

# Springfield CONNECTION

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## Lake Braddock Tops Woodson

SPORTS, PAGE 12

Lake Braddock junior  
A.J. Alexander attacks  
the basket during  
Monday's game  
against Woodson.

History, Music,  
Chocolate & More

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WSHS Renovation Funds  
Long Time Coming

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# New Leadership for Workhouse Arts Center

**Board of Supervisors continues to debate future success of center.**

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

**L**aura McKie, a volunteer at the Prison Museum at the Lorton Workhouse Arts Center, said she doesn't expect the museum's everyday operations to change too much as Fairfax County takes greater control over the center.

"I think everything will carry on as normal," McKie said. He is referring to the Jan. 14 Board of Supervisors' decision, which will abolish the current Lorton Arts Foundation Board. Fairfax County will assume \$30 million in debt, settling the agreement with Wells Fargo Bank, which the Lorton Arts Foundation has entered into a debt of \$60 million.

Still, county officials such as Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity question the Jan. 14 Board of Supervisors' decision. Herrity, who was the only Supervisor who dissented in the decision, said that foreclosure could have been avoided, even without Fairfax County assuming the Foundation's debt. "We had more time and we didn't take it," Herrity said. "This wasn't

our loan. We had no legal obligation to pay off this debt."

Braddock District Supervisor John Cook, however, said before the Board of Supervisors decision that if the decision to assume the loan was not made, foreclosure would have been inevitable. "The fact of the matter is, if this deal was not made today, the bank was going to foreclose on that loan this month, and we had to act," Cook said.

Cook said before the Jan. 14 vote that the Lorton Arts Foundation failed, something Herrity disagrees with.

"The Lorton Arts Foundation didn't fail. They did the best they could with the situation," Herrity said. He added that circumstances were tough, however, especially considering the location of the arts center.

"Even the Torpedo Factory in Old Town Alexandria isn't surviving," Herrity said.

In 2002, Fairfax County purchased 2,440 acres of federal land, which was the site of the historic Occoquan Workhouse Prison, for \$4.2 million. In 2006, the Lorton Arts Foundation renovated the former prison into an arts center after approval from the Board of Supervisors. Chairman Sharon



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

Bulova has attended many events at the Workhouse Arts Center. McKie, who organized the "American Women: The Long and Winding Road" lecture series at the Prison Museum, said Bulova attended the first lecture and will participate in the event in March. "She is a big supporter of our program," McKie said.

Bulova issued a statement following the Board of Supervisors decision, stressing the economic difficulties faced by the Lorton Arts Foundation.

"However, like many nonprofits and businesses alike, the LAF has not been immune to the economic recession and slow recovery. Simply put, the past few years have proven an intensely difficult time to raise money for the arts, and the Workhouse Arts Center's operations have not generated enough revenue to cover expenses, especially debt it incurred for capital renovations," Bulova said in the statement.

Herrity said he is opposed to spending \$30 million of taxpayer's money, and believes Fairfax County should look at longer term solutions. "We shouldn't be bailing out a bank because it made a bad loan," Herrity said. "We should be looking at monetizing the surrounding land."

Cook, however, said that nobody is being bailed out with this agreement, and that the agreement was necessary to avoid litigation. "It is not true that there was no potential legal liability to the county. We own the land. We own the buildings," Cook said.

Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay supported the decision in order to protect the county's investment in the Workhouse. "This is a county with over a million people. We ought to have an arts center in this county, but we ought to have one that is fiscally well-managed and controlled, and one that we have some lever of oversight with," McKay said.

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## West Springfield Renovations Still Years Off

### Citizens question Capital Improvement Program funding.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

**W**est Springfield High School freshman Rylie Smedley said her school's need for renovation doesn't impact her everyday life at school too much, but that repair is obviously needed.

"A lot of the bathrooms don't work," said Smedley.

It was this state of disrepair that led Eric Hawkins, a resident of West Springfield since 2001, to join other parents and community advocates in 2008 to create SOAR, a group dedicated to ensuring West Springfield High School renovations by 2016.

Fairfax County Public School's current Capital Improvement Program only allows for one high school to be renovated every educational bond, which is bi-annual.

This has led to a queue of schools in line to be funded for renovation. West Springfield renovation is due to begin in 2016, but Hawkins said this timeline negatively impacts students and teachers currently at West Springfield.

"Some classrooms are freezing cold while others are steaming hot on the same day. It is as basic as bathrooms not functioning properly, to huge temperature fluctuations in classrooms on the same day," Hawkins said. "Most importantly, the school does not provide an optimal learning environment. The facility of West Springfield does not provide optimal learning environments and does not even meet the educational speci-



**Springfield District Supervisor Pat Herrity and Del. Dave Albo, both graduates of West Springfield High School, work closely with SOAR to ensure the renovation of the school.**

fications of Fairfax County Public Schools."

According to Hawkins, schools in need of repair are forced to wait for years before renovation can take place.

"No Fairfax County high school facility should ever be in the situation that West Springfield is in today. The most unfortunate reality is that not only is it West Springfield. Behind West Springfield in the renovation queue is Oakton, Herndon and Falls Church," Hawkins said. "If you think forward, and you can only fund one of these every other year, you are literally saying that all of these other high schools are not going to be renovated until the mid-2020s."

**IN 2013**, the Infrastructure Financing Committee was created to discuss capital needs of both Fairfax County Public Schools and county government.

Hawkins said SOAR had been advocating for a collaborative group between the schools and the county for four years before it was finally established in 2014.

"We wanted schools and the county to work together to what we saw, even at that time, as an impending crisis of unmet and unfunded infrastructure and capital needs. Community groups like ours saw that impending crisis three or four years ago," Hawkins said.

SOAR has been working for the past four years with their elected officials, including Springfield Supervisor Pat Herrity, a graduate of West Springfield High School.

Herrity said that it is problematic that Fairfax County has increased their debt by passing the storm water bond in 2012, but schools like West Springfield have still not been renovated.

"We told schools we don't have money and couldn't increase bonds for renovations, but then against the recommendation of staff, the storm water bond was increased in 2012," Herrity said.

Although West Springfield is on the queue to begin renovation in 2016, Hawkins said he hopes that the Infrastructure Financing

Committee will address problems with the way schools are put on the list to be renovated now.

"Why has the school system communicated a goal of 25-year renovations cycles, if the county has never provided enough funding to make that goal attainable?" Hawkins asked. "The question we have for the Infrastructure Financing Committee is how can the county invest more to resolve these unmet and unfunded capital needs, that have been termed a crisis and the biggest challenge currently facing the school system, and how quickly can incremental funding be provided?"

West Springfield PTSA President John Pastino, who has two children at West Springfield High School, said that although the school should have been renovated sooner, its faculty and staff, along with students, are what makes West Springfield a viable place to learn.

"The teachers and books are still the same, whether the infrastructure changes or not, you still have the same teachers, you still have the same books," Pastino said. "They've had issues over the past couple of years with maintenance. That obviously impacts the learning abilities of the students and the teachers to teach."

According to Pastino, West Springfield High School renovations will include larger classrooms, new windows, an increased parking lot size, and much more.

"We're being told it's going to look like a new school when it's done," Pastino said.

Hawkins hopes the IFC can make changes that will positively impact the timing of West Springfield's renovation.

"At the current rate, only children in second grade or younger will attend a completely renovated West Springfield High School," Hawkins said.

## Federal Grand Jury Indicts Fairfax Man

### Accused of producing child pornography.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**A** 46-year-old Fairfax man is facing more than a decade in prison after being indicted last week by a Federal grand jury in Alexandria. He is Padraic Collins, and he was indicted Thursday, Jan. 23, on a charge of production of child pornography.

According to U.S. District Court documents, he was allegedly found in possession of videos containing child pornography while he tried to cross the border into Canada. Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Washington received information from HSI Toronto regarding Collins at the

Lansdowne, Canada Port of Entry.

He was arrested by the Canadian Border Services Agency and charged with importing and possessing child pornography files on a handheld video camera and a laptop. Authorities say the seven videos confiscated reportedly show Collins engaging in sexual activity with an underage girl.

HSI Washington, in coordination with HSI Toronto and the Ottawa Provincial Police, determined the identity of the 11-year-old child in the videos. Court documents state that she allegedly identified Collins as her abuser and confirmed the details of the sexual abuse.

According to authorities, the girl reported that the crime happened in Springfield. The indictment lists the alleged offense date as Dec. 18, 2011. It also states that the visual evidence documenting it was contained on Collins's Sony Handycam video camera and

his Dell Latitude laptop computer.

If he is convicted, Collins could be sentenced to anywhere from a mandatory minimum of 15 years behind bars to a possible maximum of 30 years. He's scheduled for arraignment this Friday, Jan. 31, at 9 a.m., before Judge Claude Hilton in U.S. District Court in Alexandria. His plea or trial date should be set at that time.

The investigation was conducted by HSI Washington, with assistance from HSI Toronto, HSI Buffalo, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Ottawa Provincial Police and the U.S. Marshals Service. Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Alicia J. Yass, a trial attorney with the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section of the U.S. Justice Department's Criminal Division, is prosecuting the case on behalf of the United States.

Dana J. Boente, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, and Scot R.

Rittenberg, Acting Special Agent in Charge of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), HSI Washington, made the announcement about Collins after the grand jury returned the indictment against him to U.S. Magistrate Judge T. Rawles Jones Jr.

This prosecution is part of Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative launched in May 2006 by the Department of Justice to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Led by U.S. Attorneys' Offices and the Criminal Division's Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, Project Safe Childhood uses federal, state and local resources to better find, apprehend and prosecute people who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information, go to [www.projectsafchildhood.gov](http://www.projectsafchildhood.gov).



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# Debate Over School Budget Continues

**Later start times,  
class size discussed.**

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

**L**ater start times, class size, and cuts to needs-based staffing were major themes of the testimony given at the Jan. 27 public hearing on Superintendent Karen Garza's proposed budget.

Members and representatives of SLEEP in Fairfax, Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, Coalition of the Silence, and many other groups spoke at the public hearing.

Several SLEEP advocates at the hearing said that Fairfax County should follow the example of other school systems in the area and adjust middle and high school start times, beginning in Fall 2014.

Catherine Pournelle, an eighth-grader at Lake Braddock Secondary School, said most teenagers only get around seven hours a sleep per night, which leads to several problems while in school.

"I know from experience that this then causes us all to feel drowsy and not pay attention as well during morning classes. It especially becomes hard when homework

piles up, causing us all to get to bed later and creating a spiral of sleepiness until the weekend," Pournelle said. "Overall it does not create a healthy environment for learning."

Stuart Orloff, a 10th-grader in Fairfax County Public Schools, agreed. "School is a great idea. Sure there are flaws, but it is an important part of growing up. The problem is, I'm only half awake to experience it. In class, I can hardly focus because I'm trying too hard to stay awake," Orloff said.

Another concern several speakers have with the budget is the cuts to need-based staffing.

Coalition of the Silence co-founder and vice chair Dr. Lolita Mancheno-Smoak stressed the importance of closing the achievement gap in Fairfax County, which she said cannot be done with the proposed budget.

"We all accept the premise that education is the great equalizer. However, over the years, we keep seeing budget cuts that weaken the progress towards leveling the playing field for all children," Mancheno-Smoak said.

COTS co-founder Avis Catchings also spoke, and said that while COTS supports some aspects of the budget, including the decision to pay teachers fairly, she is disappointed with some of its other aspects.



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS

**Janet Laubgross and Fairfax County Public Schools student Stuart Orloff spoke in support of later high school start times at the public hearing.**

"This is about life choices for COTS kids. When COTS kids fail in school, too often they also fail in life," Catchings said. "Proposing any cuts to needs-based staffing when the FCPS student population has increased by the thousands, and when most of this growth is in our neediest communities, is just not a good choice."

Several students also advocated for children who are underrepresented and disadvantaged. Alanna Brown, a ninth-grader at Lake Braddock Secondary School, spoke

about the digital divide in Fairfax County.

Brown said she thinks that while digital textbooks are helpful, it is unfair for poorer students who don't have access to the internet at home.

"Although there are low-income students at Lake Braddock, I don't believe there are that many, but there are other places like Alexandria and other areas in Virginia that have many more poor students," Brown said. "Many of these students may not have access to the internet at home, and I don't believe it is fair that they may get bad grades because they can't do their homework because they don't have access to the internet at home."

At the hearing, Steven Greenberg, president of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, praised Garza for her budget proposal.

"Dr. Garza's budget is the best lemonade anyone could possibly make, considering the rotten lemons we've been given," Greenberg said.

However, former school board member Tina Hone, a founder of Coalition of the Silence, said that the organization is struggling with the proposed cuts to need-based staffing.

"Even Jack didn't cut needs-based staffing," said Hone of the former Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Jack Dale.

## McKay to Tour Schools in Lee District

Lee District Supervisor Jeffrey McKay announced Tuesday that he will be touring all schools in the Lee District in order to speak with principals regarding challenges as the debate surrounding Superintendent Karen Garza's proposed budget continues.

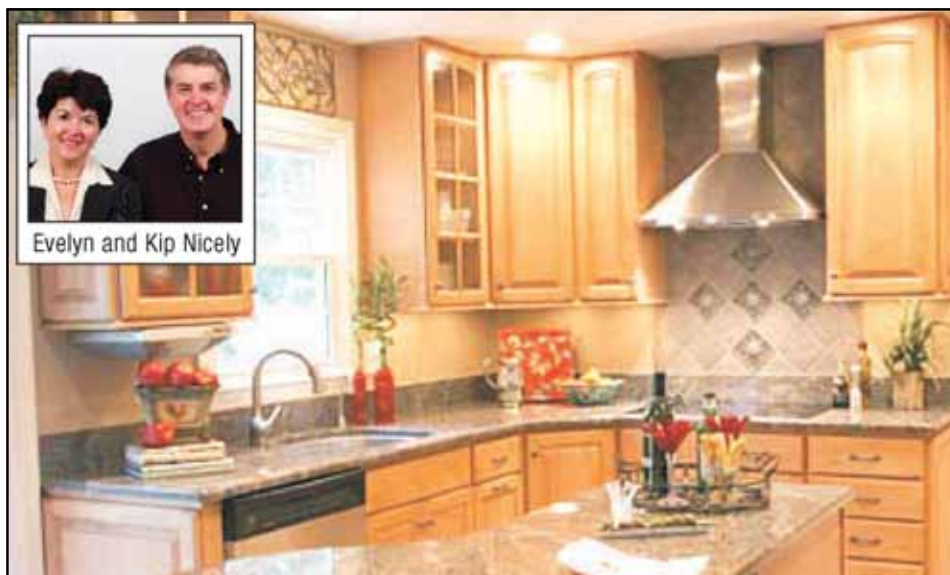
"These are difficult budget times and they're not likely to get easier, especially when rhetoric seems to trump common sense," Supervisor McKay said in a statement. "My goal is to find the road that leads to practical solutions and I want to view those solutions through our principals' eyes."

By going beyond a budget cut list to understand how our schools, programs, communities, and elected officials can all work together, I'm hoping to make our budget process a little less fraught."

McKay will begin his tour with Hayfield Secondary School on Jan. 29.

Following the tour, McKay will share his observations with Garza, School Board members, the Lee District PTSA, and his fellow Board of Supervisors members.

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# OPINION

## For Nonpartisan Redistricting

Virginia is a purple state, gerrymandered to bleed red.

Consider that in statewide elections, Virginia voters have chosen Democrats in the last two presidential elections, for U.S. Senate, for Governor, Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General.

Almost none of these elections was by a wide margin, but it's clear that Virginia is a purple state leaning blue.

Here are the actual numbers:

**2013**  
McAuliffe (D) 1,069,789; Cuccinelli (R) 1,013,389  
Northam (D) 1,213,155; Jackson (R) 980,257  
Herring (D) 1,103,777; Obenshain (R) 1,103,612

**2012**

Obama (D) 1,971,820; Romney (R) 1,822,522  
Kaine (D) 2,010,067; Allen (R) 1,785,542

It's reasonable to assume that a state so evenly divided would be about evenly divided in political representation.

How is possible then that Virginia House of Delegates consists of 67 Republicans and 33 Democrats?

Why is it that Virginia's delegation to the U.S. House of Representatives consists of 11 Republicans and three Democrats?

The split in the Virginia Senate makes sense, a 20-20 split with a Republican Lieutenant Governor breaking tie votes the last four years and a Democratic Lieutenant Governor poised to break ties in the coming four years (pending this week's recount in the special election in District 6 to replace Lt. Gov. Ralph Northam).

Virginia's 11 Congressional districts should

be split about evenly. You could understand a split five Dems and six Republicans; or five Republicans and six Democrats. A four and seven split would smack of some unusual circumstance. But three and eight?

The answer is gerrymandering.

Both political parties have been guilty of this when in power, although new technology and better data have made the process more egregious, the effects more damaging.

Political parties should not control the drawing of political districts. Gerrymandering thwarts the will of the electorate. It is especially damaging in a Dillon rule state, like Virginia, where localities have only the power explicitly granted to them by the General Assembly.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

EDITORIAL

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## Funding Urgently Needed For School Renovations

To the Editor:

In 2008, a group of concerned parents and community members created SOAR West Springfield to advocate for much needed attention for the neglected West Springfield High School facility after former FCPS Facilities VP Dean Tistadt admitted in a May 2008 West Springfield community Town Hall

meeting that WSHS had been "omitted and overlooked" in prior renovation queues. How and why did that happen?

SOAR has been collaboratively advocating for more timely school renovations for the past five years. We have met multiple times with School Board members and Supervisors Pat Herrity, John Cook and Sharon Bulova where we have presented ideas and proposals for faster school renovations.

Although the school system's goal is to renovate schools every 25 years, actual renovation timelines have often exceeded 40 years. West Springfield High School has never received a struc-

tural renovation since it opened in 1966 — 48 years and counting — and is not projected to be fully renovated until 2019. Also, three other unrenovated high schools all built in the 1960s languish in queue behind West Springfield and are not projected to be renovated until the 2020s. Are these school renovation timelines viable for Fairfax County?

FCPS leadership has repeatedly stated since at least 2008 that current capital funding is not sufficient to renovate all schools within their 25-year goal. The School Board has referred to the renovation queue backlog as a "crisis," and also admitted in a recent

meeting that the 25-year renovation goal has not been achieved since 1990.

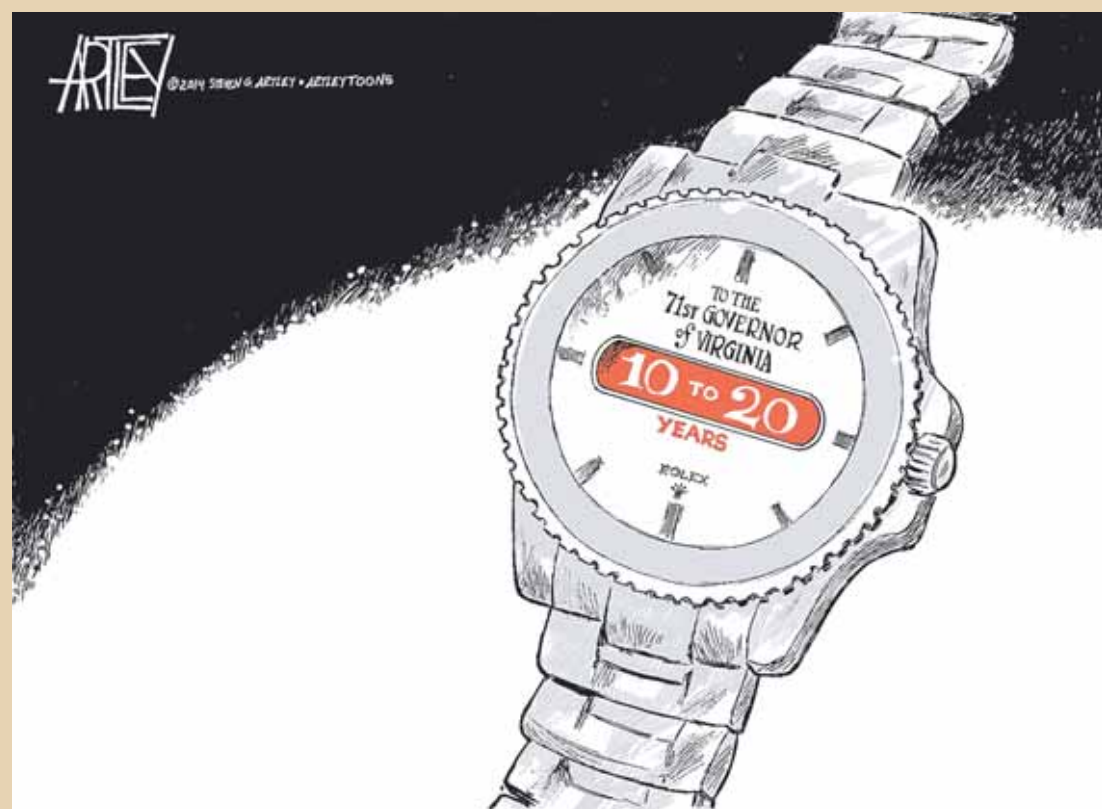
In January 2012, the School Board requested an incremental \$25 million in capital funding that the Board of Supervisors did not approve, saying the county couldn't afford it. However, In May 2012, the Board of Supervisors approved an incremental \$30 million in capital funding for the "stormwater bond" to provide flood control solutions for approximately 200 homes in Alexandria. In January 2013, School Board again requested an incremental \$25 million in funding.

These developments led to the creation in 2013 of a new joint School Board-Board of Supervisors task force called the Infrastructure Financing Committee (IFC) to find solutions to county and school system unmet capital needs.

How can the school system continue to thrive if too many of its older, unrenovated schools like West Springfield High School fail to provide optimal learning environments? How can Fairfax County provide adequate capital funding to renovate schools in a more timely manner to achieve their own goals? Why has the school system continually communicated a goal of 25-year renovation cycles if the county has never provided enough funding to make that goal achievable?

West Springfield High School is a great school in an unacceptable facility. WSHS staff and students continue to endure ongoing facility challenges that include instructional spaces that are not optimal and that do not conform to FCPS standards, an HVAC system that

SEE LETTER, PAGE 14



STEVEN G. ARTLEY/THE CONNECTION

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## COMMENTARY

# Filler-Corn Shares Observations

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 48<sup>th</sup> 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.

### RICHMOND REPORT

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 fastest 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

SEE FILLER-CORN, PAGE 14



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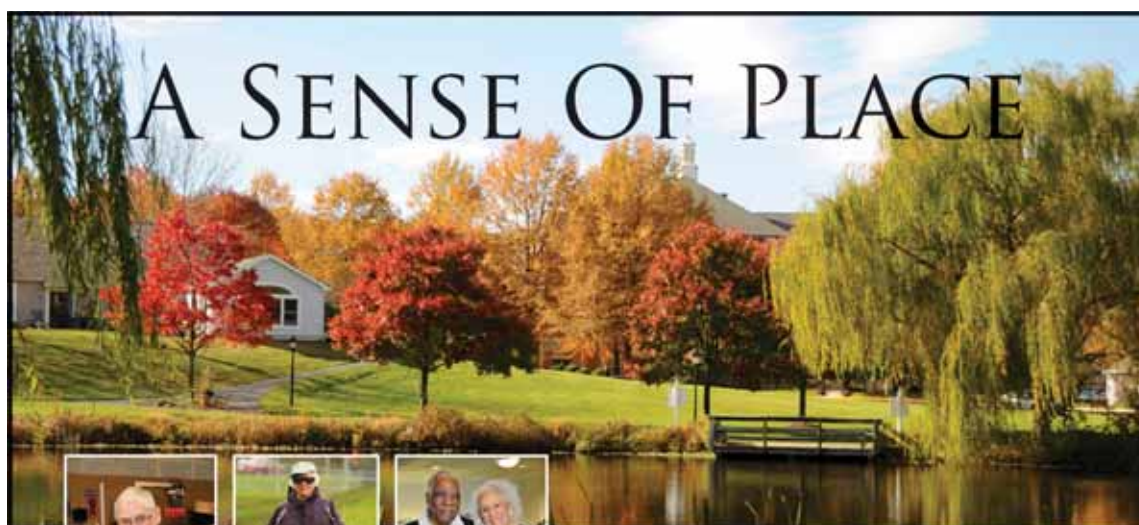
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# WINTER FUN, FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT

## Staying Warm and Entertained in Burke

Check out GMU's Center for the Arts for winter fun.

**B**urke Residents have been interacting with members of the George Mason University Fairfax Campus for some time. One of the benefits of this relationship includes use of Mason's many cultural and entertainment events at the Patriot Center and the Center for the Arts.

In February, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra will be coming to the Center for the Arts, featuring conductor and violinist Pinchas Zukerman.

At Mason's Art and Design Building's Fine Arts Gallery, "Black and White and Thread All Over" will be displayed until Feb. 21.

The exhibit, arranged by Virginia Commonwealth University Professor Sonya Clark, uses textiles, combs and hair as a commentary on race, culture and identity. An artist lecture and reception will take place in the Fine Arts Gallery Feb. 4, 1:30 p.m. Other events at Mason include the Haifa Symphony Orchestra of Israel, Walnut Street Theatre's "Driving Miss Daisy," and Mark Morris Dance Group.

Ticket prices vary. Visit [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu) for more information.

Burke residents can also travel to the City of Fairfax for the 2014 Chocolate Lovers Festival, taking place Feb. 1-2. Learn more at [chocolatefestival.net](http://chocolatefestival.net)

— JANELLE GERMANOS



Under the baton of Maestro Boguslaw Dawidow, Haifa Symphony Orchestra of Israel will be coming to George Mason's Center for the Arts this Saturday, Feb. 1 at 8 p.m.

### VIEWPOINTS

What do you like to do for fun in the wintertime?

— JANELLE GERMANOS



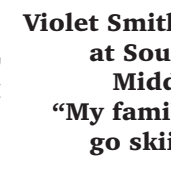
**Rylie Smedley, 9<sup>th</sup> grader at West Springfield High School**  
"I like going to D.C."

**Morgan Geer, student at South County Middle School**

"I like drinking warm drinks and baking cookies."



**Emma Henderson, 12<sup>th</sup> grader at South County High School**  
"The Gaylord Hotel Ice Sculpture is really fun to look at. It's nice being so close to D.C."



**Violet Smith, student at South County Middle School**  
"My family likes to go skiing a lot."



**Jimmy Luehers, student at George Mason University**  
"I like to eat."



**Laura Jasso, educator, JCC of Northern Virginia**  
"I love to play in the snow and sled."



**Erez Cramer, student at George Mason University**  
"I like to sled and hang out in the snow."

## Winter Fun with Local History

Take a break from the cold to learn about the Franconia Museum and Laurel Grove School.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

**I**f tired of spending another cold winter day at the movie theatre or bowling alley, try something educational for a change. Take a step back in time this winter by visiting the Franconia Museum, located at the Franconia Government Center on Franconia Road. This museum, founded in 2006, offers information about the Franconia area that dates back to the Civil War.

Pictures, artifacts and stories are abun-

dant in the museum, bringing visitors back in time to an era when life was simpler.

The Franconia Museum has a simple mission: to promote the heritage of the Franconia area. The museum is heavy in Civil War memorabilia.

**THE HISTORICAL LAUREL GROVE SCHOOL**, a couple minutes from the Franconia Museum down the road on Beulah Street, offers another historical glance at life in the area. Every Saturday in February, the museum is offering an open house with free admission.

Laurel Grove School was a one-room school house for African-American children in Franconia from 1882-1932. Visitors to the school can learn about what it was like to go to school with multiple grades in one room.

The museum curator, Phyllis Ford of the Fairfax County Historical Commission, will also be present to ask questions.

"We decided to have an open house every Saturday in February for Black History

### More Information

#### Franconia Museum

Address: 6121 Franconia Rd., Franconia, VA 22310  
Phone: 703-971-4984  
Hours: Monday-Wednesday, 10-2 p.m., Saturday 10-2 p.m.

#### Laurel Grove School

Address: 6840 Beulah Street, Alexandria, 22310  
Phone: 703-322-0833  
Open House: February 1, 8, 15, and 22, 11-3 p.m., no admission fee

Month. We're mostly opening up for the community to tell some of the history of how the school got started, and talk about the history from slavery to the Jim Crow Period," Ford said.

Visitors can see a map from the 1860s showing where families lived in the area.

"We are trying to get three women who went to the school to visit on Feb. 22," Ford said.

"On the other Saturdays, we will be showing a video of the women."



# WINTER FUN, FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT

## Chocolate Lovers Festival this Weekend

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

For anyone who likes chocolate, the City of Fairfax is the place to be, this coming weekend. The 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Chocolate Lovers Festival is Saturday-Sunday, Feb. 1-2, with tasty treats and fun-filled events for the whole family.

The Taste of Chocolate — which attracts visitors from throughout the Washington Metropolitan area — runs *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, 3999 University Drive.* Admission is free. Inside are a variety of 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.

Visitors buy pogs for \$1 each and then browse around the vendors' tables to check out all the chocolate treats being offered. When they decide to purchase something, they pay for it in pogs. Strollers may be left on the building's front porch, and a fully accessible entrance is at the door on Main Street.

Vendors at this year's Taste of Chocolate 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, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Feb. 2, from 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.

Saturday's many activities kick off with the annual, Kiwanis Club Pancake Breakfast, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Fire Station 3, at 4081 University Drive. Then that evening will be the festival's first-time, "Chocolate and a Movie" night, featuring the original "Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory." It'll be shown at 7 p.m. at the Stacy C. Sherwood Community Center, 3740 Old Lee Hwy.

For more information about the festival and a complete schedule of events, go to [www.chocolatefestival.net](http://www.chocolatefestival.net) or call 703-385-1661. A Chocolate Express will provide free, shuttle service

### Step Back in History While in Fairfax

As part of the Chocolate Festival, several historic buildings in the City of Fairfax will be open to visitors this Saturday, Feb. 1. They are as follows:

❖ **Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center,** 10209 Main St., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This structure was constructed in 1873 with bricks made at the Farr property across Main Street. The oldest brick, two-story school building remaining in Fairfax cost \$2,750 to build. Docents and volunteers now welcome visitors to stop in for chocolate goodies while learning about the city's colorful history. Admission is free.

❖ **Ford House,** 3977 Chain Bridge Road, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit the childhood home of Antonia Ford, a Confederate spy during the American Civil War. She provided Confederate military leaders with information gathered at her Fairfax home during the First Battle of Manassas.

When she was imprisoned, she fell in love with her Union jailer, whom she later married, and their son built the Old Town Hall. The Woman's Club of Fairfax created the exhibit at the Ford House, which is currently used as an office building. Admission is free.

❖ **Legato School,** Route 123/Chain Bridge Road, between Judicial Drive and Sager Avenue, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Learn about the noble heritage of chocolate and play some games at the one-room Legato School, the last of its kind in Fairfax County. It's been restored and is furnished as it was in the 1870s. Now operated as a museum, Legato School is located on the grounds of the historic Fairfax County Courthouse on Route 123. Admission is free.

❖ **Ratcliffe-Allison House,** 10386 Main St., noon to 4 p.m. The oldest standing house in the City of Fairfax depicts the lives of everyday people in 19th century Fairfax. And during the festival, it'll offer chocolate treats. Built in 1812, it served a variety of purposes, including a stint as a cobbler shop.

The house is furnished with period pieces collected by one of its owners, the late Kitty Pozer, a famed gardener and writer who lived in the house until 1981. The Ratcliffe-Allison House features the exhibit, "Dr. Kate Waller Barrett: Mother to Many." The adjoining Kitty Pozer Garden may also be visited. Admission is free.

❖ **Historic Archives:** In the Historic Archives in the Fairfax Courthouse, people may view historical legal documents such as The 1739 Land Grant; a page from polling done around the county as citizens voted to secede from the Union; the Civil War Rule Book filled with graffiti from the soldiers stationed here; as well as original deed books, court-order books and images of pages from George Washington's will. The Old Courthouse will be open to the public for the first time since its renovation.

between event locations. It'll run Feb. 1 from 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and Feb. 2 from 11:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

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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 February 20.

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THE CONNECTION  
NEWSPAPERS

## WINTER FUN



Truffles are among the many items offered at the Taste of Chocolate during the City of Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival this weekend Feb. 1-2.

### ENTERTAINMENT

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.

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 1

**Youth Poetry Slam.** 6 p.m. George Mason University, Johnson Center, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Free admission. [www.poetrynowVA.com](http://www.poetrynowVA.com)

**A Broadway Valentine.** 8 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd, Lorton. The very popular Cabaret Series at the Workhouse will be exploring the romantic section of the Broadway songbook with a tribute to Valentine's Day. Tickets: [www.workhousearts.org/](http://www.workhousearts.org/)

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 1- SUNDAY/FEB. 2

**Fairfax's Chocolate Lovers Festival.** Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive. Indulge in all things chocolate at this annual festival. [www.chocolatefestival.net](http://www.chocolatefestival.net)

#### SUNDAY/FEB. 2

**A Broadway Valentine.** 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd, Lorton. The very popular Cabaret Series at the Workhouse will be exploring the romantic section of the Broadway songbook with a tribute to Valentine's Day. Tickets: [www.workhousearts.org/](http://www.workhousearts.org/)

#### TUESDAY/FEB. 4, 11

**"Song & Character Study:" An Audition Workshop for High School & Adult Students.** 6-8 p.m. Truro Anglican Church, 10520 Main Street, Fairfax. High School and Adult actors and singers are invited to join CFTC for a four week class on song and character study. Each week will feature a master class setting where students will bring a song to workshop with the class. Instructors will assist the student with delivering text as a song, with emphasis on combining of acting and singing skills in a well-rounded performance. Cost: \$40 per student. \$65 for two people in the same family, \$90 for three or more people in the same family. [www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org](http://www.fairfaxcitytheatre.org)

#### THURSDAY/FEB. 6 – FRIDAY/FEB. 7

**All that Jazz!** 7 p.m. West Springfield High School, 6100 Rolling Rd, Springfield. A musical Cabaret presented by the students of the West Springfield High School choral department and will also feature special performances by West Springfield's own Personality Show Choir. Tickets: \$7. [www.spartanchoir.com](http://www.spartanchoir.com)

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 8

**Virginia Grand Military Band.** 7:30 p.m.

Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall, NVCC Campus, 3001 N. Beauregard St., Alexandria. Performing works by Rodgers and Hammerstein, von Suppe and Sousa. Adults \$15. Band directors, students and children admitted free. Free parking. 703 426-4777. [www.vgmb.com](http://www.vgmb.com) manager@vgmb.com

#### Second Saturday Art Walk.

6-9 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd, Lorton. Tour the studios, meet the artists, enjoy refreshments and purchase original works of art from nearly 100 Artists at the Workhouse.

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 15

**Couple's Yoga.** 2-3 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd, Lorton. \$20 per couple, no experience is necessary—both beginners and master yogis are invited to join. Register online: [www.workhousearts.org/](http://www.workhousearts.org/)

#### A Valentine's Sweetheart.

9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Rd, Lorton. Give kids the opportunity to learn how to bake sweet treats, draw and paint portraits, and participate in other Valentine's Day activities. \$65 per child and includes the materials fee. Register online: [www.workhousearts.org/](http://www.workhousearts.org/)

#### SUNDAY/FEB. 16

**The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will have a display and N gauge trains.** 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Information on the museum and shows is at [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) phone 703-425-9225.

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 22

**Jeffrey Siegel, "The Power and Passion of Beethoven."** 8 p.m., Hylton Performing Arts Center, 10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas. The acclaimed pianist performs Beethoven's "Rage Over a Lost Penny," "Sonata Pathétique," and "Farewell Sonata" as part of his Keyboard Conversation series. \$20-\$38, Mason ID permits 1 free ticket on Feb. 11, 2014. [HyltonCenter.org](http://HyltonCenter.org).

#### WEDNESDAY/FEB. 19

**Love, Faith and Other Dirty Words.** 7:30 p.m. JCCNV, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. The play, based on conversations with interfaith couples, is a funny, moving story of couples negotiating to maintain the balance between devotion to each other, and devotion to their separate faiths. Free. [www.jccnvarts.com](http://www.jccnvarts.com).

#### SATURDAY/FEB. 22

**7th Annual Lorton Monopoly Tournament.** 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Gallery Building 16 - 2nd Floor, Lorton. Proceeds benefit the Lorton Community Action

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 11

[WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM](http://WWW.CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM)

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## WINTER FUN

# Winter Fun in Lorton

**Bundle up and enjoy the outdoors this winter.**

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Station and Lorton residents have the Workhouse Arts Center, Gunston Hall, and several other arts and historic sites at their disposal for winter fun this season.

But what about a winter activity that is somewhat off the beaten path?

Being outdoors and hiking can be just as fun during the winter months, and the Fairfax Station, Lorton and Clifton area has a variety of great trails to keep people active.

It may seem cold, but winter is a great time to go hiking. There are fewer crowds, and if bundled up, short hikes can be rewarding

during the winter season.

The Bull Run-Occoquan Trail is a great option for some hiking. The 18-mile trail goes along the Bull Run and Occoquan Rivers.

"If you did the whole thing, you would spend anywhere from seven to 10 hours hiking, and you'll maybe see a house, or maybe see a car. The only other people you will run into are other people hiking on the trail. That's how isolated it is," said Brian Bauer, the marketing and communications director at Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.

Paul Gilbert, executive director of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, said the trail is a hidden treasure in Fairfax County.

"It's like hiking the Appalachian Trail. You're just 10 minutes from Fairfax, in Fairfax County, and you feel like you are in the middle of absolute wilderness. It's really cool," Gilbert said.

Occoquan Regional Park in Lorton has a variety of short trails that offer beautiful

**"It's like hiking the Appalachian Trail. You're just 10 minutes from Fairfax, in Fairfax County, and you feel like you are in the middle of absolute wilderness."**

**— Paul Gilbert, executive director of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority**



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

**For some winter fun in the South County area, bundle up and try a trail, such as this one at Occoquan Regional Park.**

views of the Occoquan River.

The park is also home to historic brick kilns, which were used to build bricks for the Lorton Workhouse Prison.

"I love Occoquan in general," said Lorton resident Hau Chu, 20. "It's just really nice." Remember to wear layers, hats and gloves, wool socks, drink plenty of water, and bring high-calorie snacks.

For residents who don't want to brave the cold, there are several indoor events to keep busy, including the Workhouse Arts Center. The Workhouse Arts Center offers several events in the coming months, including comedy shows, art walks and more.

Residents looking for educational fun this winter can try the Prison Museum at the Workhouse Arts Center, which details the history of the workhouse as a prison throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

There's also the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Art Walk on Feb. 11, a free event that showcases the work of more than 100 artists.

This event also includes a nonperishable food drive for the Lorton Community Action Center.

Occoquan Regional Park is located at 9751 Ox Road, Lorton. It is open daily from 8 a.m. until dusk, Jan. 1 – March 17. For more information, call 703-690-2121.

## CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 10

Center, a local human services nonprofit that assists individuals and families with emergency food and financial assistance, resources for improving life skills, tutoring and after-school programs. Registration Fee: \$25 (by Feb. 19). At the Door Fee: \$35. Minimum player age: 8. Maximum player age: None. LortonMonopoly.com

### SUNDAY/FEB. 23

**Train Scenery and Display Hands-On Workshop.** 1-4 p.m. Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Model train experts and enthusiasts will teach visitors to the Fairfax Station Railroad Museum how to make authentic scenery and displays for model train layouts of different sizes. There is no charge for the workshop but regular Museum Sunday admission rates apply, \$4 for adults 16 and older; \$2 children 5-15; free for Museum members and children under 5.

For more information on the Museum events, [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org). 703-425-9225.

### SUNDAY/MARCH 30

**Jeffrey Siegel, "The Romantic Music of Chopin."** 7 p.m., George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, MS 2F5, Fairfax. The acclaimed pianist performs Chopin's compositions as part of his Keyboard Conversations series. \$19-38, Mason ID permits 1 free ticket on March 18. [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

### SUNDAY/APRIL 27

**Jeffrey Siegel, "Mistresses and Masterpieces."** 7 p.m., George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, MS 2F5, Fairfax. The pianist performs music inspired by composers' major love interests. \$19-\$38, Mason ID permits 1 free ticket on April 15. [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).  
**Young Artists Musicale.** 6 p.m., George Mason

University Center for the Arts lobby, 4400 University Drive, MS 2F5, Fairfax. Piano students and winners of the Northern Virginia Music Teachers Association Honors Recitals perform short pieces. Free admission. [cfa.gmu.edu](http://cfa.gmu.edu).

### 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).

**First Fridays at the Clifton Art Guild.** 6-9 p.m. at Clifton Wine Shop, 7145 C Main St., Clifton. Enjoy a wine tasting and mix and mingle with the Art Guild of Clifton artists. 703-830-1480 or [www.artguildofclifton.org/](http://www.artguildofclifton.org/).

**Saturday Farmers Market.** 8 a.m.-1 p.m., at the parking lot at the intersection of West and Main

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**Fairfax Mosaic Wednesday Night Freshbikes Rides.** 6:30 p.m., at Fairfax Mosaic Freshbikes, 2910 District Ave., Fairfax. Weekly bike rides leave from the Fairfax Mosaic store, the newest addition to the Freshbikes family of stores in the area. [www.freshbikescycling.com](http://www.freshbikescycling.com).

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# Lake Braddock Boys' Basketball Beats Woodson

**Bruins, Cavaliers have become Conference 7's top teams.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**L**ake Braddock boys' Basketball Coach Brian Metress stood down the hall from the Bruins' home locker room and praised Monday night's opponent.

"They're very good," Metress said about the Woodson Cavaliers. "They've beaten Robinson, they've beaten really good teams. I think they'll be there at the end. They're one of the top three teams in the region. We just want to be part of that."

"Woodson-Lake Braddock is becoming a big basketball game."

The Lake Braddock boys' basketball team defeated Woodson 56-50 on Jan. 27 at Lake Braddock Secondary School in the first of two regular-season meetings between what have become the top teams in the Patriot District/Conference 7. The Bruins improved to 10-3 while handing Woodson (13-4) its first conference loss of the season. Lake Braddock has dropped just one conference game — a controversial loss to Annandale on Jan. 10.

Woodson led 43-41 with six minutes remaining in the fourth quarter, but Lake Braddock took the lead for good with a 10-0 run, including three-pointers by freshman Corey Pelham and senior John Nice.

The Cavaliers pulled to within three with less than a minute remaining, but 6-foot-6 Lake Braddock sophomore James Butler grabbed an offensive rebound off a missed free throw and scored to extend the Bruins' lead to two possessions.

"It's one of those things where when the game is chaotic, certain guys can think, I might be able to get one here," Metress said about Butler's rebound and putback. "I think he was thinking all along, I might be able to get one of these. It was a big play."

Lake Braddock senior Will Gregorits led all scorers with 15 points. Junior forward A.J. Alexander and Nice each scored nine points for the Bruins.

Senior point guard Eric Bowles led Woodson with 13 points. Junior guard Jackson Boehman finished with eight, and senior forward Andy Stynchula and junior guard Trey Johnson each had seven.

Last season, Woodson beat Lake Braddock twice during the regular season and finished atop the district standings. The Bruins countered by beating the Cavaliers in the district tournament semifinals before capturing the program's first district title in a decade. Woodson went on to win the Northern Region title and advance to the state semifinals.

On Monday, Lake Braddock made more plays in the fourth quarter.

"It's always a big win," Alexander said of beating Woodson. "Last year, they beat us pretty good in the regular season, we came back and beat them in the



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Lake Braddock sophomore James Butler had a key offensive rebound and putback late in the fourth quarter of Monday's win over Woodson.**

Patriot District tournament. They're a great team. Everyone is talking about them every year. Bowles is a great point guard — much respect out to him, he kept them in the game. It's a fun game. It's good playing competitive teams that can score on us.

"It's fun beating teams by a lot, but always good to have a good crowd-pleaser."

Woodson closed the second quarter with a 10-0 run and led 36-32 at halftime, but failed to widen its lead beyond six points in the second half.

"We had a chance to take control ... and it didn't happen," Woodson head coach Doug Craig said. "Give them credit. They made all the plays down the stretch and found a way to make enough plays to win the game. We had some opportunities and we didn't convert."

The Cavaliers and Bruins are scheduled to meet again on Feb. 4 at Woodson High School. However, a water pipe recently burst in the Woodson gym, leaving the facility unplayable. If the floor is not fixed in time, the game will likely be played at Lake Braddock or another facility.

While the Bruins got the best of the Cavaliers on Monday, Metress said there is still more work to be done.

"We're under no illusions," he said, "that this automatically gives us any more victories."

## Mandela's 3-Point Play Lifts Bruins to Win

**Lake Braddock girls' basketball edges Woodson.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**W**ith her team trailing by two points late in the third quarter, Lake Braddock senior Caitlyn Mandela thought she was fouled on a shot attempt and informed an official of her displeasure with the no-call.

Mandela received a technical foul and Woodson capitalized by making one of two ensuing free throws, extending its lead to 30-27. Lake Braddock head coach John Giannelli had a talk with the forward before sending her back in the game.

"Caitlyn plays with a lot of emotion," Giannelli said. "Early in the year, I had her playing out at the [small forward] position and it was a little bit out of her game. Her game is more [suited for power forward or center] — the more contact, the more she's into the game and the more that fires her up."

"The thing with Caitlyn is her motor never stops. Sometimes I have to sit her down and say, let the game come to you instead of you go to the game."

Mandela didn't let the technical foul affect her aggressive approach. With the score tied in the final minute, No. 33 stepped up and made a play.

Mandela scored and was fouled with 33.9 seconds remaining in the fourth quarter. She converted the free throw and her three-point play proved to be the difference as the Lake Braddock girls' basketball team defeated Woodson 40-37 on Jan. 27 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

"I just saw an opening and took it," Mandela said. "I love driving to the basket."

The victory came three days after a 51-46 loss to Annandale and returned Lake Braddock to the winning side of .500 with an 8-7 record.

Woodson took a seven-point lead in the second quarter when a jumper by Jasmine Fasold gave the Cavaliers a 19-12 advantage with 1:50 remaining in



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Lake Braddock sophomore Caroline Jones scored a game-high 12 points against Woodson on Jan. 27.**

the first half. But Lake Braddock responded with a 9-0 run in 87 seconds, giving the Bruins a 21-19 halftime lead.

No team led by more than four points in the second half. A bucket by Claire Swanson gave Woodson a 37-35 lead with 2:13 left in the fourth quarter, but Lake Braddock tied the score with a pair of free throws by Marcia Altman with less than a minute remaining and took the lead for good with Mandela's three-point play.

"Any time you get a win in the conference it's a big boost," Giannelli said. "I honestly think we stole tonight's game because I think Woodson played better than us. I absolutely think Woodson played better than us and we just stole it. To be successful during the season, you need to steal a couple games. I think that helps."

Sophomore Caroline Jones led Lake Braddock with 12 points. Altman finished with seven, Nirali Shah and Christine McGrath each scored six and Mandela added five.

Gillie Andes led Woodson with eight points. Swanson finished with seven and Tianay Zeigler and Caitlin Patrick each had six.

Lake Braddock will travel to face T.C. Williams at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 30 and will host Robinson at 5:45 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 1.

Woodson defeated Annandale 34-30 on Tuesday and improved to 4-12.



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**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.**



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# Filler-Corn Shares Observations

FROM PAGE 7

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.

## 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. 41<sup>st</sup> 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 41<sup>st</sup> 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.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 6

cannot be regulated from room to room resulting in some rooms that are freezing cold while others are blazing hot to the most basic of bathrooms that do not always function properly.

Recently in The Connection, community leaders shared their New Year's resolutions. Supervisor and IFC co-chair John Cook's

## 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 Elections 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 41<sup>st</sup> 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.

was "to look for solutions to complex problems and concrete ways to make our communities stronger and even better places to live." A laudable goal. Implementing solutions that will positively impact the timing of the West Springfield High School renovation would be a great place to start.

**Erik Hawkins**  
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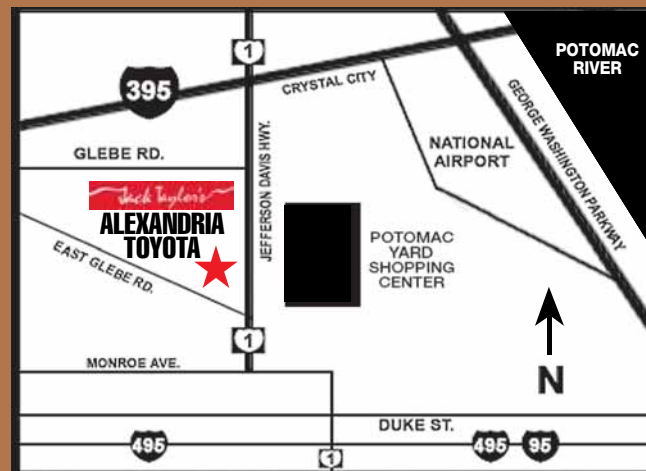


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INCLUDES: Inspect suspension, ball joints,  
struts & shocks, tire condition and set tire pressure.

NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. OFFER  
EXPIRES 2/28/14. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID  
ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL.

## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE BUY 3 TIRES AND GET 4TH FOR

**\$1<sup>00</sup>**

GOT TIRES? NO CHARGE ROAD HAZARD PROTECTION, TIRE  
WARRANTY, AND FREE COURTESY MULTI-POINT INSPECTION.  
PRICE MATCH GUARANTEE. SEE SERVICE ADVISOR FOR DETAILS.

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## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE BASIC MINOR SERVICE PERFORMED EVERY 5,000 MILES OR 6 MONTHS WHICHEVER COMES FIRST

**\$75<sup>88</sup>**

2003 & NEWER

INCLUDES: Replace engine oil, replace engine oil filter, drain plug  
washer, check & top off fluids(as needed), inspect brake  
linings/drums & brake pads/discs, rotate best tires to front,  
clean brakes(if applicable), perform multi-point inspection,  
& road test vehicle(as needed).

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## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE TRUE START BATTERY SPECIAL



**\$129<sup>95</sup>**

INCLUDES BATTERY INSTALLATION

Includes: 84 month warranty, 24 month FREE replacement, 24  
month FREE roadside assistance, 60 month prorated,  
PLUS we'll check all battery cables & connections.

Does not apply to hybrid batteries.  
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## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE 12% OFF FACTORY RECOMMENDED MAINTENANCE

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**MEET OR BEAT**  
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SPECIALS

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## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE COMPLIMENTARY MULTI-POINT INSPECTION

Includes: Inspect tires, brakes, wipers, lights,  
belts & hoses & fluid levels.

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## TOYOTA GENUINE SERVICE IS YOUR CHECK ENGINE LIGHT ON?



DON'T GET STRANDED...  
LET US CHECK IT FOR YOU,  
**AT NO CHARGE!**  
UP TO A 1 HOUR DIAGNOSIS

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**CUSTOM BUILT!!!**  
Large 5 Bedrm,  
3.5 bath  
Colonial on beautiful half-acre wooded lot!

Located near end of quiet cul-de-sac, this 3 level home has an oversized 2 car garage + additional off street parking. Many extras including Sun Rm, Fam. Rm w/ Fireplace off Gourmet kitchen, Deck, Finished basement, and Master suite w/ dual walk-in closets and luxury bath! 703-981-3277.

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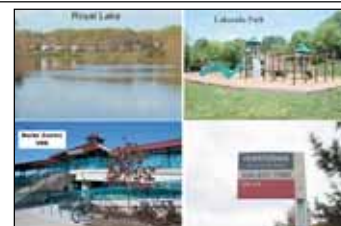


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Original owners have babied this home!! Many upgrades & updates thru-out. Gleaming hwd floors

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