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## NEWS

## Into the Budget Fray

Bulova highlights accomplishments, challenges in annual address.

> By Victoria Ross THE CONNECTION

espite the lingering impact of an anemic economy, and the regional ripple effects of federal sequestration, Fairfax County residents will see some concrete signs of progress this year.

That message was delivered by Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, who cast a mostly positive light on the county's future during a media screening of her televised annual State of the County address on Wednesday, Jan. 15.

In addition to the completion of Phase 1 of the Silver Line in Tysons, motorists can expect to see congestion eased through a number of statefunded transportation projects, including the new I-95 Express Lanes that will tie into the Beltway Express lanes at Edsall Road.

Residents can also look forward to the revitalization and redevelopment of older commercial and industrial areas throughout the county, including the \$250 million transformation of Springfield Mall into the Springfield Town Center in the fall of 2014.

The newly-renovated mall will include the addition of roughly 700,000 square feet of retail, restaurants, a food court and a state-of-the-art movie

theater. The 20-foot-tall brown numbers that indicated the mall's six main entrances — a hallmark of the 1970s-era mall — will be replaced with one central grand entranceway.

Bulova also praised the Economic Development Authority and Visit Fairfax for boosting tourism and facilitating the selection of Fairfax County as the host of the 2015 World Police and Fire Games, the world's second largest athletic competition after the summer Olympics. The event is expected to generate more than \$100 million in tourism revenue for the

The 30-minute State of the County video, 10 minutes longer than last year's production, highlights many county achievements in the past year — such as the county's low crime rate and a 26 percent reduction since 2007 in the number of



Photo by Victoria Ross/The Connection

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova hosted a media screening of her annual State of the County address on Wednesday, Jan. 15. Residents can view the address on Channel 16 from 7:30 to 8 p.m., or on YouTube at http://youtube/YzeaC3K-wiY

> people counted as homeless. It also features three of the county's new leaders: newlyelected Sheriff Stacey Kincaid, the county's

"Our first area of response focus is on preventing the 911 call. ... We've visited over 40,000 homes since June 8 and installed over 6,000 smoke alarms ....

— Fire and Rescue Chief Richard Bowers

Roessler and Karen Garza, the new superintendent of Fairfax County Public Schools.

In the video, Garza said one of her top priorities is "to listen and learn what our community expects of its schools."

"One of our big projects this year is that

we enlisted the help of a broad-based community committee to develop the Portrait of a Graduate which will detail what our community expects an FCPS student to know and be to do upon graduating from our system," Garza said.

Garza also addressed the ongoing challenge of funding a school system with a current enrollment of 184,600 students, making FCPS larger than the school systems of eight states and the District of Columbia.

"As you know, FCPS is facing some challenges as well," Garza said in the video. "We have grown by more than 15,000 students in the last five years and our required expenditures for items like employee benefits have continued to increase. At the same time, revenues have not increased enough to cover expenditures."

In fiscal year 2014, 53 percent of the county's general fund budget was transferred to Fairfax County Public Schools, a sum of roughly \$1.9 billion.

School officials recently unveiled a \$2.5 billion budget, asking for a 5.7 percent increase, or nearly \$98 million more in county funding. Under the proposed budget, class sizes will increase at all grade levels and about 730 staff positions will be cut.

After the screening,

Bulova emphasized that while education continues to be the board's "highest priority" and the community's "greatest invest-

ment," there will likely be a significant gap between what school officials are asking for in their budget, and how much the board is prepared to give.

"The schools won't get everything they asked for," Bulova said. "The school board will have to roll up their sleeves and so will supervisors."

When asked how close the board is prepared to get to the 5.7 percent request, Bulova said that a 2 percent increase — or \$33 million — is a more realistic number.

In an effort to bridge that gap, supervisors have made state education fundfirst female sheriff; Police Chief Edwin ing the county's top legislative priority for

## Retail Worries

October numbers artificially inflated; holiday numbers could spell trouble.

> BY MICHAEL LEE POPE THE CONNECTION

he partial government shutdown was more than an October surprise during the race for governor. Newly available statistics from the Virginia Department of Taxation show the month was also an unexpected boost to sales tax revenues across the commonwealth. Fairfax County, for example, recorded a 15.5 percent spike in sales tax revenue in October 2013 compared to October 2012. But state and local officials says that's because several major department stores neglected to increase their sales tax rate to reflect the new regional tax for transportation when the new fiscal year began in July. So the October numbers represent the backlog of uncollected revenues.

Which retailers flubbed their taxes?

"That's proprietary information, so we can't say," said Marcia Wilds, revenue and economic analysis coordinator with the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget. "They're big."

The revenue corrections came at a key time for local governments, a month that many expected to be particularly bleak. Many government workers and contractors were out of work in October, when local governments became concerned that spending habits might reflect a sense of uncertainty about the future. Now budget officials across Northern Virginia are worried about what kind of sales tax revenue they'll collect from the holiday season.

"The sales tax will be back with holiday sales," said Stephen Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. "Over the year there will only a minor weakening."

BUDGET OFFICIALS are not so sure. As local governments across the region prepare for the first round of budgeting next month, a sense of uncertainty looms over the revenue projections and spending priorities. Part of that is the unemployment rate, which remains at about 6 percent across Virginia. That means consumers may hold back on consumption based spending, which would mean lower revenues for local governments on retail sales and restaurant meals.

"If revenues continue to decline, it may be necessary to make up any additional

SEE BUDGET FRAY, PAGE 12

SEE SALES TAX, PAGE 12

### WEEK IN FAIRFAX

### Route 29K/N Metrobus Changes

Washington Area Metro Transit Authority (Metro) has made the following changes to Metrobus Route 29K/N, which affects City of Fairfax riders:

\* The 29N will extend from Fairfax Circle to Vienna/Fairfax-GMU station. This change will connect the Little River Turnpike corridor to the Orange Line and provide connections to additional Metrobus and

Fairfax Connector routes.

- \* There will be 12 additional weekday trips in each direction.
- \* The time between buses will improve to 30 minutes between Northern Virginia Community College and King Street-Old Town station (60 minutes on each route).
  - \* Service will run later in the evening on weekdays.
  - \* The 29N will run all day during the week. For more information, call 202-637-7000.

### Robinson Offers 'Snow Queen'

Robinson Secondary presents the children's show, "The Snow Queen, Friday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2 and 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 in advance at the main office, \$7 at the door; \$6 reserved tickets are at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/521540. It's being put on by the theater class, Robinson Production Co., and is based on a tale by Hans Christian Anderson.

### Needed: Chocolate, Cakes, Sculptures

The City of Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee is looking for professional and amateur chefs of all ages to participate in the Chocolate Challenge, Feb. 1-2, as part of the Chocolate Lovers Festival. Works and tastes of art will be submitted for the area's most talented chefs and chocolatiers to judge in several categories. Obtain an application from the Chocolate Lovers Festival website, www.chocolatefestival.net, or call 703-385-7858. Applications are due by Jan. 27.

### Bulova, Petersen Town Meeting

Del. David Bulova (D-37) and Sen. Chap Petersen (D-34) will hold their annual town meeting Saturday, Feb. 1, from 9-10:30 a.m., at the Fairfax City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St. in Fairfax.

### Child Car Seat Checks

City residents may have their children's car seats checked or installed by the City of Fairfax Fire Department. For an appointment, call 703-385-7830.

### Volunteers Needed

The Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program needs volunteer advocates for residents in assisted living and nursing facilities throughout the area. Volunteers can work in facilities close to where they live. Training is provided in March 2014. Call 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/ltcombudsman/vol ombud program.htm.

### Pedestrian Killed in Springfield

An 80-year-old man was driving a 2008 Mazda 323 southbound on Greeley Boulevard and made a left turn, on a green light, onto eastbound Old Keene Mill Road. Meanwhile, 74-year-old Thomas Sullivan was walking south, across the eastbound lanes of Old Keene Mill Road, not in a crosswalk, and was struck by the Mazda. It appears that the Mazda struck Sullivan while in the left lane. He was transported to Inova Fairfax Hospital and was pronounced dead a short time later. Speed and alcohol are not considered factors in this crash. Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Solvers by phone at 1-866-411-TIPS/8477, e-mail at www.fairfaxcrimesolvers.org.

### RICHMOND DIARY



**Delegate** Filler-Corn visits with members of **Providence** Elementary School (Fairfax County) during their STEM presentation at the **STEM fair** sponsored by the VA Math & Science Coalition.

Photo Courtesy of the Office of Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn

## Filler-Corn Shares Observations from 2014 General Assembly

By Del. Eileen Filler-Corn Special to The Connection

### WEDNESDAY, JAN. 8

Today marked the opening of the 2014 Virginia General Assembly Session. The Session kicked off with the 48th Annual Commonwealth Prayer Breakfast, where I joined 900 other Virginians to offer prayers for our country, armed forces, and legislators. It was an early start to a busy day, but an inspiring way to kick off the new Session. During the first floor session of 2014, all the new and returning members took our oath of office to serve our country and our Commonwealth. Speaker William Howell announced the 2014 Committee assignments, and I was honored to be reappointed to the Finance Committee; Transportation Committee and Militia, Police and Public Safety Committee. We closed for the day in remembrance of peace activist and former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. In the evening, I joined members from the House and the Senate to attend Governor McDonnell's final State of the Commonwealth and farewell address.

### THURSDAY, JAN. 9

With only 60 days to discuss thousands of bills, resolutions, and amendments, we hit the ground running. It was a busy day full of meetings with several constituents and colleagues as we discussed different pieces of legislation and how they would affect Virginia. I had the privilege of meeting with several members of the Veterans for Foreign Wars as part of their lobby day. I also met with Dr. Angel Cabrera, president of George Mason University. GMU is one of the fasted growing universities in the country and provides a tremendous benefit to our Fairfax community. GMU was also just named a top 100 public university in the country. The evening ended by celebrating our newly-elected Attorney General, Mark Herring at his inaugural gala.

### FRIDAY, JAN. 10

Friday was the end of a short, but full, first week. I joined Dr. Cabrera and several other George Mason

faculty for a meet-and-greet breakfast. Before an early floor session, I attended the Militia, Police, and Public Safety Committee's first meeting of 2014. Throughout the day, I was busy finalizing my 2014 proposed budget amendments before the submission deadline. I submitted a total of six budget amendments focusing on education and health services issues. That evening, I joined friends and colleagues at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts to celebrate the inauguration of our new Lieutenant Governor Ralph Northam.

### SATURDAY, JAN. 11

Saturday was Inauguration Day for the 72<sup>nd</sup> Governor of Virginia, Terry McAuliffe. After being selected to serve on the Common Ground for Virginia Transition Team, I was thrilled to be in Richmond with the new Governor and his family to celebrate. The General Assembly met in a Joint Assembly in the House Chamber at 11:15. We then joined the McAuliffe, Northam, and Herring families on the Capitol portico for the inauguration ceremony at noon. The weather was not ideal (to be kind) but the rain let up and the sun actually came out for a couple of minutes during Governor McAuliffe's address to the Commonwealth for the first time as Governor. He thanked Governor McDonnell for his service and facilitating a smooth transition and called for cooperation in the General Assembly for a productive Session. The festivities continued with an inaugural parade showcasing marching bands and floats from across the Commonwealth, and the day ended with the Governor's inaugural ball at the Siegel Center to celebrate our new state officials.

### SUNDAY, JAN. 12

After a jam-packed start to Session and the Inauguration, I returned home to the 41<sup>st</sup> District. I welcomed the opportunity for a brief rest and to spend time with my family before heading back to Richmond in time for a 7:30 a.m. meeting on Monday.

See Filler-Corn, Page 7

### News

### Woman Killed by Train in Burke

A cashier at the Burke Target was hit by a Virginia Railroad Express Train traveling from Washington to Manassas on Wednesday, Jan. 15. According to Fairfax County Police, Danyelle Lynn Anderson of Manassas was hit right after 7 a.m. while crossing the tracks behind the Target.

"The preliminary investigation determined that a locomotive was traveling southbound en route from Washington, D.C. to Manassas; it was foggy and dark, visibility was reduced. As the train passed the Burke station and rounded a slight curve, the engineer saw a pedestrian walking across the tracks from left to right," said the news release from the Fairfax County Police Department. "The engineer immediately applied the emergency brake and sounded the horn. The train slowed but hit the pedestrian in the middle of the southbound track."

There is a bridge pedestrians can use crossing Roberts Highway near the Burke Centre VRE Station, but many riders often cross the tracks to reach nearby neighborhoods. Signs on the fences near the station warn riders not to cross the tracks.

In April, VRE sent a safety and security bulletin regarding the Burke Centre Station, urging passengers to take the extra time to cross the bridge at Roberts Highway rather than crossing the tracks.

"Each day we see a number of VRE and Amtrak passengers leave the station and hike up and over the tracks at this point as a shortcut to Guinea Road. Simply put, this practice is unacceptable to us. You are taking a significant risk in doing this because visibility is severely limited by the natural curve of the railroad and both tracks are always active with both freight and passenger trains. The train you just got off is not the only one out there," the statement said. "In the interest of passenger safety, we are cracking down on this unsafe and illegal practice. Please use the Roberts Parkway bridge. It may take around two extra minutes but we can assure you, there's nothing on Guinea Road even close to being worth your life and two fewer minutes."

 Janelle Germanos www.ConnectionNewspapers.com

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## OPINION

## Extend Health Coverage in Virginia

### General Assembly should not block coverage for as many as 400,000 uninsured.

tanding on what is essentially scorched earth, Republicans in the Virginia General Assembly have condemned hundreds of thousands of poor Virginians to living without health coverage even though it would be fully funded by Fed-EDITORIAL eral money for the next three years, and

with Virginia paying 10 percent after five years. Gov. Terry McAuliffe has pledged to do everything he can to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, and we encourage him to

from the General Assembly, for example. Earlier this week, McAuliffe included an amendment to the FY2014 caboose budget bill authorizing the Governor to act in the event that the Medicaid Reform Innovation and Reform Commission (MIRC) fails to decide

happen. In Ohio, the governor found a legal way

to accept the Medicaid funds despite objections

whether or not to accept federal funding to cover up to 400,000 uninsured Virginians through Medicaid by the end of the current legislative session.

Business groups and chambers of commerce around Virginia, including the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, support accepting the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia under the Affordable Care Act. One persuasive factor for the business community: The expansion would create an estimated 30,000 jobs. Hospitals support expanding Medicaid which would offset many of

It isn't as if there is no health care cost for the uninsured now. Right now, they access health care when they are very sick by going to an emergency room or other clinics, where providers spread the cost of care around. This is inefficient, expensive and unhealthy, including for those of us who do have health insur-

the costs of caring for uninsured populations.

ance. It means unvaccinated and/or sick people are going to work and going about their daily lives putting themselves and others at risk.

As of January 2014, in Virginia, Medicaid eligibility for adults without disability is limited to parents with incomes below 51 percent of poverty, or about \$11,900 a year for a family of four, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. Adults without dependent children remain ineligible regardless of their income.

The General Assembly should not be able to block coverage for as many as 400,000 Virginians basically out of spite. The established excuse, that the Feds can't afford it and can't be counted on to pay the money, doesn't hold water in Virginia, which receives more Federal dollars per capita than any other state but Alaska. If legislators are so concerned about Federal ability to pay, you might expect to see them refusing transportation money, for example, or to turn the possible FBI headquarters away, or thousands of other ways that Federal dollars make their way into Virginia.

> — Mary Кімм, MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## ■Fairfax

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News Brief

### Animal Shelter Shines in 2013

airfax County Animal Shelter adoption initiatives resulted in the shelter having its most successful year yet, saving a record number of animals' lives.

Thanks to implementation of new programs and policies, the shelter had an overall animal placement rate of 92 percent, making Fairfax County the largest municipality in the entire nation to have a placement rate above 90 percent. The placement rate measures the number of animals adopted, transferred to a rescue group and reclaimed by their owners.

More than 4,200 animals came tion, the shelter ran creative adopthrough the shelter's doors in 2013. There are many reasons animals end up at the shelter. Some are picked up as stray pets by Animal Control. Others are surrendered by their owners, who, for a variety of reasons, including moving, allergies, or economic hardship, must give up their pets. Finally, the shelter receives animals involved in cruelty, neglect and hoarding cases.

To find loving homes for thousands of homeless pets, the shelter worked with more than 61 rescue partners and countless volunteers and foster families. In addition promotions throughout the year which increased all adoptions and doubled dog adoptions. Other successful shelter initiatives included animal enrichment, daily play groups for dogs, weekend fostering, and off-site dog walking.

Partnerships with other organizations added community strength, as well. The "Twelve Days of Adoptables," a partnership between the Washington Humane Society and the Fairfax County Animal Shelter resulted in adoption of nearly 300 animals between Nov. 15 and Dec. 31. Joining forces with other groups and

agencies helped to spread the word about some long-term shelter residents.

Help make the Animal Shelter a better place for homeless animals in the community. Consider becoming a foster family by temporarily housing animals that may need the safe, quiet home to recover from medical treatments, illness, or simply need extra love and socialization that a private home provides.

Schedule a shelter tour for scout, school, church or community groups FCPDPetResources@fairfaxcounty.gov or by calling 703-324-0208.

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

### SUNDAY/JAN. 19, 26 - FEB. 9, 16, 23

"Religions & Cultures of the

Middle East." Six-class series taught by Johnnie Hicks of George Mason University, formerly of the Tehran American School in Iran. 3-4:30 p.m. Grace Presbyterian Church, 7434 Bath St., Springfield. 703-451-

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

English Conversation Group. 7 p.m. Burke Centre Library, 5935 Freds Oak Road, Burke. Practice English with others and improve your skills. Adults.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

Dog Adoption Event. 12-3 p.m. PETCO, Greenbriar Towncenter, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. 703-817-9444.

### SUNDAY/JAN. 26

**Annual Meeting of the Burke** 

Historical Society. 4:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall at Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 6304 Lee Chapel Road, Burke. BHS members Mary Lipsey and Christine Zinser will tell the fascinating story of Burke's initial selection as the site of Washington's new airport in the 1950s, and the events that followed.

### MONDAY/JAN. 27

Pohick Prose Society. 7 p.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Help with using eReaders, tablets, computers and mobile devices to access library eBooks.

Adults.

### WEDNESDAY/JAN. 29

**Pohick English Conversation** 

Group. 7 p.m. Pohick Library, 6450 Sydenstricker Road, Burke. Practice English with others and improve your skills. Adults.

### SATURDAY/FEB. 1

Dog Adoption Event. 12-3 p.m. PETCO, Greenbriar Towncenter, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Highway, Fairfax. 703-817-9444.

### MONDAY/FEB. 3

Area Wide Prayer Meeting. 7:30 p.m. 10000 Coffer Woods, Burke. All local Burke churches are welcome and invited to join us as we pray for our community, schools and leaders. Hosted by Knollwood Community Church. For more information go to www.knoll.org or call 703 425 2068.

### **ONGOING**

Singers Wanted for the

Celebration Singers. The women's show choir is interested in new talent to perform at various Northern Virginia community sites. Practices are Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. in Burke. Contact Gayle Parsons, 703-644-4485 or email

### Senior Fall Prevention Classes.

1:30-2:30 p.m., at the Woodlands Retirement Community, 4320 Forest Hill Drive, Fairfax. Tuesday and/or Thursday classes in a heated pool designed to work on balance and core muscles for injury prevention. \$10. 703-667-9800.

### American Red Cross CPR, First Aid and AED. Various times, at 2720 State Route 699, Suite 200, Fairfax.

One-vear certification, digital or print materials and continued education on Mondays-Thursday and Saturday. \$70-110. www.redcrossnca.org.

### COMMENTARY



Members of the Virginia chapters of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) visited Delegate Filler-Corn on their advocacy day in Richmond.

Photo Courtesy
of the Office of
Delegate Eileen
Filler-Corn

## Filler-Corn Shares Observations from 2014 General Assembly

From Page 4

### MONDAY, JAN. 13

I started Monday morning early with several meetings, including the first Finance Committee meeting of the year. The Finance Committee joined the Appropriations Committee for a joint meeting with the new Secretary of Finance, Ric Brown. In between meetings and a short House floor session, I met with a constituent from the Military Officers of America Association. After the floor session, my first bill was up before the Civil Courts Subcommittee - HB 551, which would have allowed individuals filing a will or codicil with the clerk's office two options for the lodging and safekeeping of these documents. 41st District resident, Richard Golden of Burke, drove to Richmond to join me and testify in favor of the bill. Unfortunately, the Subcommittee "gently laid the bill on the table," essentially defeating it for this Session.

### TUESDAY, JAN. 14

I started my day with the first meeting of the Transportation Committee. With the start of the judicial nomination process, we had a slightly longer House floor session. We voted to approve the first batch of candidates recommended by my colleagues on the Courts of Justice Committee. After the floor Session, I had my next bill, HB 550, before the General Laws Subcommittee on Housing. Tena Bluhm, another fellow 41st District resident, joined me to explain how the procedures recommended in the bill would alleviate the burdens on volunteer-managed homeowners associations. The Subcommittee recommended the bill to the full committee for a vote.

### WEDNESDAY, JAN. 15

This morning I was busy meeting with several constituent groups and learning about the issues that mattered to them. Among the groups I was honored to meet with, were Fairfax County members of the Virginia Fire Fighters. I appreciated the presentation of their legislative priorities for this Session. After the floor Session ended and several meetings, I presented my bill HB 545 before the Privileges and Elec-

tions Subcommittee on Campaign Finance. I have been a strong advocate for making elections more accessible to all eligible voters, and HB 545 would have extended the polls closing time by one hour to 8 pm. Unfortunately, the Subcommittee recommended that the bill be "laid on the table," essentially defeating it. That evening, I joined members of the House and Senate for Governor McAuliffe's first Joint Session Address. Governor McAuliffe again called for bipartisan reform and cooperation in the 2014 General Assembly. Immediately after the Joint Address, we walked over to the Governor's Mansion to end the evening with a reception of General Assembly members and their families and appointed members of the Governor's Cabinet.

### THURSDAY, JAN. 16

To start the morning, I joined several of my Democratic House colleagues on the leadership team (I currently serve as Deputy Whip for the Democratic Caucus) for breakfast with Governor McAuliffe at the Governor's Mansion. I then balanced my time between my full Transportation Committee and Militia, Police and Public Safety Subcommittee, which were meeting at the same time (which is not uncommon here). After the floor session, I joined the House Democratic Caucus for a press conference to present our agenda for the 2014 General Assembly Session. We highlighted our priorities for the 2014 legislative session, including SOL reform and quality education, mental health reform, affordable health care and growing the economy. At the press conference I was pleased to have the opportunity to again speak about HB 545, calling for continued reform to make it easier for Virginians across the Commonwealth to cast their ballots.

### FRIDAY, JAN. 17

After a short floor session with full House of Delegates, I wrapped up some final business of the week and hit I-95 headed towards the 41st District to spend the weekend back home in the district with my family. I will head back down to Richmond early Monday morning to start another eventful week.



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- Two mobile labs and 11,000 volume media center assist with providing a multi-faceted learning approach to our science and social studies curriculum.
- Spanish is offered in Kindergarten through 8th Grade
- St. Leo the Great offers a myriad of extracurricular activities, such as Girls on the Run and the Mad Science of Washington Club.
- Our NVCYO Sports Program Includes Basketball, Track & Field, Tennis, and Cheerleading.
- Our band was established in 1974 and has been the recipient of many awards over the years, to include the Music in the Parks Award.
- Our students leave St. Leo the Great with strong leadership abilities, which sets the foundation for them to excel in leadership roles in high school, college and beyond.



# Be Part of The **Pet** Connection in February

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Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, and identify all people and pets in photos. Submission deadline is July 19.

## ENTERTAINMENT

## A Chocolate Lover's Dream Fairfax's annual festival is Feb. 1-2.

THE CONNECTION

hocolate - candy, cake, sauce, pancakes, fudge, ice cream and even a chocolate fountain or three — they're all part of the City of Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival. And this year's event, the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual, is Saturday, Feb. 1 through Sunday, Feb. 2.

A dream-come-true for chocolate aficionados, as well as for those seeking tasty treats to give as Valentine's Day presents, the festival offers a full slate of activities for

The fun-filled weekend contains everything from a competition to see who can make the most beautiful and creative cakes, cupcakes and sculptures in chocolate to an irresistible sampling of chocolate goodies that attracts thousands of people from throughout the Washington Metropolitan

"Chocolate and Valentine's Day belong together," said Mayor Scott Silverthorne. "The City of Fairfax's annual Chocolate Lovers Festival has become a delicious destination for people throughout the region and beyond. Join us!"

The festivities begin Friday, Jan. 31, at 2 p.m., when Kaydee Puppets offers "Chocolate Dipped Tales" for children at the City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St. Then on Saturday, Feb. 1, the day starts with the annual, Kiwanis Club Pancake Breakfast, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Fire Station 3, at 4081 University Drive. Dine on regular or chocolate-chip pancakes, plus sausage, coffee, juice and milk. Cost is \$6, adults; \$4, children ages 4-10. Children 3 and under music performances, fairytales, a fire-safety puppet show, a Chocolate Caper mock trial, a magician and open houses in historic build-

New this year is the "Chocolate and a Movie" night, Feb. 1, featuring the original Chocolate Lovers Festival in the City of encourage participation in the community "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" Fairfax," said Festival Chairman Beverly starring Gene Wilder. Admission is \$3/per- Meyer. "It brings folks from all up and down son and comes with a golden ticket that the East Coast, young and old alike, and could prove lucky, and there will be weather is never a deterrent for the festichildren's stories and activities before the val."



From left: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova, event Chairman Beverly Meyer and eat free with a paying adult. There are also City Councilman Steve Stombres judge cupcakes during last year's festival.

The event initially began as a joint effort There's even a Chocolate Express provid- of the City of Fairfax, Central Fairfax Cham- the Taste of Chocolate.

ing free, shuttle service between event locaber of Commerce, Downtown Fairfax Coalitions. It will run Feb. 1, from 9:30 a.m.-5:30 tion, Downtown Fairfax Merchants Associap.m. and Feb. 2 from 11:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. tion and George Mason University. The goal "We are excited to again be hosting the was to attract visitors to Old Town Fairfax, and foster cooperation among the city government, businesses and local residents.

> The first festival was in February 1993 and, since then, it's become one of the citv's most popular events. And two of the main highlights are the Chocolate Challenge and

Running Saturday, Feb. 1, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 2, from noon-4 p.m., on both floors of the Old Town Hall,



This pirate ship from Cake Walk won an award in 2013's Chocolate

Mayor R. Scott Silverthorne. The event also well as items from local

Raspberry-white chocolate cupcakes on display.

3999 University Drive, the Taste of Chocolate is not to be missed. Strollers may be left on the building's front porch. A fully accessible entrance is at the door on Main Street.

Admission is free; visitors buy pogs for \$1 each and then browse around the vendors' tables to check out the wide array of chocolate treats being offered. When something catches their fancy, they pay for it in

For example, a slice of cake could cost three pogs, or a customer could buy three small pieces of candy for two pogs. The vendors set their own prices and roaming volunteers in red aprons will have plenty of pogs on hand for people wanting to purchase more.

And the variety of goodies is mind-boggling. There are chocolate cakes, all kinds of chocolate candies and bars, chocolate-covered strawberries, fudge, ice cream and even chocolate fountains into which customers may dip fruit, cake or marshmallows.

This year's Taste of Chocolate vendors include: BaTer Chocolates, C & D Sweets, Cakes by Shelby, Cameron's Coffee & Chocolate, Capitol Chocolate Fountains; Chocotenago, Cocoa Vienna, Confection Connection, Dave's Candy Kitchen, El Ceibo/ Bolivia, Extreme Ice Cream, Fair Trade Winds, Fluffy Thoughts Cakes, Mike's Fudge, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Sugar Mama's, Virginia Chocolate

Co. and Watergate Pastry. The Chocolate Challenge, a display of imaginative creations in chocolate — art, cakes and cupcakes — takes place at the Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive. It runs Feb. 1, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Feb. 2, noon-4 p.m. Both professionals and amateurs participate, and judges and visitors judge them in various categories. Visitors may also vote for the People's Choice Award winner.

This year's judges include Sabrina Campbell, owner and executive pastry chef of Occasionally Cake; Dean Thomas Prohaska of GMU's College of Health and Human Services; and Fairfax features a silent auction enabling visitors to bid on the challenge entries, as businesses.



Truffles are among the many items offered at the Taste of Chocolate during the City of Fairfax **Chocolate Lovers Festival.** 

In addition, the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee donates part of each year's event proceeds to a charity. This year's recipient is Best Buddies Virginia, a nonprofit providing opportunities for one-on-one friendships between people with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. The funds will support the Best Buddies chapter at GMU.

"And don't forget to visit our downtown merchants, as they'll be running specials throughout the weekend," said Meyer.

For more information about the festival, go to www.chocolatefestival.net or call 703-





Chocolate treats for the eyes and tummies are found at the City of Fairfax **Chocolate Lovers Festival.** 

### Chocolate Lovers Festival Schedule of Events –

Kaydee Puppets: Chocolate Dipped Tales. 2 p.m.. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North

### SATURDAY/FEB. 1

Kiwanis Club Chocolate Chip Pancake Breakfast. 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Fire Station 3, 4081

Child Fingerprinting. 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Fairfax Courthouse, 4000 Chain Bridge Road. Taste of Chocolate. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. Chocolate Challenge and Silent Auction. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University

The Chocolate Caper Mock Trial. 10:15 a.m., 1:15 p.m. Fairfax Courthouse, 4000 Chain Bridge

Musical Duo of Cody & BJ. 11 a.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North Street

Harley Eye Candy Photos. 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library.

Fire Safety Puppet Show. 12:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library. So You Think You Are Smarter Than a Lawyer? 11:45 a.m. Fairfax Courthouse, 4000 Chain

Chocolate-Covered Fairy Tales with Gary Lloyd. 2 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library. See Jane Sing Quartet. 3:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library.

**Open House and Exhibits.** Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Legato School, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ford Building, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ratcliffe-Allison House, 12 - 4 p.m.

Chocolate Movie Night: featuring "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (rated PG).

7- 9 p.m. Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Highway

### SUNDAY/FEB. 2

Chocolate Challenge and Silent Auction. 12-4 p.m. Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive. Taste of Chocolate. 12 -4 p.m. Old Town Hall.

fire Safety Puppet Show. 12:30 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library

Wildlife Ambassadors. 2-3 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library. Journey to the Jungle, see exotic animals and learn how they live in the rain forest among the cocoa-bean trees.

Turley the Magician . 3:30-4:15 p.m. City of Fairfax Regional Library. Open House and Exhibits. Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Legato School, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Ratcliffe-Allison House, 12 - 4 p.m.

Schedule is subject to change. Visit www.chocolatefestival.net for an event map and information on parking, shuttle schedules, costs and more.

### - Bring Food Donations -

he Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee cups, pudding, applesauce, cheese and crackers, wersity Drive (during the Kiwanis Pancake will again support the Fairfax Kiwanis granola bars, 100-percent fruit juice boxes, Capri Breakfast) Meals for Young Minds Program with Sun juice packets; and shelf-stable milk. multiple locations where people may drop off food during the festival for children in need. This project provides food for local, elementary- granola bars and other breakfast foods: school students who don't have food to eat on the weekends.

Each child rec friendly, nonperishable, nutritious food items to beef ravioli, tuna and similar foods; program has expanded to support students at cup, fruit roll-ups and other snacks.

size boxes of cereal, chili cups, macaroni and tions: 

Children are given bags containing: ❖ Two breakfasts: oatmeal small cereal box

Two lunches: cheese and crackers, cup of soup and similar items;

Two dinners: ea:

last the weekend. Since its inception in 2010, the Two or three snacks: applesauce, pudding, fruit

These and similar nourishing food items will be Needed are oatmeal packets; single-serving collected Saturday, Feb. 1 at the following loca-

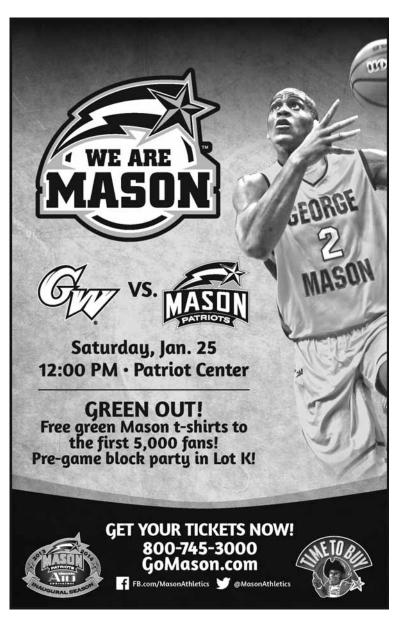
❖ 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St. ❖10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Nutrition Kitchen, 3950

University Drive ❖10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St. Food donations will also be o

Feb. 2, at: ❖ 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Fairfax Museum and Visi-

tor Center, 10209 Main St. Noon to 4 p.m.: Nutrition Kitchen, 3950

Noon to 4 p.m.: City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St.



### 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.

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23

Mrs. Green's Natural Market. 6:30-8:30 p.m. 12995 Fair Lakes Shopping Center, Fairfax. Brand New, natural & organic, One-stop fresh food market. www.mrsgreens.com

### THURSDAY/JAN.23-SATURDAY/JAN.25

I Never Saw Another Butterfly. 7

p.m. The Sovereign Grace Home School Co op Main Auditorium, 5200 Ox Rd, Fairfax. The play tells the unforgettable story of a young Jewish survivor of the Holocaust during World War II. \$7 for adults; \$5, students 3-17. www.facebook.com/ Sawabutterfly and jubileecampaign.org/funds/tabithaorphans-fund

### THURSDAY/JAN. 23-FRIDAY/JAN. 24

Annie Get Your Gun. 7:30 p.m. Lake Braddock Secondary School, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke. This musical tells the fictionalized story of the life of Annie Oakley (1860-1926), a sharpshooter who starred in Buffalo Bill's Wild West, and her romance with sharpshooter Frank Butler. Tickets \$10. http:// lakebraddockchorus.squarespace.com for information and online ticket

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24- SATURDAY/JAN. 25

"Cats." 7:30 p.m. Fairfax High School 3501 Rebel Run, Fairfax. Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber and based on

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Some members of The Fairfax Academy cast rehearsing the musical "Cats." Performances begin Jan. 24 at Fairfax High School.

TS Eliot's "Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats" Ticket sales for \$14.13 & \$6.25 on line at: fxdance.ticketleap.com

### FRIDAY/JAN. 24

Messages of Hope. 7:30-9:30 p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. A Chris Lavelle Film, will be shown. A film event that will touch your soul, this documentary is based on Suzanne's true story of transformation that has captivated audiences. Participants can ask questions about the afterlife, hear the rest of the story, and get books signed following the discussion. Cost:

One-Act Festival. 8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Unquiet Theatre Company Presents: A Pair of One-Act Plays. \$5-\$10.

### SATURDAY/JAN. 25

Springfield Burke Relay for Life Scrapbooking/Crafting Event. 8 a.m.- 5 p.m. West Springfield High

School cafeteria, 6100 Rolling Road, Springfield. Complete your craft projects in the New Year—photo albums, jewelry, Valentines. Cost includes lunch, door prizes, silent auction and shopping showcase. Suggested donation \$40 for full day, \$25 for half day. All proceeds go to the American Cancer Society. To register contact Leslie Carlin at 703-866-4862 or Anne Wardinski at 703-764-9687.

Making the Connection. 9:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Participants will learn how to open themselves to higher levels of

guidance, creativity, inspiration and love. Cost \$35 each Saturday presentation – morning or afternoon.

"Heart Gifts" New Evidence of Our  $\textbf{Interconnectedness.}\ 1:30\text{-}4:30$ p.m. Unity of Fairfax, 2854 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, Suzanne Giesemann, former Aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

and now acclaimed spiritual author, will tell the gripping story of a very special soul called "Wolf." who in his short time on earth, walked two worlds at once - the physical and non-physical. His story reveals the interconnectedness of the two worlds and the messages he left behind are amazing gifts to us on how to bring peace, balance and greater love into life. Cost: \$35.00 for this afternoon session.

Annie Get Your Gun. 2 and 8 p.m. Lake Braddock Secondary School, 9200 Burke Lake Road, Burke. This entertaining musical tells the fictionalized story of the life of Annie Oakley (1860-1926), a sharpshooter who starred in Buffalo Bill's Wild West, and her romance with sharpshooter Frank Butler. Tickets \$10. http:// lakebraddockchorus.squarespace.com for information and online ticket

### Anna Balakerskaia & Friends. 8

p.m. George Mason University, Harris Theatre, Fairfax. An evening of chamber music featuring the music of Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Shostokovich and Rachmaninov. Anna Balakerskaia, piano, with guest artists Zino Bogachek, violin, Philippe Chao, viola, Brendan Conway, violin, Claire Eichhorn, clarinet, Dasha Gabay, piano, Igor Zubkovsky, cello.703-819-6669

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### Entertainment

### 'Family-Friendly, Magical and Heartwarming'

## Robinson presents "The Snow Queen."

By Bonnie Hobbs The Connection

ased on the same Hans Christian Anderson tale as the Disney movie, "Frozen," Robinson Secondary presents the children's play, "The Snow Queen."

"Kids will like the colorful characters and that it's the children who save the day," said Director Chip Rome. "And adults and teens will enjoy the wordplay and characterizations. It's a fun ride."

Putting it on is the acting and tech class, Robinson Production Co. The cast and crew of 32 began work in September. Students must audition for the company; so besides being highly motivated, said Rome, "They've approached this show with extraordinary enthusiasm and dedication. They're talented, creative and hardworking and it's paying off."

When the queen insults a goblin by saying he's ugly, his revenge is to freeze her heart and she becomes the Snow Queen. Sister and brother Gerta and Kai hear about her from their grandmother; and when Kai vanishes, Gerta learns the Snow Queen stole him, so she goes on a quest to find him.

Along the way, she meets young Prince Eric of Lapland, who agrees to help her, as do a crow named Cawtrina and a witch called the Conjure Woman. But they must battle the Snow Queen's minions, Blue Norther and Frostbite.

The story unfolds in the grandmother's house, against a snowy landscape and in the Snow Queen's palace, and almost everyone in the cast is also working on tech. For example, costume head is Katherine Ide, with help from freshman Olivia Hays who portrays the Snow Queen.

Wearing a fur shawl, an icicle tiara and a shattered-mirror necklace, Hays described her character: "She's heartbroken because her own son was taken from her and she can't find him. So her mirror turns her evil, bitter and heartless. Playing the Snow Queen is a fun contrast because I'm peppy and friendly in real life, so I love taking on a villainous role. I can be larger than life, order people around and speak harshly."

Calling it "a fun, wintertime-themed show," Hays said its message is that "love persists through everything, and everyone is your family. Children will love it. They'll connect with the lovable talking animals Gerta meets on her journey and will love getting to know each one."



The Conjure Woman (Cassidy Milne with flute) and flowers (from left) Brittany Harris, Jenna Jaso, Hanna Kornell (weeping willow), Maria Versace, Sarah Leopard and Erin Powell.

Hays said freshmen are doing the whole show. "It gives us real-world experience of being part of a theater company, not just acting, but also doing sets, makeup and all the artistic elements," she said. "Everyone gets to show their talents and really shine."

Playing Gerta – in pigtails, tights, hat and a cape over her dress – is Isabel Min. "Gerta's sweet and is nice to everyone she meets," said Min. "She was orphaned, so she wants all the family she can get and is accepting of everyone. She's caring and brave and loves her brother, and she always looks on the bright side."

Having such a big part is challenging, said Min, but it's taught her "more about acting – facial expressions, body movement and reacting to other people. And as Gerta, I meet all these hysterical characters that are fun to be around." She said the audience will like the moral of how "family always comes through. And the costumes, makeup and lights really help the magic of the story come alive."

Sam Rudy portrays Prince Eric. "He's thoughtful and kind, goes out of his way to help others and strives to be the best," said Rudy. "It's fun having some scenes that are all about Eric; it's grand playing a prince because everybody looks up to my character."

Garrett Christian plays Kai. "He's a loving brother and a nice guy," said Christian. "But when he's under the Snow Queen's spell, he becomes cold-hearted, hateful and cruel – all the things children shouldn't be. It's great playing his two, different personalities and showing the contrast between the evil guy and the normal one."

The curtain rises Friday, Jan. 24, at 7 p.m., and Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2 and 7 p.m. \$5/advance at the main office, \$7/door; \$6/reserved tickets at www.brownpapertickets.com/event/521540.





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### News

### Bulova Talks Budget in Address

From Page 3

this year's General Assembly session.

"This is our education year, our number one ask and priority from legislators is to get the full funding of \$33 million," Bulova said.

Although Fairfax County is not facing the "doomsday budgets" of the mid-1990s, a projected budget shortfall of \$25 million this fiscal year, coupled with the accelerating growth and financial needs of Fairfax County Public Schools will present the Board of Supervisors with choices and challenges.

"Once again, it will not be an easy budget year," Bulova said. "Actions or lack of action at the fed-

eral level has impacted commercial and sales tax revenue, making it more difficult for the county to recover from the downturn."

Bulova said the county's advertised budget for fiscal year 2015 will be released for public comment

next month. The county will host a number of public hearings, community forums and town meetings to give residents the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions. In late April, the board officially adopts the budget.

"Recently, the department has established the chief's Council on Diversity Recruiting. This council provides the agency engagement with leaders from culturally diverse communities to assist us in developing innovative recruitment opportunities."

— Police Chief Edwin Roessler

tells a story,"
Bulova said.
"We'll look for
efficiencies and
savings and opportunity for
savings, but it
won't be easy.
The low-hanging
fruit has already
been picked."

"Every budget

In spite of the challenges, Bulova said she believes the board has consistently been able to strike a bal-

ance that has kept taxes affordable while delivering high quality services to residents.

"We remain committed to work with the community to maintain excellence in the face of our challenges," she said.

### Sales Tax Error Inflates Revenue

"Am I worried? Yes, but

directors do. We worry."

- Arlington Budget Director

**Richard Stevenson** 

that's what budget

From Page 3

shortfalls with expenditure reductions," wrote Alexandria City Manager Rashad Young in a memorandum to City Council members this month.

The concerns are larger than retail sales. One of the potential problems on the horizon is transient occupancy tax revenues. In Alexandria, for example, the hotel occupancy rate fell from 76.1 percent in October 2012 to 72.4 percent in October 2013. In Arlington, hotel occupancy tax rev-

enues fell 15 percent in November compared to the previous year and 18 percent in December compared to the previous year.

"Am I worried? Yes," acknowledged Arlington Budget Director Richard Stevenson. "But that's what budget directors do. We worry."

**EXPERTS WHO FOLLOW** local government revenues say jurisdictions are worried for two reasons. The first is the lack of continuity on the part of the federal government. When the shutdown was happening, nobody knew how long it would last or when it would end. That led families to cut back their spending habits and cast a wary eye toward the future.

"That, obviously, is scary," said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Government at George Mason University. "It means for a family that you always have to leave something aside instead of using it at a local restaurant, store or other facility."

A second reason for worry is that the uncertainty is far from over. The budget agreement reached be-

tween Congress and the president is good through September, leaving open the possibility of yet another battle about bankruptcy and insolvency. That leaves open a sense of doubt for long-term contracts

> involving everything from bridges and fighter planes to satellite and veterans hospitals.

> "With the Federal Highway Trust Fund expected to be insolvent by next year," said Shafroth, "a key partner in the regional Washington economy is becoming an uncertain one."

THE NEXT FEW months will detail the extent of the economic damage created by sequester and shutdown. Will the numbers track with expectations? Or will they fall well below the budgets local leaders voted for last spring? That has local governments worried and prepared to make reductions if necessary. Then again, they also don't want to make spending reduction that are unnecessary and potentially damaging.

"What you don't what to do is make cuts that if we recover enough we didn't need to make," said Laura Triggs, finance director with the city of Alexandria. "But by law, if it continues to be low then yes I have to cut back on expenditures."

Part of the problem is revenue growth not meeting expectations. Even if local governments see an increase in revenue from sales tax revenue, failure to meet expectations could spell trouble for balancing the books in the current fiscal year. And that means even more headaches for trying to predict the future in fiscal year 2015.

"Normally our sales tax is increasing at a larger extent than it is right now," said Wilds.

## Piercing the Marble

## Virginia Supreme Court opens audio recordings to public.

By Michael Lee Pope The Connection

embers of the Virginia Supreme Court have a New Year's Resolution — become more transparent. Starting this year, members of the public will finally have access to audio recordings of oral arguments. The recordings were once public, but installation of new recording equipment in January 2008 changed that. Because the new microphones were so powerful, justices were concerned that sidebar conversations between justices might be audible.

"That was a lame excuse," said Del. Dave Albo (R-42). "I'm glad they decided to change this without the General Assembly passing legislation to make it happen."

As it turns out, legislation was already in the works when the justices changed the policy. Wise County Clerk of Court Jack Kennedy approached Del. Terry Kilgore (R-1) about introducing legislation requiring the court to release audio recording of oral arguments. Draft language for House Bill 1018 said audio records of Supreme Court oral arguments "shall be made publicly available in electronic format without fee within a reasonable time after oral arguments take place."

"I'm a Democrat and he's a Republican," said Kennedy, who lives in Kilgore's district. "But transparency should not be a partisan issue."

### THE LACK OF TRANSPARENCY in

Virginia has been a problem for many years, and the commonwealth has recently gained a reputation as a place that is hostile to open government. In 2012, the State Integrity Investigation ranked

"I'm glad they decided to change this without the General Assembly passing legislation to make it happen."

— Del. Dave Albo (R-42)

and graded each of the 50 states on government accountability, transparency and corruption. Virginia got an F, largely because police agencies deny access to basic documents. This week, Richmond-based Open Law Virginia issued its own state-by-state guide comparing public availability of online documents. Virginia got a C minus, largely because many documents and files are difficult for members of the public to access.

"Access to live and recorded oral arguments creates opportunities for civic education and public engagement," the report concludes. "And even many judges have recognized, in part based on experience, that it is time to bring video coverage to appellate courtrooms routinely."

When the court's policy of denying public access became public last year, leaders at the Supreme Court initially decided to defend the policy. In a written statement explaining the lack of transparency, director of legislative and public relations for the Office of Executive Secretary Katya Herndon said new technology was to blame.

"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," said Herndon last June. "Accordingly, the recordings, which are for the internal use of the justices, are no longer made available to the public."

Since that time, a number of media outlets have reported on the lack of transparency. And legislators began drafting bills to force the court to open up. Now, the court has decided to change course — at least for oral arguments moving forward. Advocates for open government say it's a victory for the public.

"We can't have secret courts," said Ginger Stanley, executive director of the Virginia Press Association. "The public has a right to hear these audio records. That's how democracy works."

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE TOWN OF CLIFTON FEBRUARY 4, 2014

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Clifton Town Council and Planning Commission will hold a joint Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 4, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the Clifton Community Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton, Virginia. The purpose is to consider amendment and revision of the Signs regulations within the Zoning Ordinance, found in Chapter 9, Article 2 General Regulations, Section 9-14 of the Code of Town of Clifton, Virginia.

The proposed revision is available for review on the Town website at <a href="http://clifton-va.com/TownCode.pdf">http://clifton-va.com/TownCode.pdf</a> under the Town site at http://ciitton-va.com/Towncode.pdi unider the Townc Council/Legislation drop-down menu. A hard copy may be ex-amined at the Clifton Post Office, 12644 Chapel Road, Clifton, Virginia. All interested parties are encouraged to attend the Public Hearing to express their views with respect to the proposed amendment and revision of the Signs section of the Zoning Ordinance.

### 21 Announcements

### **ABC LICENSE**

Exclusive wine Imports, LLC trading as Exclusive Wine Imports, 7361 D Lockport Place, Lorton, VA 22079. The above establishment is applying to the VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL(ABC) for a Wine Importer and Wholesale wine license to sell or manufacture alcoholic beverages. James Ungerleider, sole member. NOTE: Objections to the issuance of this license must be submitted to ABC no later than 30 days from the publishing date of the first of two required newspaper legal notices. Objections should be registered at www.abc.virginia.gov 800-552-3200.

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### **SPORTS**

### Lake Braddock Boys' Basketball to Face Woodson

The Lake Braddock boys' basketball team dropped to 10-3 with a 99-86 loss to Herndon on Jan. 18, but the Bruins will soon get another crack at one of the top teams in the

Lake Braddock hosts Woodson at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 23 in a game that was originally scheduled for Tuesday, but postponed due to inclement weather. Woodson is 11-3, has won seven in a row and 10 of its last 11.

"It's definitely a huge game for us," Lake Braddock senior Will Gregorits said. "Woodson has had some great teams in the past and they have one this year ... We'll be surprised if we don't' see them [in the conference tournament]."

Gregorits, a 6-foot-7 forward, is averaging 15 points per game for the defending Patriot District champions.

The Bruins had won five of six before falling to Herndon — a team Gregorits said he could see Lake Braddock facing in the postseason.

"They are the best team we've played so far this year," he said. "To be honest, they are one of the best teams I've played my whole high school career." Herndon is 11-2.

— Jon Roetman

### Lake Braddock Girls' Basketball Wins 5 of 7

After a 2-4 start, during which several players missed time due to injury, the Lake Braddock girls' basketball team has won five of its last seven games and regained a winning record.

The Bruins defeated Herndon 85-39 on Jan 18 and improved to 7-6, putting them above .500 for the first time since the team was 2-1 after beating Lee on Dec. 13.

During the season, Aryn Burrage (12 stitches in lip), Hermela Arcudi (concussion), Caitlyn Mandela (ankle), Marsha (hip) and point guard Betsy Gallier are among the Bruins who suffered injuries.

"I think early in the season we had a lot of girls that were injured," head coach John Giannelli said. "Right after the tryouts, we picked a team and I had to take two or three of the JV girls just so I could run a practice."

Lake Braddock defeated Annandale 41-33 on Jan. 10. After losing to T.C. Williams, the Bruins beat South County 45-42 on Jan. 17.

Giannelli said the loss of 6-foot-4 Natalie Butler, who averaged 26.2 points, 17.8 rebounds and 10.1 blocks per game as a senior last year and now plays for Georgetown, has made for a



Lake Braddock senior captain Marcia Altman attempts a perimeter shot against Herndon on Jan. 18.

challenging year. The Bruins have responded with a balanced scoring attack, including several games where each player on the team scored.

Christine McGrath is Lake Braddock's leading scorer at 10 points per game. Marcia Altman is averaging eight points per contest, Caroline Jones is averaging seven and Mandela six.

"Anybody on the team," Giannelli said, "can be the leading scorer on any given night." Lake Braddock will host Woodson at 5:45 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 24.

— Jon Roetman

### Robinson Names New Head Football Coach

Robinson Secondary School recently announced Scott Vossler as the Rams' new head football coach.

Vossler spent last season as associate head coach at Robinson under Dan Meier, who agreed to coach the Rams on an interim basis for one season. Vossler is a social studies teacher at the middle school and has been part of the football program for three years.

Vossler was a four-year letterman at the University of Dayton, earning all-league honors as a defensive lineman in 2007 and 2008. He was team captain and defensive player of the year in 2008.

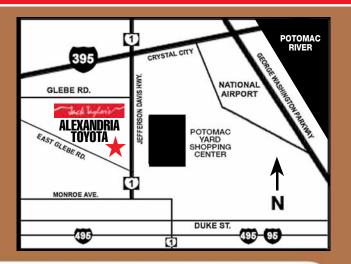
Robinson finished 8-4 under Meier last season, including a victory over Patriot in the opening round of the 6A North regional playoffs. In two seasons prior, Robinson finished a combined 9-13 under head coach Trey Taylor.

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