily to Franconia/Kingstowne and Springfield area, and this road will be a direct connection between those two. It's a big road project, hopefully will be opening in the first quarter of 2014.

Preschool programs. One thing I hope is big in 2014 is how we address Pre-K learning in the county. It's something I have a passion for because for one thing I have a kindergartener, and I can just see in her class the great delta that exists between kids that have had some structured preschool learning opportunities and kids that didn't. A lot of jurisdictions, even across Virginia, that don't have the resources we have, do have

public preschool initiatives in existence. What they have shown study after study is that they are a very wise investment. They pay for themselves tenfold.

**Q: What are some challenges you see in the upcoming year?**

A: Clearly a challenge last year that is going to continue this year, and I think will be even more challenging this year, is the budget. Obviously, there's a pretty big hole, particularly in the school side of the ledger that we are going to have to figure out what to do about that. They are projecting a pretty large deficit. A lot of the available options that we have, we've taken in the past couple of years. We're used to this, but the down side we're out of easy choices to make and we're left with really what I think are the most difficult choices.

### Q: What do you think we can expect from Governor-elect Terry McAuliffe?

A: It's going to be interesting to see what the new administration brings forward as high priorities. I've heard about Pre-K, I've heard about making the best of our transportation bill, I've heard about taking a serious look at funding for mental health and human services, which is a big challenge the county faces, so I'm hopeful that the new administration will bring a partnership with local government that respects we can't do it all without their help. I'm optimistic that we will get support from this administration at the local level to get some of our initiatives done.

**Q: What is a headline you would like to see in 2014?**

A: "Springfield Mall Reopens."  
"Economy has robust recovery."

— JANELLE GERMANOS

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