

Graduating from NOVA and Robinson

NEWS, PAGE 4

It's Time to Stuff the Bus

NEWS, PAGE 3

Learning about Foster Care and Adoption

NEWS, PAGE 3

Fairfax Station residents Lia and Gary Keith stand behind their daughter Rachel, 17. Rachel will graduate from NOVA and Robinson this spring.

NEWS

Fairfax Station Author Wins SET Award

Giving civil engineers their due.

BY SENITRA T. MCCOMBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax Station author Stefan Jaeger's Arlington-based thriller "The Jackhammer Elegies" was among the blockbuster movies and television shows honored at the 3rd Annual Science, Engineering & Technology (SET) Awards in Beverley Hills last fall.

The SET Awards recognize film, television, comic book, digital and other media that inspires youth interest in science, engineering, technology and math through media and entertainment.

"The Jackhammer Elegies" follows civil and structural engineer Scott Carter as he aids the FBI in their investigation of a terrorist (aka Jackhammer) who is threatening the lifelines of the city's public works. There is also a growing romance between Carter and Special Agent Michelle Taylor, the FBI agent he assists.

THE NOVEL is available through



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Stefan Jaeger of Fairfax Station accepts an award for his book, "The Jackhammer Elegies," at the 3rd Annual Science, Engineering & Technology Awards in Beverley Hills.

Amazon.com and an electronic Nook Book version is available on BN.com. Bulk discounts are available through CreateSpace.com, a subsidiary of Amazon.

During his acceptance speech at the SET Awards, Jaeger stated that he was inspired to write the novel after hearing the engineers he worked with mention their lack of presence on television.

"Over those decades the refrain

that I've always heard from civil engineers is why can't there be a television show LA Engineer, a take off on LA Law. The idea being that those shows like Grey's Anatomy inspires others to become doctors. Well I can't write for television but I have been writing quite a bit of fiction and I thought I'd take my shot," he said.

Jaeger also incorporated some world events into the novel along with landmarks and geography from Rosslyn and Arlington County.

Overall, Jaeger is thrilled that his novel was chosen by the Entertainment Industries Council. He hopes that readers will enjoy the suspense-filled plot of "The Jackhammer Elegies" and learn a little something about the field of civil engineering.

"I really hope that the book is able to show how civil engineering is a dynamic and rewarding career, with the opportunity to do good and to be a leader. That's important because engineers don't often get the exposure that doctors and lawyers do," he said.

DURING HIS SPARE TIME, he

enjoys traveling, reading and, of course, writing. Every morning, he sets aside time to jot down a few ideas for his next project. Some of his favorite authors include Graham Greene and John Grisham.

In 1984, the Indiana native resettled in Washington, D.C. where he began working for a number of major engineering associations with an initial focus in the editorial side. Currently, Jaeger is a managing director with the American Society of Civil Engineers in Reston.

He resides in Fairfax Station, near Fountainhead Regional Park. "Besides strolls in the neighborhood, in the summer we have often headed down to the Occoquan Reservoir in the park to hang out on the pier or occasionally rent a row boat to get out on the water," he said. "When we lived in Burke Center for 15 years, we often went to Burke Lake Park for walks. We enjoy taking the drive out to Clifton for a stroll by the historic houses, and one memory of a great meal is Trummer's on Main. When it's warm, from time to time we'll sit by the water in the Town of Occoquan."

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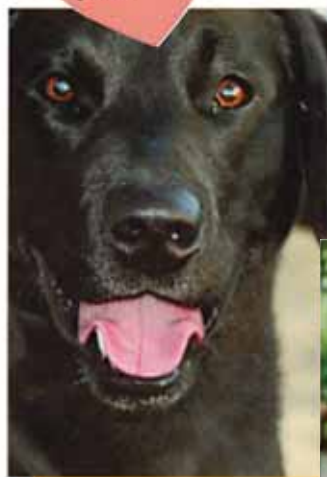
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Beverly Howard, Nannette Bowler, and Paul McWhinney listen as Democratic Women of Clifton chair Jane Barker begins "Our Children: Fostering, Adopting and Mentoring in Virginia" on Jan. 19.

Learning about Foster Care and Adoption

Children need permanent families in Fairfax County.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

In Fairfax County, there are 265 children in Foster Care. That number may sound like a lot, said Nannette Bowler, director of Fairfax County Department of Family services, but that number was at over 3,000 children 10 years ago.

Still, there are children who need permanent homes, Bowler told members of the Democratic Women of Clifton and Northern Virginia at a recent meeting.

This fact and others surrounding foster care and adoption in Virginia led Jane Barker, chair of the Democratic Women of Clifton and Northern Virginia, to host state and county officials working to place children in permanent homes at their Jan. 19 meeting.

The event, "Our Children: Fostering, Adopting and Mentoring in Virginia," gave attendees the opportunity to learn more about helping children in Fairfax County.

Barker, who along with her husband state Sen. George Barker, has been a foster parent to 13 children, said the event allowed for the community to learn more about foster children and the procedure involved in adopting or becoming a foster parent.

"This is an issue we need to take seriously," Barker said. "You never know who could help with this."

The event started with a presentation from Paul McWhinney, the director of Family Services for the Virginia Department of Social Services. McWhinney shared information on the state of foster care and adoption in Virginia.

In May of 2013, previous Gov. Bob McDonnell launched the Virginia Adopts campaign, which aimed to have 1,000 children adopted in Virginia.

Although the campaign was successful, McWhinney said there is still a great deal of work to be done.

"This is not yet over," McWhinney said.

In Fairfax County alone in 2013, there were 18,376



Beverly Howard, the coordinator of Fairfax Families4Kids, speaks to members of the Democratic Women of Clifton regarding mentoring opportunities for foster children in Fairfax County.

calls reporting possible child abuse and neglect, Bowler said.

Efforts in Fairfax County are focused on permanency, and Bowler said the goal is for children who enter foster care to be placed in a permanent situation within 12 months of entering foster care.

"Foster care is meant to be a temporary solution until a permanent family situation is possible," Bowler said.

Permanency is important for children who have been in foster care, but can be difficult to achieve for children between the ages of 12 and 17.

Older children between the ages of 12-17 make up the highest number of children in foster care in Fairfax County.

There is also racial disproportionality in the foster care system, with black and

Hispanic families and children being overrepresented in the child welfare system, Bowler said.

According to Bowler, youth who age out of the foster care system who are not adopted face a number of challenges, including lack of education, economic hardship, and becoming a single parent.

Bowler shared information on how to become a foster parent in Fairfax County. Potential foster and adoptive parents must be 21 or older, legally married, divorced or single, and able to provide a safe and loving environment.

For Beverly Howard, the coordinator of Fairfax Families4Kids, the lack of permanency that these children face was the biggest challenge she faced when adopting foster children.

"One of the two girls didn't even unpack her trash bag with her clothes," Howard said. "At ages 8 and 9, they were very damaged after being in foster care for five years."

Adults who may not be able to adopt or become foster parents but still want to make a difference in a foster child's life can become a mentor through Fairfax Families4Kids.

"Not everybody is ready to adopt, but everybody has something to offer," Howard said.

Barker ended the meeting encouraging members to continue their advocacy efforts surrounding children.

"I don't think there is a more noble profession than helping children," Barker said.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Students from Hayfield and South County Secondary School's Junior ROTC volunteered to help the hungry by working a Stuff the Bus event in Lorton. There are still several Stuff the Bus events in the next couple of weeks throughout Fairfax County.

It's Time to Stuff the Bus

Stuff the Bus campaign continues in February.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County residents can do more than just shop when they go to the grocery store this month.

The Stuff the Bus campaign, which has already been held at seven locations throughout Fairfax County, allows shoppers to donate food to nonprofit organizations in the area.

Fastran Buses staffed by MV transportation are parked in the parking lots of grocery stores, reminding shoppers to "Stuff the Bus" for those in need.

The Lorton Community Action Center is one of the organizations that has benefited from the Stuff the Bus campaign. According to Linda Patterson, the executive director of Lorton Community Action Center, 1,160 pounds of food and \$495.94 was donated from the Stuff the Bus drive at the Lorton Valley Giant.

"It was a very cold weekend, but the volunteers stuck it out and did a great job of talking to folks who entered the store," Patterson said. "And of course, Lorton Valley Giant is awesome." Students from Hayfield and South County Secondary School's Junior ROTC volunteered at the Stuff the Bus drive benefiting the Lorton Community Action Center.

"The youth did a great job of talking up the need," Patterson said. "They had little fliers of specific donations we need folks to target. And people did exactly that. They bought the items on our list-the items we

are most in need of."

Lorton Community Action Center is in need of diapers and wipes, as well as pasta, pasta sauce, rice and breakfast cereal.

Patterson said the Stuff the Bus Campaign is truly helpful for LCAC.

"Prior to us having being part of Stuff the Bus, we didn't really have any food drives until March or April," she said. "To have this one, in either January or February, has been a huge help to LCAC. It gives us some of the things that will help us carry on until early spring."

It was this need that led Fairfax County to first implement the Stuff the Bus campaign. Fairfax County and MV Transportation started Stuff the Bus, now in its fourth year, to address a decrease in food donations after the holidays.

Fairfax County is not immune to food shortages. In Fairfax County Public Schools, 47,000 students qualify for free and reduced lunch.

Robert Petitti, executive director of the Koinonia Foundation, said the Stuff the Bus campaign really helps provide food for families after the holidays.

"We could always use personal items- toothpaste, deodorant, diapers-all sizes of diapers are wonderful," Petitti said. "What we could also really use right now is sugar, flour, rice, peanut butter. I know that at the Giant food store in Kingstowne, the manager is placing five dollar bags right at the checkout for us."

Fairfax County residents still have three more dates to donate foods to groups in the area, including the James Mott Community Assistance Program, Cornerstones, Falls Church Community Service Council, United Community Ministries, Ecumenical Community Helping Others and Koinonia Foundation.

Robinson High Student Attends College, Inspires Others

Rachel Keith will graduate from NOVA and Robinson this spring.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

Rachel Keith, a 17-year-old Fairfax Station resident and senior at Robinson Secondary School, has been thinking about college long before many of her peers.

It was this forward-thinking that led Keith to take college classes at Northern Virginia Community College as a dual-enrolled student.

In May, Keith will graduate Summa Cum Laude with an associate's degree in social sciences. A month later, she'll graduate from Robinson.

Keith decided to take college classes at NOVA as opposed to strictly Advanced Placement and



Rachel Keith, a senior at Robinson Secondary School, is editor of Carousal, the school's literary magazine, and Valor Dictus, the school's newspaper.

International Baccalaureate classes at Robinson because she wanted to experience a college environment.

"In hindsight, I'm much more satisfied and fulfilled in doing the dual-enrollment program and tak-

ing college classes than getting an IB diploma or just taking AP classes," Keith said. "I thrive better in a do-it-yourself, go at your own pace environment."

ACCORDING TO HER TEACH-

ERS, friends and family, she is a motivated individual who really knows how to plan ahead. At age 12, she wrote her first novel.

"She's just so motivated," said Gary Keith, Rachel's father.

Lia Keith, Rachel's mother, said her daughter is extremely disciplined and has done very well as a dual-enrollment student.

"She's one of the most self-disciplined people I've ever known," Keith said. "She's done very well."

Rachel Keith has received all A's at NOVA, except for one B.

According to Lia Keith, Rachel's actions have motivated her classmates to think more about their long-term goals.

"A couple kids that weren't even thinking of going to college are now thinking of going," Keith said.

Rachel Keith has been taking classes year-round since becoming a dual-enrolled student, but still manages to find time for other activities.

Keith is editor-in-chief of Robinson's literary magazine Carousal, and a writer for the school's paper, Valor Dictus.

"I've always been interested in writing. I love to write in my free

time," Keith said.

Keith looks up to her newspaper advisor Deborah March, who she said is a fun and creative teacher.

According to March, Keith is a curious student who stood out from the beginning.

"She has this great sense of herself. She has curiosity that sets her apart," March said.

Although she initially wanted to be a journalist, Keith realized that she was fascinated with psychology, especially after taking a psychology class at NOVA.

Keith will enter college at James Madison University as a junior, and plans to attend graduate school.

"I feel like that is one of the advantages of doing this. I can look further into the future because I'll be done earlier with my general education requirements," Keith said.

Keith said she's heard that students change their majors multiple times in college.

"It's less expensive to do that at NOVA than at William and Mary or UVA and these top schools," she

SEE GRADUATING, PAGE 14

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NEWS

Romantic Valentine's

Romantic events happening in the Fairfax County area.

By AMNA REHMATULLA
THE CONNECTION

Start planning your romantic Valentine's Day from now with your loved one by heading off to one of these events...

❖ Friday/Feb. 14

Valentine's Day Chocolate Buffet. 6-10 p.m. The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. Entyse, Wine Bar & Lounge will offer an impressive chocolate buffet with seven different dessert options crafted by their pastry kitchen. Satisfy your loved one's sweet tooth with their dessert creations. \$25 per person, seating on first come, first serve basis.

Valentine's Day Latin Style. La Sandia Mexican Kitchen, 7852L Tysons Corner Center, McLean. Show some Latin Love this Valentine's Day with a 3-Course dinner and signature beverage or cocktail for \$29 per person. A taste of what's on the menu: Shrimp and Crab Empenadas, Chile Relleno, Pasilla Lava Cake, and more. Call for reservations 703-893-2222.

Chaise Lounge. 8 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. Love and Kisses, Swings and Misses A Valentine's Day Celebration Smooth '60s-inspired big-band jazz featuring a sultry female vocalist and a sophisticated "sound that is musically tight and always swinging" (Fanfare Magazine). Tickets: \$25. <http://www.wolftrap.org>

Horse-Drawn Carriage Rides. 5:30-9:30 p.m. Reston Town Center, Market Street, Reston. Spend Valentine's Day the old-fashioned way this year by taking a stroll in a horse-drawn carriage through the streets of Reston Town Center. Pick up location by Talbots on Market Street. All proceeds benefit Volunteer Fairfax. Tickets: \$5/person. Children under 5 ride free.

❖ Saturday/Feb. 15

Valentine's Wine Dinner. 8 p.m. Paradise Springs Winery, 13219 Yates Ford Road, Clifton. Enjoy a 4-course meal paired with your favorite Paradise Springs wines. \$119/person; \$109 for wine club members; \$149 VIP seating in Barrel Room. 703-830-9463.

"Music of the Heart." 8 p.m. George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Take part in an evening of romantic music that blends popular and classical styles with pianist Peter Nero. Tickets are \$30-\$60. Tickets are half price for youth through grade 12. Visit the box office (open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) or charge by phone at 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu.

Partner Yoga. 2-3 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Partner poses are a great way to learn more about how to communicate more effectively with your partner and have fun while improving your body health. \$20 per couple, no experience is necessary—both beginners and master yogis

SEE VALENTINE'S, PAGE 11

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OPINION

Few Thoughts on General Assembly Action

Yes, allow homeschool students access to programs in public schools.

It's possible that this is not the right bill exactly, and in general, we favor local control. But it is wrongheaded of public schools to force families into a take-it-or-leave-it position.

Families that homeschool their children are likely saving localities more than \$10,000 a year in operating costs and take some pressure off overcrowded schools. It makes sense that these students should not only have access to sports, if they can meet the requirements, but they should also have access to other extracurricular activities and even some classes.

Public schools need to provide for the best for all students in their jurisdiction.

This is HB63.

Are We Barbarians?

Testimony stated that on occasion the clothing of the person in the electric chair would burst into flames and the man throwing the switch for an execution feared the person being executed might burst into flames as well.

There have been problems acquiring the

drugs needed for lethal injection for execution, so the Virginia House of Delegates passed the following: HB1052 Method of execution. Provides that if the Director of the Department of Corrections certifies that lethal injection is not available as a method of execution, electrocution shall be used instead. House: VOTE: PASSAGE (64-Y 32-N)

How local Northern Virginia delegates voted:

YEAS: Albo, Comstock, Hugo, LeMunyon and Rust.

NAYS: Brink, Bulova, Filler-Corn, Herring, Hope, Keam, Kory, Krupicka, Lopez, Plum, Sickles, Simon, Surovell and Watts.

EDITORIALS

Please No Hunting On Sundays

For those who enjoy a hike or a ride through the Virginia countryside, it's good to know that on Sundays during hunting season, one can still enjoy the outdoors without worrying about being mistaken for a deer. On Saturdays, vigilance, bright colors, loud talking and sometimes even jingle bells hung on clothing or saddles helps provide a sense of safety. This bill already passed the House of Delegates, and will likely proceed in the Senate.

Send Photos for Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a bi-annual themed edition, will publish Feb. 26.

We invite you to send us stories about your pets, photos of you and/or your family with your cats, dogs, hamsters, snakes, lizards, frogs, rabbits, or whatever other creatures share your home or yard with you.

Tell us the story of a special bond between a child and a dog, the story of how you came to adopt your pet, or examples of amazing feats of your creatures. Can your dog catch a Frisbee 10 feet in the air, or devour an entire pizza when you turn your back for less than a minute? Do you volunteer at an animal shelter or therapeutic riding center or take your

pet to visit people in a nursing home? Tell us about your experience.

Have you helped to train an assistance dog? Do you or someone in your family depend on an assistance dog? Or take this opportunity to memorialize a beloved pet you have lost.

Send photos and identify everyone in the photo including the pets and tell us what is happening in the photo, and include your address (we will only print the town name).

Submissions should arrive by Feb. 19.

Email editors@connectionnewspapers.com, or submit photos and stories directly on our website at www.connectionnewspapers.com/pets/.

A Clifton Valentine Love Story

BY PATTI STEVENSON
CLIFTON RESIDENT

One cold and snowy night, Victor, a velvety red reindeer, found himself wandering through the charming town of Clifton. He felt lost and depressed. Where was his life going? Deep in thought, he nearly stumbled over the railroad tracks. Caught off balance, he looked up. Was it his imagination? He saw in the distance, silhouetted by the glow of the full moon, a lovely reindeer who was velvety red just like himself. She was gorgeous. Her glittery red reindeer rack reflected thousands of moonbeams. He trotted to her, shyly pawing the ground with his hoof, and said, "Please permit me to introduce myself. My name is Victorious. My friends call me Victor." She batted her big brown reindeer eyes and replied softly, "My name is Vivacious. My friends call me Vi." Victor knew he was in trouble. Her eyes; her voice; she was an angel! What was he to do? He panicked and ran. Sad and heartbroken, he returned to his home on the other side of the tracks. Was he doomed to a life of loneliness?



The Velvety Red Reindeer is now on display during the month of February in the "All That Glitters Shop" in downtown Clifton.

Then he remembered. He knew who could help him, the "Glitter Queen," the wisest in all of Clifton, known for her magical ability to spread love and wisdom throughout the land. He wasted no time in visiting her castle in the land of All That Glitters. He explained his heart's dilemma. She knew exactly what to do. First she helped Victor pick out the most perfect glittery gift from her "All That Glitters Magical Shop." Then she created a true love glitter spell that he was to recite to Vi when he gave her the gift. Victor waited until the evening of the next full moon, which happened to be Feb. 14 – Valentine's Day. At dusk he crossed the tracks, and there in the distance, just as he had hoped, stood Vi. He trotted to her, handed her the Glitter gift, and recited the true love spell: "Brighton, Pandora, and Vera, oh my! Make me the true love of Vivacious's eye."

Her answer was "yes" and they kissed. Side by side, they ran off to start their new life together, the glow of glittery love and jewels shining brightly all around.

The Velvety Red Reindeer is now on display during the month of February in the "All That Glitters Shop," 7144 Main Street Clifton, 703-830-6995.

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NEWS

Republican Women of Clifton to Welcome U.S. Rep. Darrell Issa

The Republican Women of Clifton (RWC) welcomes U. S. Rep. Darrell Issa from California's 49th Congressional district as guest speaker at its February meeting. Issa is recognized for his success as a Congressional watchdog of taxpayer dollars and serves as the top Republican on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, charged with protecting the interests of U.S. taxpayers and eliminating waste, fraud and abuse. The meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb. 12 at the Fairview Elementary School, 5815 Ox Road, Fairfax Station, and the social hour will begin at 7 p.m. when refreshments will be served. President Alice Butler-Short will open the business meeting at 7:30 p.m., after which Representative Issa will deliver comments and entertain questions.

"RWC is proud to host Congressman Issa who represents fiscal conservative principles. We are certain members and guests alike will benefit from his insight into how government can be smarter and more efficient," said Butler-Short.



Darrell Issa

Issa represents California's 49th Congressional District, a seat he has held since 2001. He had a successful business career prior to his election and in 1994 was named Entrepreneur of the Year by Inc. Magazine, Ernst & Young and The San Diego Tribune for leadership of his company Directed Electronics. Issa holds 37 patents and is vigilant about protecting intellectual property rights. He opposed the

Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) which bailed out Wall Street and he proposed a bipartisan commission to uncover the root causes of the crisis. The idea was passed and the investigation is underway to reveal government mistakes and to protect U.S. taxpayers from future runaway government intervention.

As a fiscal conservative, committed firmly to low taxes and free markets, Issa continues to oppose the rise of out-of-control government spending.

Guests will be asked for a \$5 donation at the door for TAPS - the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors of our Fallen Heroes.

AREA ROUNDUPS

South County High Theatre Presents 'Dead Man's Cell Phone'

Celebrate Valentine's Day with theatre. Join South County High School senior thespians Feb. 14 and 15 as they present "Dead Man's Cell Phone," an imaginative new comedy by MacArthur "Genius" Grant recipient and Pulitzer Prize finalist Sarah Ruhl. An incessantly ringing cell phone in a quiet café. A stranger at the next table who has had enough. And a dead man, with a lot of loose ends. Ruhl, author of "The Clean House" and "Eurydice," creates a work about how we memorialize the dead – and how remembering changes us. The play is the odyssey of a woman forced to confront her own assumptions about morality, redemption, and the need to connect in a technologically obsessed world. Directed by SCHS English teacher Dan Deiter, the play features an all-senior thespian cast: Emmy Brien as Jean, Jeremy Thomas as Gordon (the dead man), Kelsey Davis as Gordon's mother, Kathy Oh as Gordon's widow, Sam Weggeman as Gordon's brother, and Jackie Parman as the stranger.

The play runs Friday, Feb. 14 and Saturday, Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. Tickets can be purchased at the door for \$5. The Dale S. Rumberger Auditorium at South County High School is located at 8501 Silverbrook Road, Lorton. This play contains adult language and is intended for mature audiences.

Too many people miss the silver lining because they're expecting gold.

—Maurice Seitter

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Consistent Bedtimes Linked to Improved Wellbeing in Children

Local experts offer suggestions for helping youngsters get a good night's sleep.

By MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When the clock strikes 9 on any given evening, 13-year-old twins Timothy and Danny Gulyn and their 11-year-old twin brothers, Christopher and Jonathan, know that it's time for bed. Whether they are on vacation during the summer or at their Arlington home on a school night, the siblings follow a consistent routine that has them tucked-in at the same time every day.

"I am a big believer in structure and routine," said the boys' mother, Linda M. Gulyn, Ph.D., a professor



PHOTO COURTESY OF LINDA GULYN

From left: Twins Christopher and Jonathan, 11, and their 13-year-old twin brothers, Timothy and Danny, pictured with parents Linda and Peter Gulyn have a consistent bedtime and structured bedtime routine. Experts say a regular bedtime can have a positive impact on a child's behavior and overall health.

of psychology at Marymount University in Arlington. "Bedtime should be absolutely rigid, the stricter the better. We all need structure, but children need it especially."

Researchers say going to bed at

a regular time can have a positive impact on a child's behavior and overall health. In fact, a recent study of 10,000 children by University College London found that a child's behavior improved when a consistent bedtime was estab-

lished. Local childcare experts agree, saying a regular bedtime routine, such as a bath followed by reading, is an important factor in establishing a consistent lights-out time.

Kathryn Cogan, Ph.D., a Bethesda-based psychotherapist, says that a lack of adequate sleep can affect a child's physical health. "If they don't get enough sleep, it affects their immune system and their ability to pay attention," she said.

Child psychiatrist Dr. Bruce P. Pfeffer, of Pfeffer Psychiatric Associates in Potomac, Md., said a structured bedtime is part of what he calls "good sleep hygiene," which can impact a child's overall wellbeing. "Often in my practice I see children with attention problems, behavior problems, irritability, who aren't getting enough sleep," he said. "I've had children fall asleep in class because of sleep deprivation."

Experts say that while older children also need a good night's sleep, the demands of school and extracurricular activities can make getting needed rest more challenging.

"Failing to get adequate rest can be an extreme stress on one's body and mind, resulting in a frantic attempt to complete academic tasks in an active rather than contemplative manner," said Michael S. Moynihan, head of the Upper School, The Heights School in Potomac, Md.

Cogan stressed that teenagers actually need a similar amount of sleep as newborns, "generally 12-14 hours of sleep at night because they are growing so fast, and their brains are growing so fast. Your brain works better and functions better when you have a regular sleep schedule."

For long-term success, experts like Pfeffer and Moynihan underscore the importance of a regular bedtime routine. It should "follow a short time of quiet reading, along with exercise," said Moynihan.

ESTABLISHING A REGULAR

BEDTIME can be challenging, but not impossible. Child development experts say that a structured bedtime routine should include a few key components. "Build it into their daily routine and give them a lot of advanced warning," said Gulyn. "If I you just pluck up a kid from

"Bedtime should be very soothing. They take a bath, brush their teeth and put on their pajamas. A high-energy child will need more lead time to slow their motor down."

— Dr. Bruce P. Pfeffer, child psychiatrist

the middle of an activity and just say 'Go to bed,' that is upsetting to a child and it is not fair. They need an opportunity to make the transition psychologically. If they're playing a game and they get a bedtime warning, they can say 'Ok, I need to finish this game before bed.'"

When it comes to bedtime, it is important that children know what to expect, she said. "You have to

make it consistent every night, even on Christmas. Give them a chance to decide how they want to spend their last half hour so they can prepare psychologically."

Pfeffer said, "It is important to establish a comfortable environment for very young children. If they start as toddlers with an established routine, they are comforted as they get older by reading a book and playing soft music in a room that is not filled with light. Bedtime should be very soothing. They take a bath, brush their teeth and put on their pajamas. A high-energy child will need more lead time to slow their motor down."

Len Annetta, Ph.D., a professor in the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University, said, "High energy kids need to blow off steam and tire their muscles. Routine and consistency are critical. It's not easy, but you have to shut them

down at the same time every night and wake them at the same time every morning. It's not a debate. The parent is in charge and has to stand firm on the rules. Rewarding the child for getting to bed and staying in bed ... helps the child know you appreciate their effort and are proud of their accomplishment."

Kensington-based psychotherapist Karen Prince cautions, "Screen time makes it harder to fall asleep. Start the bedtime routine a minimum of an hour before the actual bedtime. It shouldn't include television, video games or screen time of any sort."

While a regimented bedtime may sound draconian, it can actually be comforting. "Children thrive on structure and expectation," said Gulyn.

"For many young children, this can be a time of uncertainty, insecurity and separation anxiety. Establishing a structured bedtime routine brings comfort to the child. If you have a structured routine and strict bedtimes, it makes it easier for a child to get to sleep and rest better throughout the night."



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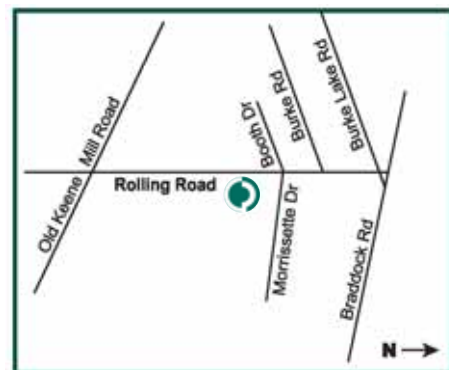
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CALENDAR

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/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

FRIDAY/ FEB. 7

Basic Gardening: Gardening with Roses. 1:30-2:30 p.m. Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Master gardeners show you common-sense approaches and precautions to help ensure successful growing. \$10/person. Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring.

Friday Night Film Series Presents:

The House I Live In. 7 p.m. Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10215 Lakehaven Court, Burke. The House I Live In captures heart-wrenching stories of those on the front lines — from the dealer to the grieving mother, the narcotics officer to the senator, the inmate to the federal judge — and offers a penetrating look at the profound human rights implications of America's longest war. www.accotinkuuc.org, administrator@acctinkuuc.org

SATURDAY/FEB. 8, 15, 22

Laurel Grove "Colored" School Open House. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. 6840 Beulah Street, Alexandria. Laurel Grove School is a one room school that served African American students in the Franconia Community of Fairfax County from 1882 to 1932. Visit the school to learn about families coming together to build a school and the importance of educating their children.

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 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



Laugh until you cry at the 9th Annual Comedy Night at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia in Fairfax on Saturday, Feb. 8 at 8:30 p.m.

purchase original works of art from nearly 100 Artists at the Workhouse. **9th Annual Comedy Night.** 8:30 p.m. JCCNV, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. Comedy night features Emmy award-winning comedy writer and comedian Monica Piper. Tickets: \$34, \$26 JCCNV members. <http://jccnvcomedy2014.brownpapertickets.com>.

"Off the Wall" Benefit. 6-9 p.m. George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Guests have the opportunity to tour studios, classrooms and the Fine Art Gallery in the Art and Design Building, and interact with faculty and students in various disciplines: graphic design, photography, printmaking, sculpture, painting, drawing, new media and game design. Faculty and students will provide creative and interactive demonstrations, workshops and presentations in which guests can participate. Tickets: soa.gmu.edu

TUESDAY/FEB. 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

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/

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/

Movie & Pizza Night. 6 p.m. Hidden Pond Park, 8511 Greeley Boulevard, Springfield. Friends of Hidden Pond are having a movie and pizza night in the Hidden Pond nature center. Pizza and drinks will be for sale followed by a showing of Over the Hedge (PG) on the big screen. RSVP to fohpnc@yahoo.com.

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 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.

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Valentine's Day

FROM PAGE 5

are invited to join. Register online: <http://www.workhousearts.org/>

A Valentine's Sweetheart. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. The Workhouse is offering a Seasonal Camp for kids, ages 6-10. A Valentine's Sweetheart will give kids the opportunity to learn how to bake sweet treats, draw and paint portraits, and participate in other Valentine's Day activities. Tuition is \$65 per child and includes the materials fee. Register online: <http://www.workhousearts.org/>

Date Night: Chef's Table. 7-9 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. A casual cooking class with a professional chef, where participants will be working in pairs to create menu items. At the end of the class, the participants will be served a tasting portion. Tuition is \$85 per person, which also includes a glass of wine and all materials fees. Please register online at least 2 days prior to event date. <http://www.workhousearts.org/>

Ballroom Social Dance. 7:30 p.m. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Get on the dance floor with your Valentine at the monthly Ballroom Social Dance. Each month features a short mini-lesson covering a specific style of dance at 7:30 p.m. (February will be Swing) and then the dance floor is open from 8-10:30 p.m. \$5 for the mini less, \$10 admission to the dance.

Valentine's Day Chocolate Buffet. 7-10 p.m. The Ritz-Carlton, 1700 Tysons Boulevard, McLean. A chocolate buffet with seven different dessert options. \$25 per person.

An Evening of Enduring Music and Song

"MJO's Simply Swingin' with Sinatra and Friends."

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

It will be a memorable evening for the golden age of pop standards and tin pan alley as the Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra (MJO) and vocalist Steve Lippia bring the Great American Songbook to life at George Mason University's Center for the Arts. It will feature music that has "depth and weight ... the kind of event that will stay with you long after it's over," said Jim Carroll, MJO artistic director.

The Great American Songbook is the short-hand name for the influential and well-loved popular songs of the



Steve Lippia

mid-20th century. The enduring music and lyrics were written for Broadway shows, Hollywood films and touring artists. They were songs about love and life, with a rhythm and rhyme all their own.

You can expect "music at its finest it's everything mixed into one delicious gumbo. It's both pop music and high art ... The main thing is it swings! And swings hard," said Carroll of the "MJO's Simply Swingin' with Sinatra and

Where and When

"MJO's Simply Swingin' with Sinatra and Friends" at Center for the Arts, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performance: Saturday, Feb. 8 at 8 p.m. Tickets: \$24-\$48. Call 888-948-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu. Note: Youth discount tickets are half price for youth through Grade 12.

Friends" Carroll indicated that the evening would "open up with the MJO doing some swingin' featuring the guys in the band. Steve Lippia and his conductor Steve Sigmund, who toured with Ray Charles, will join for the last tune of the first half and continue through the second half of the performance."

"The MJO is comprised of the finest musicians in the Metropolitan area; hence the name "Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra." The group is "a big band typical in the heyday of backing up folks like Tony Bennett, Frank Sinatra, Sammy Davis Jr. and Mel Tormé." Today the singers might be Harry Connick Jr., Michael Buble and Jane Monheit.

Steve Lippia is an in-demand vocalist who has performed

throughout the world. Lippia said he wanted to not only present songs "for those who readily remember them, but also to introduce a whole new generation to the timeless standards and spirit" of the Great American Songbook.

The songs, lyrics and musical arrangements have a "very distinctive style with nuances ... great elements. The lyrics are like poetry and great stories for the listener," added Lippia.

In his interaction with the audience, Lippia plans to tell anecdotes about some of the songs. I want people at ease and emotionally involved, like being in a living room together, not just a big hall." "Great music, great arrangements, great players, great singing, a great time," Carroll said.

Be Part of The February Pet Connection

Send Your Photos & Stories Now to south@connectionnewspapers.com or complete our online form at fairfaxstationconnection.com

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Cavaliers Praise 'the Best Coach'

Woodson gymnastics coach Mike Cooper wrapping up final season.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

As gymnasts sat anxiously awaiting the opportunity to grab a gift bag and hear the results of the Conference 7 championship meet at Lake Braddock Secondary School, Director of Student Activities Mark Martino grabbed the microphone and acknowledged Woodson coach Mike Cooper, who after more than three decades is wrapping up his final season coaching high school gymnastics.

When Martino finished, gymnasts chanted "Coo-per, Coo-per" to honor the well-liked Cavaliers coach. Some of the athletes stood up and hugged him. Minutes later, it was announced Cooper's time as Woodson head coach would continue for at least two more weeks.

The Woodson gymnastics team placed second at the Conference 7 meet on Jan. 31, earning a trip to the 6A North region meet on Feb. 12 at Lake Braddock. With the top two teams receiving regional berths, the Cavaliers punched their ticket with a score of 132.9, edging third-place South County (131.55). T.C. Williams won the conference title with a score of 143.45.

"I'm excited because since we moved in this conference we've always been either first or second," Cooper said, "so it's nice to go out, making it to the regional tournament."

Woodson joined the Patriot District during the 2009-10 season. The Cavaliers won the district in 2010 and 2013. The VHSL underwent a six-class realignment prior to the 2013-14 school year, and seven of the eight schools from the Patriot District formed Conference 7 in the 6A North region (Lee moved to 5A).

Woodson senior Rachael Talento played a major role in the Cavaliers advancing to regionals. Talento placed third in the all-around with a score of 35.95, finishing second on floor (9.275), third on bars (8.925), fourth on beam (8.9) and eighth on vault (8.85).



After more than three decades, Woodson coach Mike Cooper is in his final season coaching high school gymnastics.

PHOTOS BY
CRAIG STERBUTZEL/
THE CONNECTION

Woodson senior Rachael Talento finished third in the all-around and helped the Cavaliers finish second as a team during the Conference 7 gymnastics championship meet on Jan. 31 at Lake Braddock.



"She did her best that she's ever done," Cooper said. "She quit club and she's trying to maintain everything. The three events — the bars, the beam and the floor — she did fantastic. Unfortunately, her vault is not the strongest, but we're going to be working on that for the next week, trying to get a harder vault."

Talento reached level 9 with Cardinal Gymnastics before quitting last summer. Talento said she "just kind of burned out" and wanted more time for herself.

"I quit club about six months ago, so I hadn't been in the gym much until the season started," Talento said. "For this season, I just wanted to come out and have fun, so being able to make it to regionals is really great and ... I'm really excited to go out and make my last meet something."

Talento credited Cooper for helping her get back into gymnastics after a six-month layoff.

"It was hard," she said. "I hadn't really done anything in a while. I lost a lot of my muscle and a lot of my skills. Then Cooper whipped me back into shape. ... I'm so happy I was able to do this with him for this last year. He's honestly the best and it's been a great season."

Woodson freshman Charlie Klika

placed third on floor with a score of 9.15. Cavalier freshman Margaret Bushman finished seventh (8.925).

While Cooper helped Woodson finish conference runner-up this year, much of his success as a high school gymnastics coach came at Lake Braddock. Cooper led the Bruins to five consecutive state championships from 1995 through 1999. Cooper also coached boys' gymnastics, along with swimming and diving at different schools around Northern Virginia.

"He's the best coach you can honestly have," Talento said. "He's very patient and he'll help you with anything."

Cooper said he intends to spend time traveling with his wife, though he will continue coaching at the club level.

"I want my fingers in it," he said, "I just don't want my whole body in it."

Now, thanks to the performance of the Cavaliers at the conference meet, Cooper will have at least one more chance to coach at the high school level.

"I do it because I love the sport," he said. "Out of the decades from the '80s to 2014, I still stay in contact with the girls and boys and that to me is showing that I've done something with my career."

Fairfax's Barborek Wins Conference 6 Gymnastics Title

Fairfax junior Rachel Barborek won the Conference 6 all-around gymnastics championship on Feb. 3, producing a score of 37.1 during the conference meet at McLean High School.

With the victory, Barborek secured a berth in the 6A North region meet, which will be held Feb. 12 at Lake Braddock Secondary School. Barborek finished first on bars (9.475), tied for second on vault (9.4), placed third on beam (9.275) and tied for eighth on floor (8.95).

Barborek competed for Fairfax as a freshman. Last season, she reached level 10 as a club gymnast for Capital Gymnastics and, by rule, was unable to compete for her high school team.

Barborek eventually quit club gymnastics and rejoined the Rebels.

"I'd like to go," Barborek said, "all the way to states."

Barborek helped Fairfax finish fifth as a team with a score of 117.775. McLean won the conference title with a score of 144.475, followed by Washington-Lee (140.925), Yorktown (137.25) and South Lakes (121.425).

— JON ROETMAN



Fairfax junior Rachel Barborek won the Conference 6 all-around gymnastics championship on Feb. 3 at McLean High School.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

South County Frosh Burgess Finishes Conference 7 Runner-Up

South County freshman Collea Burgess finished runner-up in the all-around competition on Jan. 31 during the Conference 7 gymnastics championship meet at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Burgess posted a score of 36.025. T.C. Williams senior Holland Cathey won the title with a score of 37.55.

Burgess' performance earned her a spot on the all-around competition at the 6A North region meet on Feb. 12 at Lake Braddock. She placed first on bars (9.45), fourth on vault (9.2), tied for fifth on floor (9) and finished ninth on beam (8.375).

"I think I did good," Burgess said, "but I could have done better." South County finished third with a score of 131.55. T.C. Williams won the conference championship with a score of 143.45 and Woodson earned the other regional berth with total of 132.9.

— JON ROETMAN



South County freshman Collea Burgess finished runner-up in the all-around competition during the Conference 7 gymnastics championship meet on Jan. 31 at Lake Braddock.

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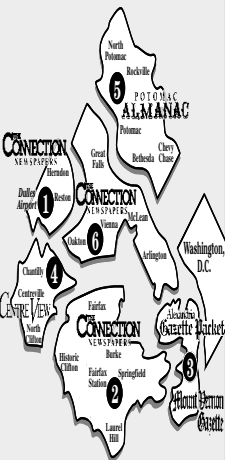
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PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Pat Herrity (on left) receives the award from the FCFT's Steven Greenburg.

County Teachers Federation Honors Supervisor Herrity

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) was honored Jan. 11 by the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers (FCFT). He received the organization's 2013 President's Award for "consistent advocacy, proactive communications and support of (FCPS teachers) over the past year."

Pleased by the recognition, Herrity said,

"Teachers are the lifeblood of our schools. Since I took office, I have worked to focus our resources into the classrooms to help our teachers and our kids and to get the regulatory burden off of teachers so they can teach."

I am honored to receive this award for supporting our teachers."

Graduating from NOVA and Robinson

FROM PAGE 4

said.

Lia Keith said that navigating the dual-enrollment system was somewhat difficult, as there are few students who have followed a path similar to Rachel's.

For example, in the Fairfax County School system, Advanced Placement and Honors classes are weighted higher than other courses, and have the potential to raise a student's grade point average. According to Lia Keith, dual-enrollment classes do not do this.

"Some will be high school credits, some will be college credits, some will be both. So she only has a certain number of the college classes she's taken on her high school transcript," Keith said.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES in Virginia also offer guaranteed admission to schools such as University of Virginia, William and Mary, and Virginia Tech, but Rachel Keith does not qualify because she is a dual-enrolled student, even though she followed the same requirements as those in community college who have already graduated high school.

"I don't take IB classes because I'm taking college courses at NOVA," Keith said. "If you look at the college I've done, this is just different."

Keith is set on attending James Madison, but said it depends on what she receives in scholarship money. The dual-enrollment program has allowed her family to save money, as she will be entering college as a junior.

"It saves a lot of money," Rachel said. "A ton of money," her mom added.



Rachel Keith, a 17-year-old Fairfax Station resident, has been taking classes at Northern Virginia Community College for the past two years. Her brother Matt, left, may be following Rachel's path of dual-enrollment.

Regardless of where she will attend college, Keith said she is excited to learn in a new environment.

"I'm really looking forward to meeting people who share the same interests as me, and really getting into the groundwork and the more complicated topics that are involved in what I want to do," Keith said.

According to Lia Keith, Rachel Keith has inspired her siblings, including 14-year-old Matt Keith, to consider the dual-enrollment program.

Rachel Keith said her time as a dual-enrollment student has led her to believe the school system is somewhat flawed.

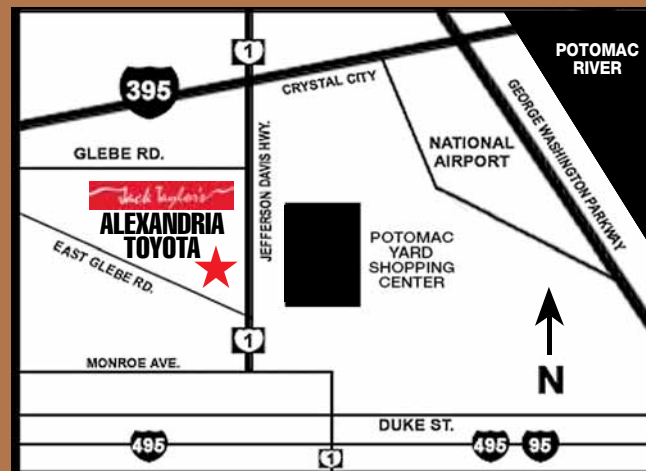
"I went the unorthodox route, and for that I'm being pushed to the side because they can't measure my achievements in the same way," she said.

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Avg Sold Price	\$531,136	\$492,480	7.85%
Avg List Price for Solds	\$538,381	\$503,337	6.96%
Avg Days on Market	36	50	-28.00%
Attached Units Sold	7,271	6,652	9.31%
Attached Avg Sold Price	\$361,376	\$332,435	8.71%
Detached Units Sold	7,710	7,165	7.61%
Detached Avg Sold Price	\$691,230	\$641,066	7.83%

Source: RBL, LLC. An MRIS company

Our January Sales



Clifton—\$945,000
UNDER CONTRACT



Fairfax—\$775,000
UNDER CONTRACT



Fairfax Station—\$960,000
SOLD!



Burke—\$675,000
UNDER CONTRACT



Clifton—\$698,000
UNDER CONTRACT



Burke—\$399,000
SOLD!



Burke—\$335,000
SOLD!



Burke—\$675,000
UNDER CONTRACT

Over \$43 Million Sold in 2013

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