

Remembering Segregation

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Deloris Evans, born and raised in McLean and Vienna, has seen dramatic change in Northern Virginia over the years.



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Remembering Segregation in McLean and Vienna

Longtime resident reflects on life in McLean and Vienna during uncertain times.

BY LORI BAKER
THE CONNECTION

Deloris Evans remembers the excitement of riding the bus with students from The Madeira School. She was thrilled because they were going to see Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1941 inauguration parade. She was also delighted because this was her father's bus. He was the chauffeur for Lucy Madeira, head and founder of The Madeira School. And for this event, he was given permission to bring his young black daughter onto a bus full of white students to see the historic parade.

A lot has changed since that time, and Deloris Evans has lived that change. Today's youth likely cannot imagine that at one time, young African-Americans from McLean could only enter a favorite restaurant through the back door. That is how Evans grew up. But over the years, Evans has seen McLean and Tysons evolve from a small segregated town, to an open and vibrant community.

Evans, whose strength of character is evident, says it is those very struggles that made her strong. And on the heels of Black History Month, she recalled some of the stories that helped shape her. She was affected by the time and events around her; and she, in turn, helped to shape and improve the lives of young Northern Virginia African-Americans that would follow after her.

EVANS was born off of Swinks Mill Road in McLean. At that time, Black women in the McLean/Great Falls area were only permitted to have their babies delivered at Freedman's Hospital, which is now Howard University Hospital; or at home by the local doctor. Deloris Evans was born in her family's home in July of 1932, with the help of Dr. Harold Johnson. "He served the entire Black community by visiting homes," Evans said. She recalled waiting numerous times, as a child, with chronic and painful ear



Deloris Evans, born and raised in McLean and Vienna, has seen dramatic change in Northern Virginia over the years.

PHOTO BY LORI BAKER/THE CONNECTION

problems for the busy Dr. Johnson to arrive.

Once she reached school age, Evans would walk from her home on Balls Hill Road, down Lewinsville to its intersection with Spring Hill Road. The small Odrick's School was located there, and offered education to Black children in grades one through seven. "It was a long walk," she laughed. Charity Baptist Church now sits very close to where Odrick's School once stood.

Soon afterward, she attended Louise Archer School on Nutley Street, after her family moved to Vienna. The school, in its early days, was called the Vienna Colored School. Dedicated educator, Louise Archer, along with two other teachers, taught and fed black students in the three-room brick building. The school was renamed Louise Archer Elementary School not long after the much-loved educator's death in 1948. "Ms. Archer taught history like it was the only subject in the curriculum," Evans said. "You

knew everything about the presidents." When it came time for high school, McLean and Vienna's African-American students were bussed to Manassas, unless they could find transportation to a black high school in Washington, D.C. So Evans attended Manassas Regional High School for four years starting in 1945. After graduation, Lucy Madeira, who Evans considered a kind friend to the family, strongly encouraged Evans to attend Howard University, and

SEE BARRIERS, PAGE 7



Deloris Evans, pictured on the right, founded the Esther Honesty Scholarship Committee in 1963. The scholarship awarded college funds to young members of Shiloh Baptist Church in McLean. The Scholarship Committee still exists today. The late Pastor Roger V. Bush is pictured in the center back.

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

The McLean Community Center's Governing Board in session.

Community Center Seeks Board Candidates

The deadline for filing petitions is March 28.

The McLean Community Center (MCC), an agency of Fairfax County Government, is seeking candidates to run for open seats on its 2014-2015 Governing Board. The board provides oversight and guidance for MCC programs and facilities, which include the Robert Ames Alden Theatre (The Alden) and the Old Firehouse Teen Center. The center is located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue.

In order to become eligible to run for a seat on the 11-member board, a candidate must reside in the Center's tax district (Small District 1A-Dranesville). Additionally, candidates are required to obtain the signatures of 10 McLean tax district residents in their respective categories (either adult or youth), to have their names placed on the ballot.

Nominating petition forms are available at the Center's reception desk. The deadline for filing completed petitions is 5 p.m. on Friday, March 28. Voting will be held from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the annual McLean Day festival on Saturday, May 17. The festival will

be held at Lewinsville Park, which is located at 1659 Chain Bridge Road.

Absentee Voting also is permitted from Monday, April 14, to Wednesday, May 14. Absentee ballot packages are available upon request at the Center's reception desk, or residents may call or send a message to elections@mcleancenter.org to have a package mailed to their home addresses.

Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. The three adult candidates who receive the three highest vote counts will serve three-year terms. Youth members will serve one-year terms. Adult



candidates must be at least 18 years of age as of McLean Day. Youth candidates must be 15-17 years of age as of McLean Day. One youth member will be elected from the McLean High School boundary area and one will be elected from the Langley High School boundary area. Youth candidates are not required to attend either of the two schools, but they must reside in the boundary areas served by the schools as defined by Fairfax County Public Schools.

For more information on the MCC Governing Board Election, call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit: <http://bit.ly/1fHo2Ht>.

locality	education debt	transportation debt	other general government debt	enterprise activities debt	total debt	per capita debt
Fairfax County	\$1,549,052,341	\$396,425,978	\$1,489,446,960	\$554,411,229	\$3,989,336,508	\$3,564.93
Arlington County	\$415,885,635	\$112,840,854	\$455,326,656	\$428,655,606	\$1,412,708,751	\$6,589.96
Loudoun County	\$890,389,301	\$0	\$360,213,903	\$2,060,377	\$1,252,663,581	\$3,803.35
Prince William	\$597,558,000	\$201,316,000	\$260,383,000	\$0	\$1,059,257,000	\$2,552.72
Alexandria City	\$152,270,716	\$17,340,064	\$365,761,922	\$27,144,311	\$535,372,702	\$3,731.76
Fairfax City	\$88,893,350	\$0	\$78,185,450	\$29,998,814	\$197,077,614	\$8,618.81
Manassas Park	\$58,228,329	\$0	\$59,670,144	\$14,776,604	\$132,675,077	\$8,930.79
Manassas	\$39,298,653	\$7,690,477	\$15,529,780	\$30,376,597	\$92,995,507	\$2,380.84
Falls Church	\$4,869,733	\$0	\$39,573,050	\$33,821,309	\$78,264,092	\$6,227.75

A Debt to Society

Local governments use debt as a tool to build for the future.

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

Back in the 1920s, Harry Byrd became governor of Virginia on what he called a “pay-as-you-go” platform. Byrd had an almost pathological hatred of debt, fueled in part by mounting debt problems of his family’s business. Now, almost a century later, leaders across Northern Virginia have a very different view about the role debt should play in balancing the books. Local governments across Virginia have taken on more than \$8 billion in debt.

“Some jurisdictions are having to be more careful with their debt load as they are small and have a weak real estate base,” said Stephen Fuller, director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. “Others see that having high quality infrastructure is the best way to support a growing economy that will enable them to pay off the debt.”

Fairfax County has the largest debt by far, almost \$4 billion. But Fairfax also has more people than any of the other jurisdictions. So the county’s per capita debt burden is actually lower than Arlington or Alexandria. Financial reports show that local governments across Northern Virginia have been taking on increasing debt in recent years, and some believe that trend might accelerate in the near future. Because Congress is considering eliminating some ex-

emptions for income tax on municipal bonds, local governments might consider taking on larger amounts of debt in the near future to take advantage of lower interest rates.

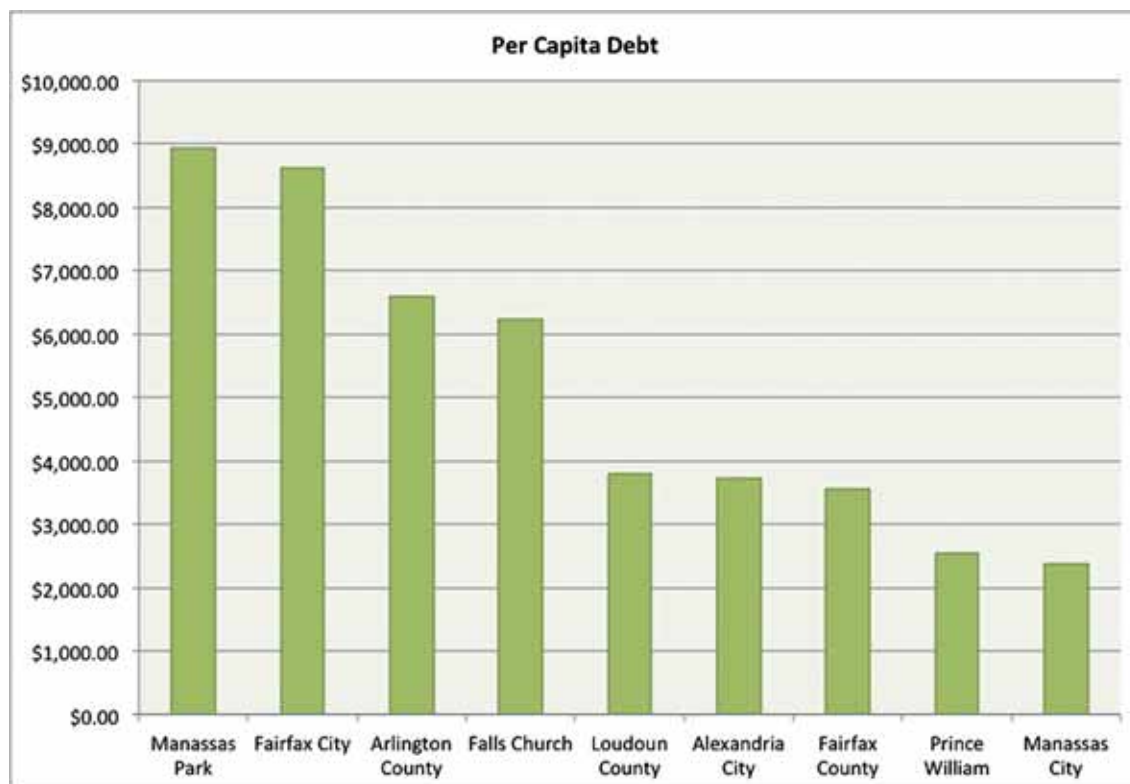
“There are some clouds gathering on the horizon that will impose significantly greater increases in costs for borrowing to issue bonds to finance long-term improvements,” said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Leadership. “Local governments are asking themselves if they want to risk deferring borrowing knowing it might carry a much higher interest rate.”

GOVERNMENT LEADERS say the old Byrd philosophy of “pay-as-you-go” is a relic of the past in much the same way as the policy of racial segregation associated with the Byrd machine. Although government officials acknowledge that local governments are taken on increasing amounts of debt, they argue that it’s all relative to the amount of money the jurisdiction raises each year and how much value is tied to land in the jurisdiction.

“All the Northern Virginia jurisdictions are looking at the same metrics — they can’t exceed a three percent limit of outstanding debt as a percent of assessed value, and annual debt payments can’t exceed 10 percent of their total budget,” said Joe LaHait, debt coordinator for Fairfax County. “Those two metrics are strongly abided by, and they are constantly monitored by the bond rating agencies who ultimately provide the ratings to every single jurisdiction in the state.”

Arlington County has one of the highest per capita debt loads in Northern Virginia, an indication that county leaders are willing to use its bonding author-

SEE DEMANDS, PAGE 11



Per capita debt.

Preventing Teen Suicides

Recent deaths shine light on FCPS suicide prevention programs.

BY VICTORIA ROSS
THE CONNECTION

Every 15 seconds, a teen in the United States tries to commit suicide.

Every 90 minutes, one succeeds.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also reports that the number of attempted suicides among teenagers increased from 6.3 percent in 2009 to 7.8 percent in 2011.

In Fairfax County, between four and seven students take their own lives every year, according to the authors of a 60-page report compiled last September by a team of community mental health agencies and Fairfax County Public School specialists.

“The youth rate, despite also being below state and national rates, remains unacceptable. The impact of suicide on families, friends, and communities is immeasurable,” the report states.

In a span of 30 days, Fairfax County residents have felt the impact and pain of teen suicide on four separate occasions. In early February, two Langley High School students committed suicide a day apart. Last week, two more students from Woodson High School took their own lives.

“It’s very clear there’s an increased frequency of suicidal behavior and thinking in Fairfax County this winter,” said Dr. Peter Robbins, M.D., medical director of The Child & Family Counseling Group in Fairfax. “If you compare this number to last winter, there’s been a higher frequency of this behavior.”

While Robbins acknowledges there are “no great answers” to the rash of teen suicides, he has been working with Fairfax County Public Schools to conduct seminars that clue parents in to the warning signs of depression and suicide.

“Numerous studies have shown that identifying at-risk students early is the best chance of prevention,” Robbins said.

FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS is doing that, through an array of programs and services aimed at spotting students at-risk for depression and suicide. Programs range

from 24/7 crisis response services to police training to mental health screenings to primary prevention programs.

Being a teenager has never been easy.

But today’s teens are feeling new pressures from many different fronts. According to a new poll, conducted by NPR along with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, nearly 40 percent of parents said their high school students are experiencing added stress from school.

The curriculum is more demanding, homework sessions are longer and gaining admission to college is more competitive, which means the stakes are high for testing.

Add social media to the mix, where students can compare their existence to other teens 24 hours a day on Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and other social networks, and the resulting stress can lead to depression and suicidal thoughts.

How can parents, students, friends, teachers help a student through the roller-coaster years of adolescence?

“It is easy to misread depres-

SEE SUICIDE, PAGE 11

Additional Resources

THE PREVENTION TOOLKIT:

a collection of data and resources regarding youth behaviors and risk factors, including depression and suicide, in Fairfax County. The toolkit supports organizations, communities, and individuals in developing data-informed strategies to address identified needs. It includes links to and resources about developing programs, implementing policies, and accessing services. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention/toolkit.htm>

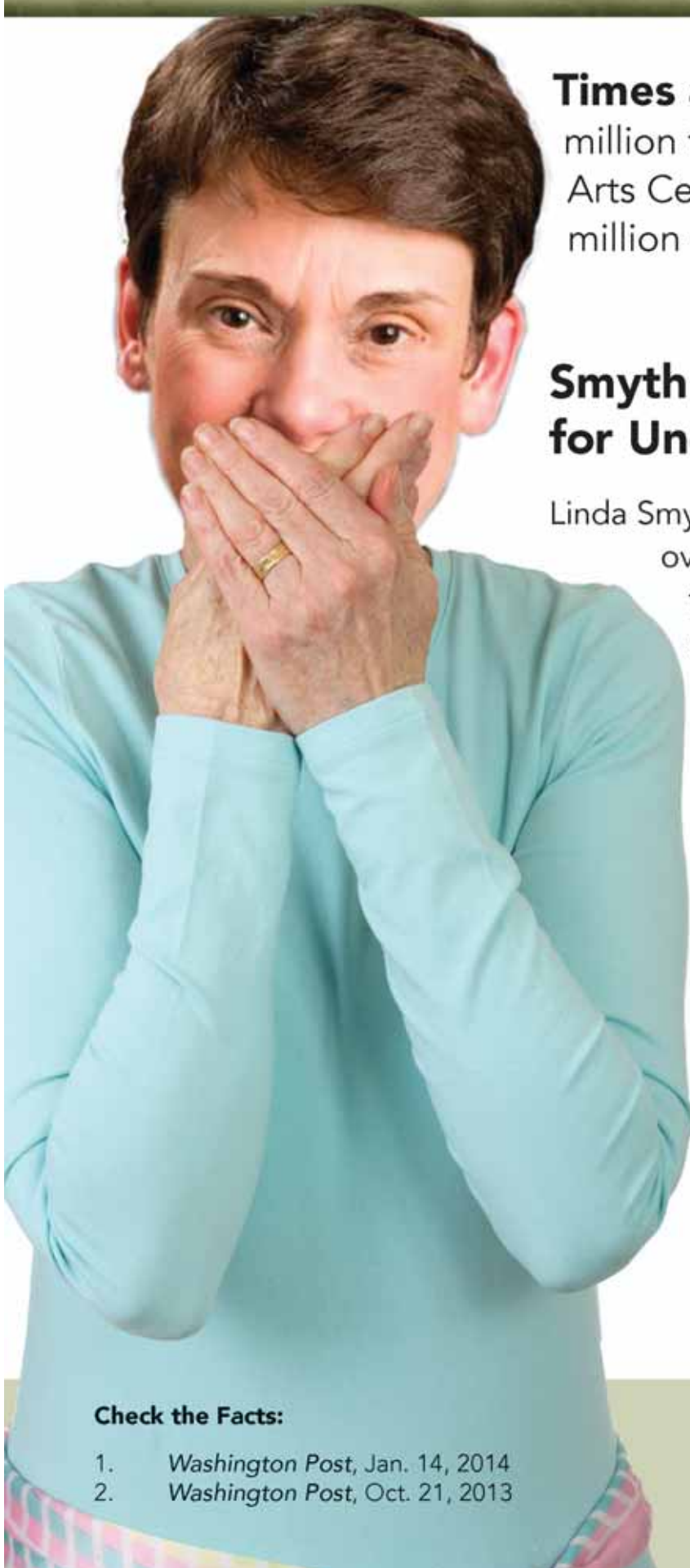
THE FAIRFAX COUNTY YOUTH SURVEY:

A joint initiative of Fairfax County Government and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), the annual survey provides data on student behaviors and risk and protective factors. The 2011-12 school year survey taken by eighth, tenth, and twelfth graders included questions about mental health and suicide. Full results can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/youthsurvey.

FAIRFAX COUNTY’S PREVENTION SYSTEM:

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ncs/prevention

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1. *Washington Post*, Jan. 14, 2014
2. *Washington Post*, Oct. 21, 2013

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Sex Trafficking in Our Backyard

Fairfax County detective, trafficking victim testify at Congressional hearing.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

Since its creation in October 2013, the human trafficking unit of the Fairfax County Police Department has received over 70 tips and leads about human trafficking in Northern Virginia.

"Fifty-two percent of those leads involve juvenile sex trafficking cases," said Detective William Woolf, lead investigator of the Fairfax County Police Department's human trafficking unit, at a House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee on Feb. 26.

In his testimony, Woolf addressed the need for stricter penalties on those responsible for human trafficking and the ways Fairfax County is addressing trafficking.

"We've taken on a very victim-centered approach. Our number one priority is recovering these young people from these terrible situations. The problem with that is it is extremely resource intensive," Woolf said.

THE HUMAN TRAFFICKING UNIT is taking a three-pronged approach of education and awareness, prevention and intervention to reduce trafficking in Northern Virginia.

"This particular crime is something that affects all communities. It's a crime that does not discriminate on race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class—it's something that has the potential of touching each and every community and each in every state here in the United States," he said.

Woolf said that a nation-wide anti-trafficking awareness campaign is necessary to prevent this crime. Fairfax County recently launched the "Just Ask" Prevention Project, which includes a website and is intended to increase awareness of sex trafficking in the area.

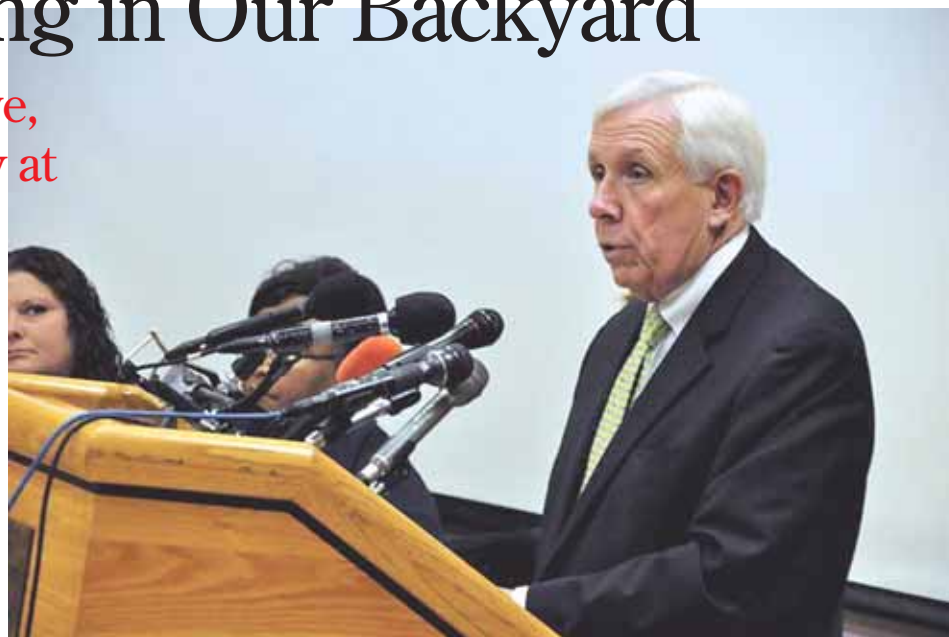
Fairfax County Public Schools recently adopted a sex trafficking awareness curriculum, the first of its kind, for students in grades six through twelfth. Woolf said programs like this are needed throughout the United States to prevent trafficking.

Sex traffickers also use Facebook and Twitter to lure victims in, Woolf said.

U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10), chairman of the subcommittee, said that internet pages such as Backpage.com are used to advertise commercial sex, including in Winchester, Va., which is part of Wolf's district.

"How do the people who own Backpage.com live with themselves? How do they honestly live with themselves?" Woolf said at the hearing.

Wolf, who has been working for several years to combat sex trafficking and raise awareness of this crime, said that as long as Backpage.com continues to operate, trafficking will continue to be an issue.



U.S. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10) speaks at a forum on human trafficking at the McLean Community Center in May. Wolf is chair of the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee, which hosted a hearing on human trafficking on Feb. 26.

"I have personally written the Attorney General several times over the last two years urging the department to prosecute Backpage.com and similar sites," Wolf said.

Since 2011, 42 defendants have been prosecuted for trafficking related crimes in Northern Virginia, Detective Woolf said, the Underground Gangster Crips case being one of the more notable cases.

In this case, female adults and juveniles were being trafficked for more than six years in Northern Virginia by Crips gang members. The gang used Facebook and local malls, bus stops and metro stations to recruit young girls. The gang members advertised the girls on the streets, as well as through Backpage.com.

In 2013, an Atlanta man pleaded guilty to trafficking underage girls in Virginia and several other states. According to court documents, the girls were sold for sex at several hotels in the Northern Virginia area, including Homestead Studio Suites in Sterling, Aloft Hotel in Ashburn, and the Holiday Inn Express, Washington Dulles Marriott Suites, and the Hyatt House Hotel, all located in Herndon.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING SURVIVOR and advocate Stephanie Vu testified at the hearing, providing a glimpse into the life of someone who has been sold for sex.

"At the age of 12, I was chosen. I was invited to a party and there I met a handsome older boy who took a lot of interest in me. Although flattered, I never thought I would see him again," Vu said.

However, she did see him again—nearly everywhere she went.

"In my 12-year-old mind, I was convinced this was fate and soon began intentionally meeting him every chance I had," Vu said.

Vu's father was deployed, and her mother worked day and night, leaving Vu responsible for her younger siblings but with little supervision.

"I was free to go on dates with this charming, older boy. I was searching for something in life and he looked like the answer,

filling my loneliness and my young heart's desire for love and romance. But I soon learned though that he was a 'wolf in sheep's clothing,' who intended on turning me into a product to be devoured," she said.

For some time, Vu said it seemed her dreams had come true.

"He said he loved me and wanted to marry me; he bought nice things for me and took me out to clubs and places I could never go to without him," Vu said. "However, in just a few months he demanded a return—I was sent to perform in a strip club. I resisted, but he said he was in a financial jam and he needed my help, and so it began. I began skipping school and dancing in the strip clubs."

Vu was soon forced to begin selling her-

"We've taken on a very victim-centered approach. Our number one priority is recovering these young people from these terrible situations. The problem with that is it is extremely resource intensive."

— Detective Bill Woolf

self for sex. Her trafficker threw her out into the streets on a cold night, telling her she could either make money or freeze.

After hours of being in the cold, Vu gave in.

"In desperation, I finally accepted one and climbed into the car. The moment changed my life forever. There were three men that night; at the end of it I couldn't stop vomiting," she said.

Vu continued to be trafficked, and soon faced depression and took drugs and alcohol to deal with the pain. She was arrested one night and sent home after being recog-



PHOTOS BY ALEX McVEIGH

Del. Barbara Comstock (R-34) and Detective Bill Woolf speak about human trafficking at the McLean Community Center in May. Woolf testified at a sex trafficking hearing on Capitol Hill on Feb. 26.

nized as a missing child. Although she was sent home, she returned to her trafficker.

After being arrested again and sent to juvenile detention, Vu's probation officer suspected Vu was a victim of trafficking. After returning home, she was brutally raped by her trafficker in front of her home.

"At this point I had finally had enough. At just 15 years old, I was ready to give up on life," Vu said.

Vu was hospitalized after the rape, and was soon sent to Northern Virginia based Youth For Tomorrow, 3,000 miles from her home.

She is now advocate and advisor to Youth for Tomorrow and Shared Hope International, also located in Northern Virginia.

Woolf said that more resident treatment centers are needed across the country, as survivors such as Vu have to travel nearly 3,000 miles to receive the treatment they need.

According to Woolf, judges are often going below the federal sentencing guidelines in trafficking cases.

"They are oftentimes just imposing the mandatory minimums as provided by the statute, when the guidelines suggest much higher penalties for this type of criminal conduct," he said.

There is also a need for federal legislation addressing the demand side, Woolf said.

"There are individuals out there that are purchasing sex from our children, and these individuals need to be punished or we at least need the tools to be able to address that as well, particularly when their actions are affecting interstate commerce," Woolf said.

The Virginia General Assembly has addressed legislation dealing with sex trafficking this session, including HB 235, which has passed both the house and senate. The bill, introduced by Delegate Rob Bell (R-Albemarle), would place convicted sex solicitors on Virginia's online registry of sex offenders.

Those looking for more information and prevention tools for sex trafficking can visit Justaskva.org.

McLean Community Center to Hold Hearing on Programs

The McLean Community Center Governing Board will hold its annual Public Hearing on Programs at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26. The board is seeking comments and suggestions on Center programs and services from residents of the Dranesville Small District 1A tax district, which it serves. The regular monthly meeting of the Governing Board will immediately follow the hearing. All meetings of the board are open to the public. The Center is located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue.

Tax district residents who attend the meeting will have the opportunity to voice their opinions on current Center offerings and make suggestions for improving programs. They may also offer suggestions on possible new programs. The hearing is one step in planning for the FY 2016 budget

cycle, which begins July 1, 2015. The Center is home to the Robert Ames Alden Theatre. A satellite program, The Old Firehouse Teen Center, is located at 1440 Chain Bridge Road.

Residents who would like to speak at the hearing may call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, to have their names placed on the speakers' list so that a schedule may be established. Residents may submit written comments by mail, fax (703-556-0547), email (george.sachs@fairfaxcounty.gov) or in person up to seven days after the hearing.

Residents who want to find out if they live within the Center's tax district or who want more information, may call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, or visit: www.mcleancenter.org/about/directions.

Breaking Barriers

FROM PAGE 3

offered to help with the financing. But scholarship money, along with the opportunity to live away from home led her to Johnson C. Smith College in Charlotte, N.C.

Evans noted that at the time, she accepted segregation as a part of life. "We were so molded in segregation. We didn't have the mindset that young people have today."

But slowly things began to change. The growing business industry around what is now Tysons Corner brought new jobs and new people, many who were less apt to tolerate racism and segregation. "The physical growth did it, really," she said. "And with that came diversity. And then the dynamics of government and politics and laws began to change."

In the late 1950s, Evans and her family helped register nearly every African-American family in the area to vote. Her mother canvassed the neighborhoods, working through the black churches. She had Deloris and her brother focus on spreading the word to younger people. Evans has been very voter-conscious ever since.

She eventually began teaching, and was one of the first African-Americans assigned to teach in Fairfax County. She was moved from James Lee Elementary, the school for black students in Falls Church, across the street to the all white Westlawn Elementary School. In the mid-1960s and early 1970s, according to Evans, Fairfax County "was rapidly making a

name for itself."

The county conducted two-year studies of African-American candidates they were considering for integrated teaching jobs. They even conducted home visits, because "some people had never been in a black home," Evans said. The candidates, established teachers, and administrators all attended training courses on integration. Her career in education grew, and eventually led her to principal positions at three schools.

IN 2002, Evans chartered a youth council of the NAACP in Fairfax County. The purpose of the council was, and still is, to help identify and address challenges to African-American youth in the area. Some of the challenges, as identified by the youth themselves, were drugs, alcohol, and teen pregnancy. As a result, countywide Teen Summits were developed, and are still ongoing. Evans helped run those summits throughout Northern Virginia until 2010.

These days Evans is struck by the feeling that young people may not realize how far things have progressed in a fairly short time. And she wants them to realize their potential.

"There are still barriers that prevent a lot of black kids from trying to reach a goal," she said. "But we can hardly accept any excuse for you're not trying to have a goal and reach it. You just have to keep going, searching, and pursuing whatever that goal is."

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THE CONNECTION
NEWSPAPERS

OPINION

Voting Against Virginia?

Local proponents of expanding health coverage for poor people have a point about those in the General Assembly voting against it.

When Delegates Scott Surovell, Charniele Herring and Rob Krupicka, along with Sen. Adam Ebbin got together to make the case for expanding Medicaid in Virginia, they brought slide presentations, charts, spreadsheets, poll results and more.

It is a compelling argument that expanding Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act is not only good for the health of working poor Virginians, it's good for the health of Virginia's economy. What's more, polls show that Virginians support expanding Medicaid, even Virginians who didn't vote for Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

EDITORIAL

Expanding health care for poor individuals and families who so far have been cut out of health care reform by the General Assembly's refusal would create more than 30,000 new jobs, hundreds of jobs in every district in the state. It would bring in \$5 million in Federal dollars every day, \$1.8 billion a year. It would save the General Fund \$285 million over the biannual budget, money that could be spent on education, mental health and other critical priorities.

"Real people are suffering because of this,"

said Ebbin. "Real people would be helped." That includes working families and more than 12,000 veterans. Ebbin related the story of a taxi driver from his district who had a stroke in his 40s. With no insurance, Mount Vernon Inova Hospital covered his acute treatment and recovery. But without insurance, his access to rehabilitation was limited and as a result, his lifetime expectations are likely limited.

Saying no to \$5 million a day is, in fact, voting against Virginia.

— MARY KIMM,

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Manufactured Crisis

To the Editor

Visit your local sports equipment store to purchase a \$100 fishing pole. You may not know that Medicaid will collect an additional \$2.83 in what used to be known as a Federal Excise Tax – reserved for luxury goods and services- now an ObamaCare Medical Devices tax. Buy a new set of tires for \$500 and you pay an additional \$14.15 on the Medical Devices tax. This is just another, in a long string of hidden provisions of a bad law. Go figure how a new set of tires or a fishing pole is a medical device. The Department of Health and Human Services has asked retailers to not show the tax on your sales receipt! Why an open, transparent Federal Government would ask that is beyond this writer.

Our General Assembly has ended the 2014 Session without passing a balanced budget – a requirement in our Constitution. A special session (passing a clean budget and extending the session) was proposed by the Republican-dominated House. Not good

enough for the socialist Governor and Senate – in an irresponsible, cynical move, the socialists demanded No Medicaid – No Budget. Welcome to government by manufactured crisis. The ramifications of this action will have a serious impact on state agencies and our local governments who depend on the state for additional funds. Each of these organizations cannot complete their budgeting process. Sheriff's deputies, mental health reform, schools, roads, state universities - all in line for modest pay increases are being held hostage. Our teachers have not seen a pay raise in three years. On July 1, 2014, the government effectively stops. We are quite familiar with government shutdowns. In this case, the blame can be laid squarely at the doorstep of the Governor and Senate: ruling on the barest of winning margins in the recent elections. With a 20-20 split in the Senate (the Lieutenant Governor, until recently did not have a tie-breaking vote on budget matters), we will have to suffer through to see who blinks first on this well-documented train wreck. Some prefer to dress up this shameful, morally repulsive tactic

describing it as an impasse.

The Medicare expansion proposal (Obamacare in disguise) provides for the Federal Government to subsidize Virginia with a substantial portion of the additional cost for the first three (5?) years. Ask yourself: where are the Federal dollars coming from? Answer: they are borrowed! (The Federal Government just got Congressional concurrence to increase the debt ceiling limit.) You can be sure we taxpayers will wind up paying for it eventually – wondering why the Virginia bubble has burst.

It's no secret that the current Medicare system in Virginia suffers from as much as 30 percent fraud, waste, and abuse. It badly needs fixing. Do we expect the current Attorney General's Consumer Affairs Department to fix it? Dream on. Let's fix what is broken first – then take stock on what we really need for the substantially less number than the WAG 400,000 health-care denied people. In the meantime – No ObamaCare, No WarnerCare, No HowellCare, and No PlumCare!

Jack Kenny
Reston Republican

Race to Watch - II

To the Editor:

There were a few errors in my letter published in the

Connection of March 5th ["Race to Watch"]. I stated that Barbara Comstock spent \$1.4 on her race and won by less than 52 percent of the vote. She actually spent \$1.4 million and received 50.6 percent of the vote, a margin of only 422 votes.

I also understated Bob Marshall's margin of victory. He won by 495 votes, not close to 400 votes.

Sue Rosenberg
Vienna

BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to mclean@connectionnewspapers.com. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 12

Great Falls Citizens

Association Town Hall Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Great Falls Grange, 9818 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. This meeting will focus on deer management and trails. Come give your opinions on these issues, and on what GFCA should be working on to better the community.

THURSDAY/MARCH 13

Vienna Arts Society Meeting.

10 a.m. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Nationally known expressionist artist, Chica Brunsvold, NWS, AWS, will give a demonstration on painting in watercolor on Yupo, she will pull images out of her non-objective beginnings in a process she calls "play, observe, study and discover." www.ViennaArtsSociety.org 703-319-3971.

TUESDAY/MARCH 18

Providence District

Supervisor Linda Smyth, School Board Member Patty Reed, and the county and schools budget staffs will discuss the FY 2015 Advertised Budget. The meeting will be held in Room 110 of the Dunn Loring Administrative Center, 2334 Gallows Road, Dunn Loring starting at 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY/MARCH 19

Vienna Photographic Society

Meeting. 7:30 p.m. Oakton Elementary School, 3000 Chain Bridge Rd., Oakton. Karen Messick will judge the March 19 competition of the Vienna Photographic Society ("VPS"), which focuses on close-ups. The competition is open to anyone who is a paid member of VPS on the evening of the judging. www.vpsva.org

McLean CONNECTION

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WEEK IN MCLEAN

Two Die in Merrifield Area Crash

Around 1:50 a.m., on Monday, Feb. 3, a police officer attempted to stop the driver of a 1999 Dodge Neon, for suspicion of driving while intoxicated. The Neon was west bound on Hilltop Road when it attempted to flee. The Neon lost control near the intersection with Old Lee Highway and ran off the road, striking a tree.

The driver and one passenger were pronounced dead at the scene and a second passenger was transported to a local hospital with life-threatening injuries.

Police have identified the driver involved in this crash as 27-year-old Eduin Joel Galeas Mejia of Fairfax, and the deceased passenger as 20-year-old Orlin Misael Nolasco Hernandez of Fairfax. Family members assisted police in making identification.

While the crash remains under investigation, according to the police report, it does appear that alcohol and speed are factors in the crash.

The Claude Moore Colonial Farm to Open Redesigned Book Shop

Local museum and working Farm's Book Shop has been completely renovated and reorganized with all new books. Grand Opening will be held on Wednesday, March 19, and the book shop will be open Wednes-

days-Saturdays, 12-7 p.m. at The Claude Moore Colonial Farm, 6310 Georgetown Pike, McLean.

Browse more than 15,000 titles in 85 categories. Books organized for history lovers, travelers, gardeners, mystery and romance readers, plus cooks, kids and more. Also first editions and some rare and special volumes. WWII first theme of specialty themes planned throughout year. Books are 85 percent hard cover with average price of \$1-\$2 each. Standard paperbacks five for \$1. Also browse selection of donated CDs, DVDs, videos, LPs and tapes. Free parking and complimentary coffee. Cash, checks and credit cards accepted. For weekly Book Shop updates visit www.1771.org and register for e-mail notification. Book Shop proceeds benefit local living history museum and National Park.

McLean & Great Falls Celebrate Virginia to Meet March 24

McLean & Great Falls Celebrate Virginia will meet Monday, March 24, at 5:30 p.m. at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. The group will be discussing plans for their Aug. 24, 2014 event commemorating the bicentennial of the burning of the nation's Capitol during the War of 1812. If interested in taking part in the organization and its upcoming event please contact Carole Herrick at 703-356-8223.



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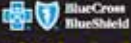
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Braunstein Retiring from CSB

He led agency through transformation, advocated for mental health services.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS
THE CONNECTION

George Braunstein said he entered the field of mental health services almost accidentally. “My first college degree was in history and education. I was going to be a high school history teacher,” Braunstein said.

His plans changed after finishing with the Coast Guard during the Vietnam War, and there weren’t as many teaching jobs available as he expected.

“I had always had a desire to do some form of public service. Somebody suggested, why don’t you try nursing? I didn’t think I had any aptitude for anything to do with the medical field, but I tried it, and I did fairly well,” Braunstein said.

Braunstein’s first job was working as a nurse in a multi-county inpatient mental health facility in Wisconsin, eventually becoming the administrator and manager in 1986.

“I ended up eventually running the place because I had some previous management experiences,” he said.

Now, Braunstein is retiring from his role as executive director of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, a public agency that provides services for members of the community with mental illness, substance use disorders, and intellectual disabilities.

Since becoming CSB’s director in 2008, colleagues say Braunstein has worked tirelessly to inform the public of the need for community mental health services.

“George is a master at being able to succinctly describe for news reporters and for the general public the big picture and the importance of what we do at the Community Services Board and how important these services are for the most vulnerable people in our local community,” said Belinda Buescher, communications director for the CSB.

Braunstein’s ability to remain calm and focused in stressful times was evident in November 2013, when Buescher said the unfortunate Creigh Deeds tragedy gave Braunstein the opportunity to put things in perspective for reporters and the community.

“He was able to remind people that individuals with serious mental illness are far more likely to wind up being victims of violent crime, rather than perpetrators, and to remind people about the importance of

putting in place community services that can help people before they reach a crisis stage,” Buescher said. “He was able to put an issue like the importance of having emergency psychiatric hospital beds, which is important, into perspective and remind people that it is not the only solution to our problems with not having sufficient services for people with mental illness.”

According to Jane Woods, a board member of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, Braunstein has worked tirelessly with staff on transforming the mindset of the agency and making the client the center of services.

“Even compared to some other surrounding localities, Fairfax for the most part gets what is important about serving these very vulnerable people.”

— George Braunstein

“The essence of the changes we’ve done in Fairfax in the last five years is creating an environment that supports getting people who are homeless into housing, providing a wrap-around service for those people, providing more job training, and providing more integrated health care, so that people who haven’t been to a primary care doctor for years can get primary care services,” Braunstein said.

Braunstein’s most satisfying experience at CSB has been working with what he describes as dedicated, skilled and caring staff and providers.

“The Fairfax providers are so skilled and so effective. They deal with some of the most challenging situations because of where we are in the greater D.C. area. We have a lot of folks with very complex problems, a combination of urban and suburban issues, and the staff is just fantastic to work with, both in administration and the service delivery areas,” he said.

According to Braunstein, government officials like Chairman Sharon Bulova under-



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

George Braunstein is retiring from his position of executive director at the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

stand the need for local funding for mental health services.

“Not all local government officials get it. This is really unique here. Even compared to some other surrounding localities, Fairfax for the most part gets what is important about serving these very vulnerable people,” Braunstein said. “It’s really rare for someone in the public sector to find local government officials who understand.”

Bulova presented Braunstein with a proclamation honoring his contributions to the CSB, and declared Feb. 27, 2014 to be George Braunstein day in Fairfax County.

According to Bulova’s proclamation, Braunstein “has steered the CSB through a major organizational transformation, pioneered nationally recognized best practices throughout the service system, and advocated with courage, skill and tenacity for services to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in our community.”

Braunstein said a frustrating part of working in the mental health field has been challenging the idea that problems such as drug and alcohol addiction are a weakness of character.

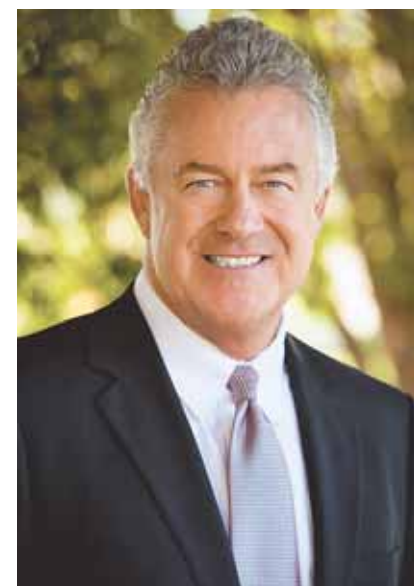
“Probably the most difficult part of working in the mental health field is that it has taken an awful long time even making short strides so that people understand the legitimacy of the services that we do, and see it as equally valid as any other services in the health care field,” he said.

Mary Ann Bergeron, the executive director of the Virginia Association of Community Services Board, said Braunstein has been a great leader ever since moving to Virginia in 2000.

“He is a master at taking very complex issues, and being able to identify solutions to an issue,” Bergeron said. “He’s been a wonderful source of inspiration.”

Braunstein’s colleagues say his leadership and guidance will be missed as he retires.

“George was at the helm of the CSB’s transformation from a siloed system that offered specific services for certain diagnoses into an integrated system based that supports the whole person based upon the level of care he or she needs, with a focus on helping all individuals gain access to cross-cutting services such as primary care, housing, employment and peer supports,” said Jeannie Cummins, investment and development manager at the CSB.



Stephan Quinn Cassaday

Stephan Quinn Cassaday Named Barron’s No. 1 Financial Advisor in Virginia

Cassaday & Company, Inc. announced that Barron’s, a leading financial publication, named Stephan Quinn Cassaday, CFP, CFS as the number one financial advisor in the state of Virginia on its annual list of America’s Top 1,200 Financial Advisors: 2014 State by State. This list includes both independent advisory firms and large wirehouses. Previously, Stephan Quinn Cassaday was ranked fourth from 2010-2013. He was also ranked in 2009.

The list recognizes advisors who demonstrate remarkable professionalism, performance, outstanding client service, and community involvement. To compile its annual list, Barron’s uses data provided by over 4,000 of the nation’s most productive advisors. Barron’s list takes a number of criteria into account including assets under management, revenue produced by the firm, regulatory records, quality of the practice and philanthropic work.

“Lists such as ‘Barron’s Top 1,200 Financial Advisors’ help provide individuals with important data and baselines to help them choose the right financial advisor,” said Stephan Quinn Cassaday, CFP, CFS, President and Founder of Cassaday & Company, Inc. “While I am proud of this achievement, I know that the firm would not be where it is today without the excellent work of my colleagues and the continued support of our clients.”

“This award represents twenty years of hard work and dedication to providing our clients with objective guidance and impartial advice. Being named the #1 advisor in Virginia is a huge milestone not only for Steve but for the entire firm,” said Allison Felix, Cassaday & Company, Inc.’s Chief Operating Officer.

For more information, please visit www.cassaday.com or call 703-506-8200.

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Demands Dictate the Debt

FROM PAGE 4

ity to borrow money to construct everything from schools to a new aquatics center at Long Bridge Park. Supporters of the county's efforts say the bond rating agencies approve because Arlington has an Aaa/AAA/AAA credit rating. Arlington is one of the few jurisdictions in America to have a triple-triple A credit rating, a distinction it's held for 13 consecutive years.

"You could make a reasonable argument, I think, that we have got a number of different programs doing the same things sometimes and you could probably streamline some things in Arlington. There's no doubt about that," said Robert Hynes, a member of the Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission. "But I also do not think there's a lot of great waste in the money they spend. They spend it well I think."

ONE POTENTIAL drawback for local governments deciding to take on more debt is the risk of violating self-imposed debt limits. In Alexandria, for example, city leaders are trying to find a way to finance a new Metro station at Potomac Yard. Last year, members of the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee sounded the alarm that the city was actually on track to violate its debt ceiling even without calculating the massive borrowing that would be needed to finance the Metro station, which could

be anywhere from \$200 million to \$400 million. That means borrowing money to build the station would violate the city's debt policy at least temporarily.

"The idea was, I think, to make an exception that would be paid down and then go back to the guidelines — in other words break the guidelines," said James Bulter, former chairman of the Alexandria Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee. "But I believe that they should carefully examine their options because the debt policy has a real meaning, and it should be followed if at all possible."

Local governments are not alone in trying to borrow money to balance the books. Last year, the commonwealth of Virginia's total debt increased to \$37.3 billion, an increase of \$1.1 billion, or 3.2 percent. According to a study by the nonpartisan State Budget Solutions, that means each private sector worker in Virginia has a state debt burden of more than \$21,000. And the federal government problems with debt are well known.

"My own personal debt concerns me, so certainly the debt of my county does as well," said Ed Batten, a member of the Lee District Budget Advisory Group. "But when I look at what the demands are in this county, the human demands as well as what's going on in the economy, I think that what we are doing is the best we can do given the circumstances."

Suicide Prevention

FROM PAGE 4

sion as normal adolescent turmoil," said Mike Parker, director of Student Services at Thoreau Middle School in Vienna, noting that depression appears to be occurring at a much earlier age, and is a leading risk factor for suicide. "In addition, self-injury has become a growing problem."

In an effort to "proactively address these issues," Thoreau sent a letter to parents in January informing them that the school would offer depression screening to all eighth grade students in February.

The screenings were free, voluntary and confidential, a way to assess whether students have symptoms consistent with depression.

The effort to address student stress and prevent teen suicides is a priority for Fairfax County school, according to Ryan McElveen, one of three at-large members of the FCPS school board. In an interview Tuesday, McElveen said that Superintendent Karen Garza is currently working with staff to craft an action plan to address student stress and suicide prevention.

"This plan will involve collaboration with county agencies and include various new strategies, training sessions, and reporting systems.

I believe that the Board will fully support these efforts once a finalized plan has been crafted," McElveen said.

One educational tool FCPS currently uses is Youth ACT- Signs of Suicide (SOS), a depression awareness and suicide prevention program. Its primary objectives are to educate teens that depression is a treatable illness and to equip them with techniques to respond to a potential suicide in a friend or family member. The program includes a depression and suicide screening component and is available for middle and high school aged youth.

FCPS is also in the process of forming a Youth Suicide Review Team to review incidences of suicide in the county, analyze trends, and recommend to the Board of Supervisors programmatic and policy solutions to prevent future suicides.

SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS, such as the one hosted by Thoreau's PTA and facilitated by Robbins, are also offered at a number of schools throughout the county.

McElveen added that students should always feel free to come to school staff or parents with concerns about their classmates.

"Students need to know that we're all in this together as a community, and the school system has the resources to support them. If they are feeling stressed, they should talk with their teachers and counselors and find better ways to strike the important balance between school, extracurriculars, social life and family life," he said.



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Youth art exhibition visitors admire a wall lined with colorful paper figures.



Amabell Rouhani, 11, of Spring Hill Elementary stands in front of her painting of her family trip to Kings Dominion Adventure Park.

Youth Art on Display

BY SYDNEY KASHIWAGI
THE CONNECTION

Over three decades ago the McLean Project for the Arts began lining its gallery walls with artwork from the McLean youth and 33 years later, the tradition has continued on as the gallery's annual Youth Art Show. Saturday marked the opening reception of the youth art exhibition at the McLean Community Center that featured the artwork of hundreds of students from eight McLean elementary schools.

"I'm always so impressed at the quality of the art," said MPA's Executive Director Nancy Perry who has helped coordinate the annual Youth Art Show for 11 years. "The expression of the younger children is so free and they're willing to experiment."

Students, parents and teachers filled the exhibition room, slowly making their way past the walls covered with bright paint-

ings, animated clay sculptures, neon print collages and paper figures folded into faces and animals.

Amabell Rouhani, 11, a sixth grade student from Spring Hill Elementary and second-time Youth Art Show participant, was eager to show off her painting of her family trip to Kings Dominion Amusement Park.

Rouhani credits her art teacher Carolyn Gore-Ashe, a Spring Hill teacher of 10 years, for helping her and her classmates think of creative ideas to make their artwork. "I was happy that she found something special in mine," said Rouhani. For an hour once a week, Rouhani and her classmates meet with Ashe who shows them pictures of different styles of artwork, and how to apply the best techniques to create their work.

"It's very exciting that students have access to a professional gallery," said Ashe. "It helps teach children how to look around and see the world, and it gives them a sense of place."

33rd annual McLean Project for the Arts Youth Art Show kicks off with a crowd.

PHOTOS BY SYDNEY KASHIWAGI/THE CONNECTION

But even though art is a core discipline at Fairfax County public schools, MPA Executive Director Power still thinks that art needs more recognition in education. In addition to providing after school art workshops for students and bringing in professional artists into classrooms to talk to students about their work, MPA tailors what students are learning in the classroom to its exhibitions. This year, the gallery featured an exhibition where artists used pieces of recycled scrap to make art, and aligned the exhibit with what students were learning in the classroom about science, technology, engineering and mathematics. "You can integrate the arts with any subject," said Power.

Robert Fuqua, principal of Chesterbrook Elementary says that art can play an integral part in a student's academic development. "Art is a part of academic curriculum," said Fuqua. "Learners have different gifts and it's our responsibility to bring them out." A Chesterbrook mother of an art exhibit participant Tracie Becker, said that art class was a great outlet for her daughter this year, and that she hopes the Fairfax



Youth art exhibition visitors look at paintings by elementary school students.

County budget will continue to make the arts a priority in the county's education.

The Elementary School Artist exhibition will run until March 15, and the Middle and High School Artist exhibition will run from March 20 through April 5.



Youth art exhibition visitors examine clay sculpture figures at the center of the gallery.



Visitors of the Youth art exhibition enjoy drawings from elementary school students.

FAITH

Faith Notes are for announcements and events in the faith community. Send to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday.

Faith and Public Policy Breakfast. Everyone is invited Saturday, March 15 to hear a panel of Fairfax County leaders discuss issues around the theme "Caring for the Vulnerable in an Affluent County - Policy and Program Challenges." The session will be moderated by Jane Edmondson, Chief of Staff for Dranesville Supervisor John Faust, and will include Kerrie Wilson, CEO of Cornerstones which supports Northern Virginia people in need; Nannette Bowler, Director of the Fairfax County Department of Family Services; and Dr. Gerald Poje, Vice-Chair of the Fairfax County Human Services Council. The free continental breakfast begins at 8:30 with the discussion addressing how faith communities can have an impact ending at 10:30. It will be held at Lewinsville Presbyterian Church, 1724 Chain Bridge Road in McLean. Contact Ray

Martin for details, email martinrs@aol.com, phone 703-556-0123.

A special Lenten program will be offered at Great Falls United Methodist Church 10100 Georgetown Pike on Saturday, March 15, 9-11:30 a.m. Details and questions 703-759-3705

The Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA) offers a wide variety of support groups for those with emotional, social, and physical challenges. www.jssa.org/growth-learning.

HAVEN of Northern Virginia offers a variety of free bereavement support groups, meeting on a weekly basis. 703-941-7000 or www.havenofnova.org.

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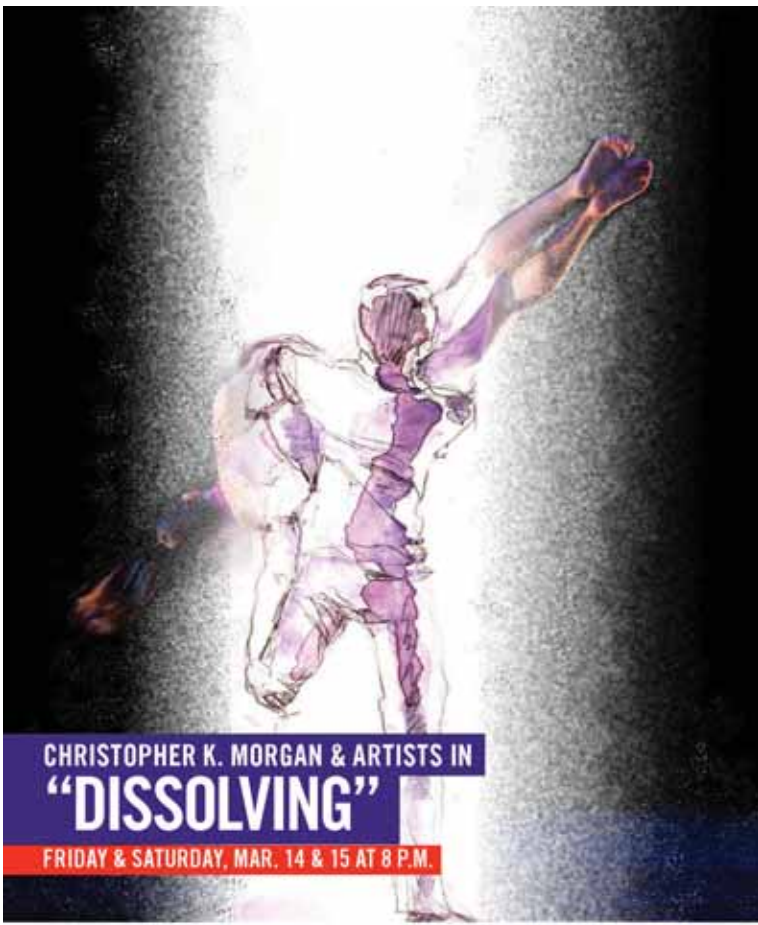
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Public Hearing on the McLean Community Center's FY 2016 Programs
Wednesday, March 26, at 7:30 p.m.

The Governing Board of the McLean Community Center is **seeking input from residents** of Dranesville Small District 1A at its Public Hearing on Programs for FY 2016, which runs July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

The Board is interested in hearing residents' ideas for classes, community events, theatre programs, exhibits, tours and youth and teen activities.

If you would like to speak at the hearing, call the Center to have your name placed on the speakers' list. You also may submit comments in writing to: george.sachs@fairfaxcounty.gov


The McLean Community Center
 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean VA 22101
 703-790-0123/TTY: 711
www.mcleancenter.org

School Board members Ilryong Moon, Janey Strauss and Ryan McIlveen with Wonhee Kang and Mark Sherwin.



Casino Night at Ritz-Carlton for Boy and Girls Clubs

Boys and Girls Club of Greater Washington, Fairfax Region runs clubs that serve children and teens in Mount Vernon and Falls Church, and held its inaugural Casino Night at the Ritz-Carlton Tysons on Friday, March 7. About 200 attended and enjoyed gam-

ing, good food, music and live and silent auctions for a good cause.

The mission of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Washington is to help boys and girls of all backgrounds, especially those who need the most, build confidence, develop character and acquire the skills needed to become productive, civic-minded and responsible adults.



Mark Sherwin with George Ross, executive vice president and senior counsel for the Trump Organization, and father of Boys and Girls Club Board member Nanci Adams. George helps with the live auction, including a visit to Trump studios. Ross has been featured on the hit NBC reality TV competition, The Apprentice, along side Donald Trump.



Daphne Benbow with Nanci Adams, center of State Farm, with Walter Adams of College Moving and Ed Asher of Northrop Grumman in the background.



Ed Asher of Northrop Grumman and John Ruff of Booz Allen Hamilton.



Wonhee Kang, Director of the Boys & Girls Club Fairfax Region, Catelyn Thurman, Robin Thurman and Debrajean Overholt.



Mike Leone, The Council for Professional Recognition.

ENTERTAINMENT

Superman Comes to McLean

Theater Unspeakable presents 'Superman 2050' at Alden Theatre.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

That iconic comic-book super-hero Superman is coming to the McLean Community Center. He is ready to save the day from his foe Lex Luther. Superman and the gang will be live and in person as performed by Theatre Unspeakable in the new "Superman 2050."

"The moment I saw 'Superman 2050' at a conference in Philadelphia last year I knew I had to book them for the Alden. The show is just so unique," said Kathleen Herr, director of Youth Programs, Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center.

Staging the Superman adventure as live theater seems rather unlikely. Now picture seven actors performing a Superman adventure on a stage that is just 3-by-7 feet of space and about two feet in the air. This is the inspired theatrical imagination behind the production that Chicago's inventive Theatre Unspeakable is bringing to the Alden.

According to Marc Frost, Artistic Director, "Theater Unspeakable is dedicated to telling stories using the entire body, mind, heart and soul...combining elements of movement, dance, mime, circus and clown."

"We want to awaken our audiences' imagination as Superman battles the likes of Lex Luther and flies about the tiny stage. We want to provoke them into coming along with us in our story set in a fictional 2050 Metropolis," said Frost. All of this while the actors challenge themselves to bring a comic book adventure to life.

The hour-long show "will bring a fresh, choreographed fun way to tell the Superman story. There



PHOTO COURTESY OF THEATER UNSPEAKABLE.

The Theater Unspeakable cast in 'Superman 2050.'

Where and When

"Superman 2050" at the Alden Theatre, McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Road, McLean. Performance Saturday, March 22 at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$20/\$15 MCC district residents. Call 703-790-0123 or visit: www.mcleancenter.org

will be plenty of movement on the tiny space including Superman flying," said Frost. It is meant for all ages.

"Superman 2050" tells the story of the battle for the future of Metropolis and a high-speed rail network. It will be live action anime; a comic book come alive into three-dimensions as the cast uses their bodies, lots of movement and their voices to create props, scenes, and sound effects.

So get ready. The show will bring the Superman you remember from your childhood, with some new twists for you and children of all ages. He will always be "faster than a speeding bullet, more powerful than a locomotive, and able to leap tall buildings in a single bound."

"Come prepared to laugh and be amazed!" added Herr. Always remember, don't mess with Superman or his cape. Just join the fun and bring your childhood along with you.

Send announcements to vienna@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Friday for the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

CALENDAR

FRIDAY/ MARCH 14

Casino Night & Silent Auction. 7 p.m., The Grand Atrium, 2236 Gallows Road, Vienna. James Madison HS (JMHS) Athletic Booster Club hosts its 8th Annual Casino Night & Silent Auction. Advance: \$55, At the door: \$65. www.warhawkssports.org or jmhsathleticbooster@gmail.com.

SATURDAY/MARCH 15

Ballroom Dance. 8-11:30 p.m., Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. DJ music from Craig Bukowski playing favorite dance tunes from the 1930s to today. \$15. 703-759-2685 or www.colvinrun.org.

Model Trains. 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. 1-5 p.m. See and hear model trolleys and steam and diesel trains plus Thomas and some of his friends in the Historic Vienna Train Station along the W&OD trail just past the Caboose. The layout reflects the mountainous terrain and towns of Western North Carolina with award winning structures. Hosted by the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders. www.nvmr.org.

Special Lenten Program. 9-11:30 a.m. Great Falls United Methodist Church 10100 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Details and questions 703-759-3705.

"Lullabies From Around the World." 4:30 p.m. Vienna Baptist Church, 541 Marshall Road SW, Vienna. Vienna Choral Society sings "Lullabies From Around The World." Special guests will include the Mosby Woods Mustang Chorus, a story teller, and a student accompanist on violin. Kids 14 and under attend free. Tickets at www.viennachoralsociety.org and at the door.

THURSDAY/MARCH 20

William Bird at the Great Falls Library. Noon to 1:30 p.m., Great Falls Public Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. The Great Falls Writer's Group will host William Bird, curator of the Division of Political History at the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian, for a light luncheon and forum. 703-757-8560.

Tom Principato Band. 8 p.m., The Barns at Wolf Trap, 1635 Trap Road, Vienna. The Tom Principato Band features everything from harmonica-heavy rock to reggae and funk infused tracks, as well as a locally inspired instrumental song, "22042 Falls Church, Virginia." \$25. 1.877.WOLFTRAP or wolftrap.org.

SATURDAY/MARCH 22

Celebrate the Cherry Blossom

Festival. 1-3 p.m. Colvin Run Mill, 10017 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Taste the many styles beyond what is used in the Japanese tea ceremony in this fascinating tasting. Shade grown, roasted, twig style, are just a few examples. Experience Japanese teas and tea treats beyond the traditional and take home tea samples including a Cherry Blossom Blend. Advance reservations and payment (\$30 each) required through the Mill at 703-759-2771.

SUNDAY/MARCH 23

Jump for Joy! 2-4 p.m. Providence Baptist Church, 8980 Brook Road, McLean. A community event for elementary age children. Pre-school children accompanied by parents are also welcome. The event will involve giant inflatables, the Providence House of Bounce, inside their gym.

Music from Oberlin at Oakton. 7:30 p.m. 2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton. Music from Oberlin at Oakton hosts current Oberlin Conservatory students three times a year to provide top-notch music to the local community. In its 14th season, this program will feature two pianists, a violinist, clarinetist, and a bassoonist. Free admission. 703-281-4230.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 17



McLean
Community
Center
The Center of It All



Here's What's Happening at MCC

Studio Rep "Code 20: Proceed to Improv"

Thursday, March 13, 7-9 p.m.
Old Firehouse Teen Center
Free admission



Christopher K. Morgan & Artists Contemporary Dance Co. "Dissolving"

Fri & Sat, March 14-15, 8 p.m.
\$27/\$18 MCC district residents

Lifetime Learning Coffee & Conversation

Friday, March 21, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Free admission

5th & 6th Grader Party Island Sensations

Friday, March 21, 7-9 p.m.
\$30/\$20 MCC district residents

UnRuly TheatRe

Friday, March 21, 7-9 p.m.
Old Firehouse Teen Center
Free Admission

Theatre Unspeakable presents "Superman 2050"

Saturday, March 22, 8 p.m.
\$20/\$15 MCC district residents

MCC Governing Board Public Hearing on Programs

Wednesday, March 26, 7:30 p.m.

An Alden Theatre Production "Miss Nelson is Missing"

Sat. & Sun, March 29-30 &
April 5-6, 3 p.m.
\$10/\$8 MCC district residents

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www.mcleancenter.org
Home of the Alden Theatre
www.aldentheatre.org

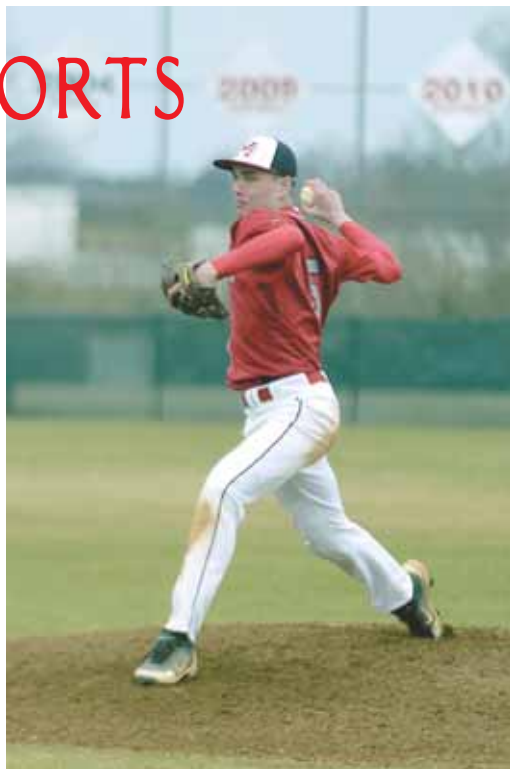


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SPORTS

Joey Sullivan, seen last season, enters his senior year as McLean's top pitcher.



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO



PHOTO BY JON ROETMAN
John Dowling enters his first season as head coach of the McLean baseball program.

Dowling Enters First Season as McLean Head Baseball Coach

Virginia Tech-Bound Sullivan is Highlanders' Top Pitcher.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Members of the McLean baseball team are still getting used to John Dowling's coaching methods, which included an exercise referred to as "burpees" at the end of a recent practice. But if what Dowling did at his previous job is any indication of his abilities, it won't be long before his methods translate to success for the Highlanders.

Dowling, 30, enters his first season as McLean head baseball coach. He spent the previous two seasons at Lee High School in Springfield, where he took a struggling program within one win of a regional tournament appearance in 2013 after defeating perennial power West Springfield in the Patriot District tournament.

"He's really organized in everything he does," McLean senior pitcher Joey Sullivan said. "A lot of us are trying to get used to it. Some of the new drills that we've learned ... are new drills that I've never seen in my life and I've been playing the game for 12 years. They seem to work and I hope they work for us in the spring."

After coaching a Lee program with limited depth, Dowling takes over a McLean program with greater numbers. Sullivan, a three-year varsity player who signed with Virginia Tech, is the Highlanders' staff ace. The right-hander's fastball touches the low 90s.

"Joey's a really competitive kid," Dowling said. "He, on the mound, will dictate the pace of the game. He's not scared of the moment — he wants the moment to be his. I learned a lot by going to basketball games and just watching him play basketball. He won the [Conference 6] Defensive Player of the Year [award]. I think that right there speaks a lot to a kid's effort on the floor."

Sullivan teams with junior catcher Caleb Beatty to form what Sullivan called "the best battery out there."

Beatty is in his third year on the varsity and second as starting catcher. He was the team's starting designated hitter as a freshman.

"He doesn't let much get by him, ever," Sullivan said. "He stops pretty much anything I'll throw — high, low, in the dirt, inside, outside. And he can also stroke the [heck] out of the ball, too."

Dowling said Beatty and Sullivan lift the team's energy level.

"We're extremely fortunate to have Caleb," Dowling said. "[He is] a very, very energetic player and to have him at such a critical position is a huge boost to our team as a whole. He and Joey really do set the energy for the team."

Dowling said he's waiting for another pitcher to establish himself as the team's No. 2 starter. Senior right-handers Colin Morse and Jesse Jones, junior lefty Frank Minamino, sophomore left-hander Jon Clines, and Beatty are candidates.

Offensively, sophomore outfielder Matt Collins, who started as a freshman, is one of the team's top hitters.

"I'm very excited to watch Matt Collins play baseball for the next three years," Dowling said. "... Offensively, the sky is the limit for Matt. He could light the world on fire this year."

McLean is scheduled to open the season on the road against rival Langley at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, March 21. The Highlanders' home opener is March 28 against Marshall.

While Dowling is still learning about his players' abilities, he has high hopes for his first season with the Highlanders.

"It's been a little difficult gauging [expectations], not knowing the players, the personnel extremely well," Dowling said. "... But with that said, what are you playing for if you're not looking to play [in the state tournament] at Robinson in June?"

Sullivan also has high expectations.

"We should definitely be in the district championship, in my opinion," he said. "We definitely have the talent to be there. When you get to the district championship, anything happens, but we want to be in the game for sure and put ourselves in a spot to get a good seed in regionals and hopefully go far in regionals."



Winning Championship, Honors

The McLean fifth grade girls' basketball team won the Division 2 championship with a 36-25 victory over Gainesville on Saturday at Liberty Middle School in Centreville.

From left, bottom row, Eric Reed, assistant coach, of McLean; Zoraida Icabcaceta of Falls Church, Chloe Reed of McLean, Heather Hughes of McLean, Evelina Swigart of McLean, Sela Scheinman of McLean.

From left, top row: Tournament MVP Kendall Jones of McLean, Season MVP Sophie Smith of McLean, Avery Richardson of McLean, Miranda Rennert of McLean and Coach Brian McNicoll of Alexandria.



Tim Higgins

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Great Falls Resident Wins Conference Championship with MIT

Tim Higgins of Great Falls is a member of the 2013 – 2014 New England Men's and Women's Conference (NEWMAC) championship basketball team. Higgins, a freshman, plays for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) men's basketball team. After winning four games and losing four games during February, MIT went on a roll and swept the

conference playoffs beating last year's champion WPI in a semifinal game, and outlasting Springfield College in the championship game. With the NEWMAC conference win, the MIT Engineers received an automatic bid to the NCAA basketball tournament. Tim attended and played basketball for Paul VI high school in Fairfax and was part of their 2012 undefeated team.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 15

TUESDAY/MARCH 25

Annual Children's Printmaking Workshop. 4-5 p.m. Patrick Henry Library, 101 Maple Ave. E, Vienna. A dozen members of the Vienna Arts Society will assist children ages 7 - 12 as they create original prints, to include printing a fish, making relief prints and mono-prints, etc. Free. Registration required by contacting the Children's Librarian at 703-938-0405.

SUNDAY/MARCH 30

"Capitol Steps" at James Madison High School. 4 p.m., James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Dr, Vienna. Capitol Steps, the quick witted multi-faceted congressional staffers, will be performing their popular fast-paced musical political satire live. \$30. jmhscapsteps@gmail.com.

ONGOING

Straight Ahead Jazz. 8 p.m., at the Maplewood Grill, 132 Branch Road, Vienna. Every Monday drummer Karl Anthony hosts a night of straight ahead jazz featuring guest musicians and open to sit-in musicians. www.maplewoodgrill.com.


Personalized ebook/e-Reader Instruction. Dolley Madison Library, 1244 Oak Ridge Ave., McLean. Learn about your e-reader and downloading eBooks; event continues through March 31.

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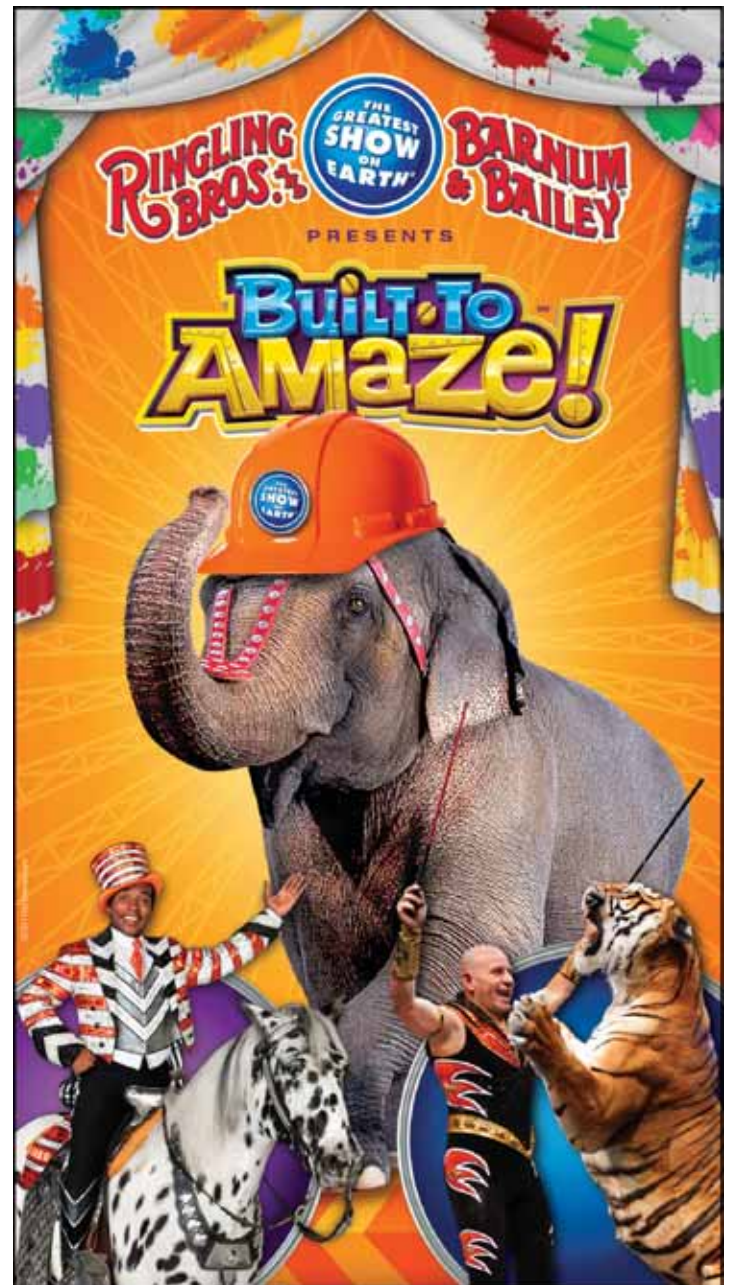
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Happy St. Catrick's Day!

You've heard about St. Patrick who drove the snakes out of Ireland, but did you know about St. Catrick, who saved the kittens out of shelters? Now's your chance to find out! Join Lost Dog & Cat Rescue Foundation for a St. Catrick's Day celebration, and learn how you can help save lives.

- ☘ Foster Crew Members will answer questions about the most important thing you can do to help.
- ☘ Adoption Center Coordinators will provide information about volunteering at PetSmart centers.
- ☘ Our Transport Coordinator will explain how you can help with little more than some time and a car.



Charlie, delivered by St. Catrick, is available for adoption

Join us at Lost Dog Café-McLean
Saturday, March 15, 3-7 p.m. Enjoy snacks & soft drinks
while learning how you can help.
1690 Anderson Road, McLean (near Safeway)
www.lostdogandcatrescue.org



Whew!



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

Originally, this column was to be a discussion about the communication process between my doctor and this patient. Specifically, the time lag between when tests are performed/completed and when those results are communicated to the doctor who in turn – per this patient's request, e-mails them to me. In the olden days, results were most likely offered up in person; in the post-olden days, more likely a phone call was made; presently, at least in my experience, results most likely will be e-mailed. I imagine an enduring problem for the patient – during all three “days,” has been the time waiting for test results and hearing about them from your doctor. Excruciating is one of the most accurate characterizations of that delay, combined with an unhealthy dose of helplessness. Eventually, if you live long enough, you sort of become accustomed to the process and learn to roll with the punches, both figuratively and literally. Nevertheless, the patience and experience you learn can't totally stop the rampant speculation that keeps you up at night and sleepy during the day.

All of this being said and mostly internalized and assimilated into my terminal-patient brain, unfortunately doesn't prevent the process from negatively impacting your waiting-for-test-results-from-your-doctor compartment where you've (at least where I have) attempted to compartmentalize this process so that it doesn't adversely impact every other psychological compartment I've previously constructed. But I may have learned my lesson this time. The reason being that even though I received an e-mail from my oncologist two days after my CT Scan was completed, it turned out to be sort of an incomplete/inaccurate assessment: “Some better, some worse. I'll explain more on Friday,” (the date of my next infusion and coincidentally, the date of our next face-to-face appointment, a week later). It seems the Radiologist had compared this recent scan to one I had taken nine months ago and consequently, made some incorrect assumptions – but of course, we didn't know any of this until we saw my doctor; as such, we stressed about the content of the e-mail.

Friday arrived and we went to The Infusion Center where I was hooked up as usual. Within a few minutes, my oncologist walked over to my Barcalounger. Dina immediately whispers: “He's not smiling.” (Reading the facial expressions and body language of your doctor has no doubt become the bane of every patient's existence, especially when dealing with oncologists.) Soon enough though, after my doctor began talking (and explaining the radiologist's mistake), it became clear that my results were quite the opposite of what the original e-mail had indicated. It was not “some better, some worse,” it was Tony-the-Tiger GREAT! news with which I could most definitely live – and for many years, too, he said. To say we were pleasantly surprised might be the understatement of the universe. To say we were over the moon might be a bit more realistic, hyperbole notwithstanding.

So what did I learn? What did my oncologist advise me going forward? To not interpret the delay in the communication process as indicating anything other than the nature of the process; nothing to be taken personally or interpreted in any meaningful way. And even though the news we received was extremely encouraging this time, the process, such as it is, likely continues, and anticipating that news – good, bad or indifferent – is to be delivered in any other way is unrealistic. As difficult as it is for this patient to be patient, in some cases, as I learned this past week, your patience can sometimes be rewarded.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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Van Metre Wins Marketing Awards

Van Metre Homes won eight Silver Awards at the 2014 National Sales and Marketing Awards, hosted by the National Sales and Marketing Council.

Van Metre Homes were honored as Rookie of the Year, Sales Person of the Year, Sales Manager of the Year, Best Direct Mail Program, Best Print Campaign, Best Overall Advertising Campaign, Best Computer Sales Tool, and Best Design Center.

Individuals recognized for outstanding achievement included Omayra Dehring for Rookie of the Year, Ernie Kyger for Sales Person of the Year, and Danny Faulkner for Sales Manager of the Year. Van Metre Homes won for Best Direct Mail Program with their Fashion Week. Their Fresh Campaign won two awards for Best Print Campaign and for Best Overall Advertising Campaign. Van Metre Homes' Hologram won for Best Computer Sales Tool and the Van Metre Design

Studio won for Best Design Center.

Van Metre Companies has constructed more than 16,000 houses and several thousand apartments, as well as office buildings and shopping centers in Northern Virginia. Van Metre communities include their own master-planned developments, as well as neighborhoods in smaller subdivisions and third-party planned communities.

The Van Metre portfolio of new homes includes condominiums, townhomes and

single-family homes designed for first-time and move-up buyers throughout the Northern Virginia suburbs.

Van Metre's exclusive Design Studio, located in Stone Ridge, Va., allows homebuyers to choose their interior finishes and options. Through the Van Metre in-house architecture team, buyers can modify architecture based on a community's design plan and surrounding environments. They are also able to offer customization with Van Metre's Dream Home Portfolio — offering homebuyers an easy path to personal home customization.

Tips to Get Your Home Ready for Spring

With warmer weather just around the corner, it's time to focus on your home.

"Routine home maintenance ensures a healthy home and avoids costly repairs down the road," said Tom Dodd, a consultant at Fred, a home repair division of Case Design/Remodeling, Inc. "Small issues now can become huge headaches later if left untreated." To avoid this, experts recommend that homeowners give their homes a yearly spring maintenance

check-up.

"Some items you can check on your own," said Dan Halpern, another Fred consultant. "Others require an expert to do a complete review."

Have your air conditioning system serviced. "Remember that dirty filters make your air conditioner work harder, increasing energy costs and possibly damaging your equipment," said Dodd. "Check the filters monthly and replace as needed, or at least every three months."

Install a programmable thermostat. "According to Energy Star, a programmable thermostat ... will quickly pay for itself in savings on heating and cooling bills," said Dodd.

Add caulking around windows and doors. "If the gap around a door or window is wider than a nickel, caulk should be reapplied," said Halpern. "Check window-glazing putty, too, which seals glass into the window frame. Also consider adding weather stripping around doors, making sure that you can't see any daylight from inside your home."

Dodd said, "Perform a visual inspection of your roof from the ground. Repairs can be as small as a few shingles to a more extensive damaged area. This is a great place to call in an expert if you think repairs may be needed. It's also a good time to check and repair breaks in the flashing seals around vent stacks and chimneys."

Look for loose or leaky gutters. "Improper drainage can lead to water in the basement or crawl space. Make sure downspouts drain away from the foundation and are clear and free of debris," said Halpern.

Experts also say that spring is the time to put away firewood. It should be stored at least 18 inches off the ground and at least two feet from the home.

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Empty-Nesters Re-invent the Family Home

Built-ins, cleverly articulated interior increase usable space without need to add-on.

BY JOHN BYRD

Sometimes life's second act requires a bold set change. How else are others to know that the featured players have moved on, embracing new beginnings?

Reinvention is after all the quintessential triumph of creativity, and can be a very personal process when the thing reinvented is your home itself.

"Of course, large-scale life changes don't necessarily demand a whole house makeover," recently retired teacher Cindy Borer said. But in the past year, her only son moved out to start a new career and her husband is now traveling less, so the timing was right for discoveries.

BUT TO START AT THE TOP: last spring the Borers had celebrated 20 years residency in their two-story, four-bedroom Colonial-style house in Burke, and were taking stock of what they wanted from the years ahead.

At just over 800 square feet, the home's primary living area had been serviceable enough; even so, the formal dining room and adjacent den on opposite sides of the front facing foyer were hardly ever used and the rear family room was dark and cramped.



By borrowing a mere nine square feet from the dining room, the designers found space for a small mudroom with bench immediately to the right of a side kitchen door.

Evaluating options, Borer considered enlarging a few rear rooms. She also wondered if some of the home's interior walls could be modified in way that would allow for more natural light. What to do?

It was at this juncture that Craig Durosko, founder of Sun Design Remodeling, was called-in to discuss possible space improvement scenarios.

Durosko pointed out that the couple

didn't so much lack square footage as a sensible space plan tailored to how they actually use their home. The existing "center-

SEE EMPTY-NESTERS, PAGE 4

Kitchen Confidential

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

When Allie Mann of Arlington, a designer and senior interior specialist at Case Design/Remodeling, Inc. was tasked with giving the first

From light-filled to dramatic, local designers create dream kitchens.

floor of a McLean, Va., home a face lift, she had to think free-flowing and airy.

"[The] client wanted to focus on making the kitchen feel open and connected to rest of home," said Mann. "[They] needed to have plenty of space to cook and entertain plus lots of storage."

Mann said the homeowner was making a cross-country move and settling in Virginia, so adhering to a strict timeline and budget were critical.

However, near the end of the project, the homeowner wanted to make a change.

"At nearly 85 percent job completion, client decided they wanted to completely remove the wall between the kitchen and family room. In the original design, we partially removed the wall," said Mann. "This meant a shift and redirection of scope, additional



PHOTO COURTESY NICELY DONE KITCHENS

A vertical, glass subway tile backsplash adds a dramatic flair to this kitchen by Nicely Done Kitchens.

engineering [because] the remaining portion of the wall housed a three-story fireplace, relocation of cabinets had already been installed and modifications to countertops. And still deliver a project close to on

time."

The finished kitchen is a light-filled space with cabinets by Crystal Cabinetry, honed Vermont Marble countertops and appliances

SEE KITCHEN, PAGE 4

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Empty-Nesters Re-invent the Family Home

FROM PAGE 3

hall” configuration defined rooms were consistent with tradition, yet were functionally underutilized most of the time. This accounted for daily traffic patterns that didn’t work as well as they might, and a nagging sense that the entire first floor was space-restricted.

On a second subject: the mid-house floor-to-ceiling bearing wall dividing the front and rear sections of the house could be completely deleted by installing concealed vertical supports at strategic intervals, Durokso said. Such a move would dramatically increase natural light, creating the floor space needed for an alternative layout more appropriate for both daily use and entertainment.

“On the first visit Craig pretty much solved our space plan problem,” Borer said. “From this point on, I was mainly to think about the interior design details.”

So Borer’s meeting with Jon Benson, the makeover’s lead designer, proved a revelation from the start.

A veteran home remodeling specialist as well as a nationally recognized furniture designer, Benson’s input shaped a floor plan focused on personal requirements in which custom built-ins eliminate unneeded walls while sharply improving both room function and interior design integrity.

To create a more functional relationship between the kitchen and the dining room, for instance, the designer replaced an interior pantry with a 27.5-square-foot food preparation surface and dining counter that serves both rooms equally.

By borrowing a mere nine square feet from the dining room, Benson also found space for a small mudroom with bench immediately to the right of the side entrance to the kitchen.

Re-situating the front hall closet to the right of the front door not only widened the front foyer but also created dramatic front-to-back sight lines that make the entire house seem much larger.

Measured in square feet, the changes are small. Yet such revisions liberate the first level circulation plan, re-organizing the home’s primary living area into rooms that are both interactive and articulated.

To visually differentiate the front-facing library from the family room, the designer converted existing overhead beams into an elegant tray ceiling supported by Craftsman-style piers.

A floor-to-ceiling bookcase—also a Benson original—provides an elegant yet useful wall for the new reading room. The new family room fireplace hearth was custom-designed to accommodate the plasma TV that now hangs above it.

Additional interior design decisions emerged from Borer’s collaboration with



PHOTOS BY BRYAN BURRIS PHOTOGRAPHY

To differentiate the front-facing library from the family room visually, Sun Design converted existing overhead beams into an elegant tray ceiling supported by Craftsman-style piers.



The new transitional-style interior employs decorative elements to create distinctive use-zones in an open floor plan.

Sun Design’s Jessica Page.

“Jessica helped me discover the design style I’d been looking for,” Borer said. “She opened up a lot of resources. Ideas that I liked were added to a project scrapbook which we both referenced regularly to keep the decision process on track.”

As space plan modifications proceeded, Borer’s research revealed a strong personal attraction to transitional-style interior design, a contemporary concept that seeks to reconcile traditional architecture with the spatial freedom of an open floor plan.

On this score, Benson’s original floorplan sketch anticipated the use of loveseats as



Transitional interior design style seeks to reconcile traditional architecture with the spatial freedom of an open floor plan.

space dividers between the family room and the den. Meanwhile, Borer’s preference for soft white and grey duotones inspired an interior paint scheme that combines sharp white and khaki.

In the kitchen, Giallo Sioriato granite surfaces are set off by a vividly original glass tile and stone backsplash which lends an invigorating streak of color to the broader visual panorama.

“Its very comfortable balance of traditional and open really works well for us,” Borer said. “I found the whole process really enlightening.”

Kitchen Confidential

FROM PAGE 3

by Sub-Zero, Wolf, KitchenAid and Miele.

NICELY DONE KITCHENS in Springfield, Va., created a kitchen with drama for a Centreville, Va., family. “White semi-custom cabinetry and a contrasting dark island creates a dramatic look,” said Stephanie Brick, designer. Brick cited the focus on the vertical, subway tile back splash.

The rest of the back splash in the kitchen is horizontal, which is the standard for subway tile, said Brick.

The kitchen also includes ample, easily accessible storage space.

“The paneled refrigerator helps conceal the appliances and helps them to blend in with the cabinetry to give the aesthetic more continuity,” said Brick. The kitchen includes easily accessible storage space and ogeedged granite counter tops.

OPENING UP and adding light were priorities when Guy Hopkins Semmes, partner and founder of Potomac-based design-build firm Hopkins and Porter and Lea Allen, one of the firm’s senior architects, remodeled the kitchen of a Bethesda, Md., home.

“The kitchen was small, but we were able to add a lot more space, by making few minor changes,” said Semmes. “Before there was an enclosed porch next to the kitchen. We opened the wall between the kitchen and the adjacent enclosed porch.”

Semmes and Allen made another major elimination: appliances. “We got rid of the



COURTESY OF CASE DESIGN/REMODELING INC

Arlington, Va., designer Allie Mann of Case Design/Remodeling, Inc. created a free-flowing and elegant feel in this McLean, Va. kitchen.

refrigerator and moved it downstairs,” said Semmes. “All of the other appliances are located under the counter and open up like drawers.”

Semmes also found a creative way to make the space more light-filled. “We took out a stairway wall to the second floor and replaced it with a triangular opening so light from stairwell came down into the kitchen.”

The kitchen now has maple cabinetry and white Silestone countertops. “It was done on a budget. It’s amazing what you can do when you work with what you’ve got.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF HOPKINS AND PORTER

Guy Semmes and Lea Allen of Potomac-based design-build firm Hopkins and Porter removed walls to create space and add light to the kitchen of this Bethesda, Md. home.

Garden Club of Virginia Celebrates 81st Tour



This Alexandria garden will appear on the 81st Historic Garden Week tour.

House and garden tours will take place across Virginia during the 81st Historic Garden Week. Garden week runs from Saturday, April 26-Saturday, May 3.

Tour proceeds fund the restoration and preservation of Virginia’s historic gardens. Each spring visitors are welcomed to more than 250 of Virginia’s most beautiful gardens, homes and historic landmarks during “America’s Largest Open House.” This eight-day statewide event provides visitors an opportunity to see gardens at the peak of Virginia’s springtime color, as well as beautiful houses sparkling with over 2,000 flower arrangements created by Garden Club of Virginia members.

Statewide tour passes are available for \$175. The Alexandria tour takes place Saturday, April 26, tickets are \$35. The Vienna tour takes place Tuesday, April 29 and tickets are \$25. There is a 240-page guidebook with detailed descriptions of properties on each tour. The \$10 charge covers the shipping and handling cost of the book. Free copies of the guide are available at Virginia businesses, visitor centers, and some AAAs. Visit www.vagardenweek.org.

David Watkins of Merrifield Garden Center says cold season annuals like these yellow pansies can add bright color to a garden now.



PHOTO COPYRIGHT CAROLINE WILLIAMS

Getting Your Garden Ready for Spring

Local experts tell you what you should do now, in spite of the cold weather.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

on the environment. It reduces bad bug populations and is safe over all.”

It doesn’t feel like spring. Last week’s snow made it seem like warm weather might never arrive, so planting a garden might be the last thing on your mind. However, local gardening experts say this is the ideal time to start preparing your landscape to yield colorful spring foliage.

Bill Mann, of Behnke Nurseries in Potomac, Md., said spring garden preparation plans differ from year to year. “It depends on the landscape beds you have and whether or not you’re planning to put in a vegetable garden,” he said.

“This is the time to inspect shrubs for damage that might have been broken during the snow load,” said David Watkins of Merrifield Garden Center, which has locations in Fair Oaks, Merrifield and Gainesville, Va., “Don’t go overboard, however: “You don’t want to prune plants before they bloom. A good rule of thumb is to prune a flowering plant right after it blooms.”

Instead, spend some time tidying up. “Right now is the time to fertilize your shrubs, remove old mulch, put down new mulch and just clean up,” said Watkins. “Everybody is sick of winter, especially this winter. This is the time to clean up old leaves. Because the winter has been so cold, there are going to be some plants that won’t have made it.”

“In March, a lot has to do with inspecting the yard for winter damage,” said Mann. “This is a great time of the year to look for insect damage and deer damage.”

Mann expects extensive deer damage this year. “Deer didn’t have much to eat except for plants like azaleas and rhododendrons.”

Insect damage is less obvious and more difficult to identify. “This is the time to do damage-control by using safe or organic-based products like neem oil,” said Mann. “When sprayed on plants, it smothers insect eggs or some insects in the larva stage. It also kills stinkbugs. If you can see them, you can control them. You can use a higher concentration this time of year and it is a lot safer and easier

WHILE EAGER GARDENERS may be excited to start planting spring flowers in their newly cleaned plots, Watkins offers a caveat: “It is a little early for most annual flowers in pots on patios, but you can plant annuals like pansies, which are cold season annuals,” he said. “They don’t like heat, so in June they start to whither. Then you can put other flowers in like petunias and geraniums.”

Watkins recommends planting hearty, ornamental shrubs in patio flowerpots and surrounding them with flowering plants to ensure year-found foliage. “A nice thing to do in pots is plant a woody ornamental,” he said. “It is nice to have plants in the pots that stay year round. I put a Japanese maple in a pot on my deck. In another pot I put ilex verticillata [winterberry] and I had red berries all winter long. In the spring, I’ll put petunias in the soil around it, and around the edge I’ll plant a flowering plant that will trail down over the pot from April to October. Then the rest of the year I’ll get red berries.”

Sowing grass seeds is also an ideal project to begin now. “The seeds won’t germinate until it gets to be 52 degrees,” Watkins continued. “So even if we get another snow storm, it helps work the seeds into the soil.”

Randee Wilson of Nature By Design in Alexandria encourages the use of indigenous plants. “Look for sources for native plants — they help sustain our local wildlife. If we didn’t have local plants, butterflies would be gone.”

Native plants also require less maintenance. “Some native plants are cardinal flower, which is bright red; bee balm, also bright red; blue cardinal; iron weed, which has purple flowers, and native wisteria vine,” said Wilson.

If a new patio is in your plans this spring, Watkins says to get started now. “We’ve been putting down putting patios all year long,” he said. “A good garden center is going to get backed up when the weather is warmer. The sooner you start getting your job in the line, the better.”

Local REAL ESTATE

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

January, 2014 Top Sales in Great Falls, McLean, Vienna, Oakton, Reston and Herndon



1 8419 Brookewood Court, McLean — \$2,198,800



2 1418 Harvest Crossing Drive, McLean — \$1,850,000

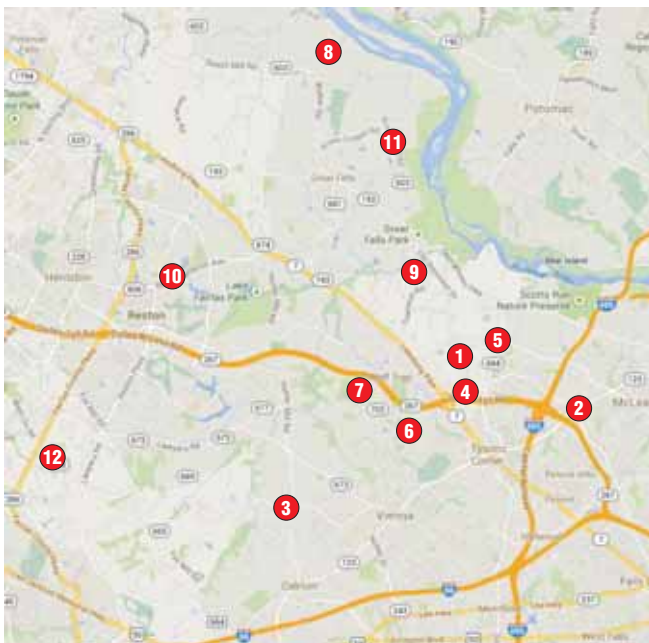


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8 9909 Windy Hollow Road, Great Falls — \$1,322,000



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3 10406 OAKTON HILLS CT NE	5	5	2	OAKTON	\$1,700,000	Detached	1.72	22124	OAKTON HILLS ESTATES	01/08/14
4 8500 STONY POINT CT	6	5	1	MCLEAN	\$1,660,000	Detached	0.71	22102	STONY POINT	01/31/14
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11 9212 MARIA AVE	3	2	1	GREAT FALLS	\$889,000	Detached	1.00	22066	GREAT FALLS ESTATES	01/29/14
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Extreme Temps Call for Back-to-Basics

What mid-winter maintenance can reveal about your home's needs.

BY JOHN BYRD

While common sense suggests that home improvements should be put off to warmer weather, a sustained period of colder temperatures often reveals systemic problems that will need correction sooner or later.

As temperatures dropped precipitously several weeks ago, all Reston homeowner Craig Mattice knew was that his original mansard roof was plagued with ice dams and his 10-year-old, 600-square-foot addition was so cold the pipes were freezing. Moreover, no amount of thermostat adjustment improved the situation much.

"After living in the house for over 25 years the chill was a surprise," Mattice said. "It wasn't just that the winter has been colder than usual ... it was beginning to look like a larger problem, particularly in the new wing, which was five degrees colder than other rooms." To determine the cause of ice-clogged gutters, Mattice turned to remodeler David Foster who had completed a number of home improvements for his son.

"The damming was literally the tip of the iceberg," said Foster, principal of Foster Remodeling Solutions. "When I inspected the attic it was clear that the envelope was not adequately sealed, insulated or ventilated, which is why the upstairs had been too hot last summer."

Add to this the fact that prior to 1980 local building code required less thermally-resistant insulation (R-19) than the current R-38 standard and the outlines of a common problem with older production homes begins to emerge.

"It's not unusual to find that the existing insulation just isn't the best application for some of our coldest days" Foster said. "Different parts of a house can call for different insulation strategies."

Since the goal for the Mattice attic was to dramatically increase R-value, Foster rearranged the old insulation, adding soffit baffles to improve ventilation. The larger technical solution, however, was to blow-in R-25 fiberglass, which raised the attic's thermal resistance to R-44.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FOSTER REMODELING SOLUTIONS

A sustained period of cold weather can reveal problems with your home's basic systems that will need to be addressed in any season.

"One of the benefits of fiberglass is that it wraps everything ... creating an air-tight insular envelope," Foster says. "This makes all aspects of the home's heating and cooling more efficient."

The more recently completed family wing was another matter. Turns out the Mattice's artfully-designed addition was built over an unheated crawl space, and the

HVAC duct wasn't even connected in the kitchen.

"An appropriate insulation strategy starts with a kind of forensics," Foster said. "Where is a wall, ceiling or roof exposed to outside conditions? Is it difficult to regulate temperatures in different parts of the house? These are some basic questions we start with."

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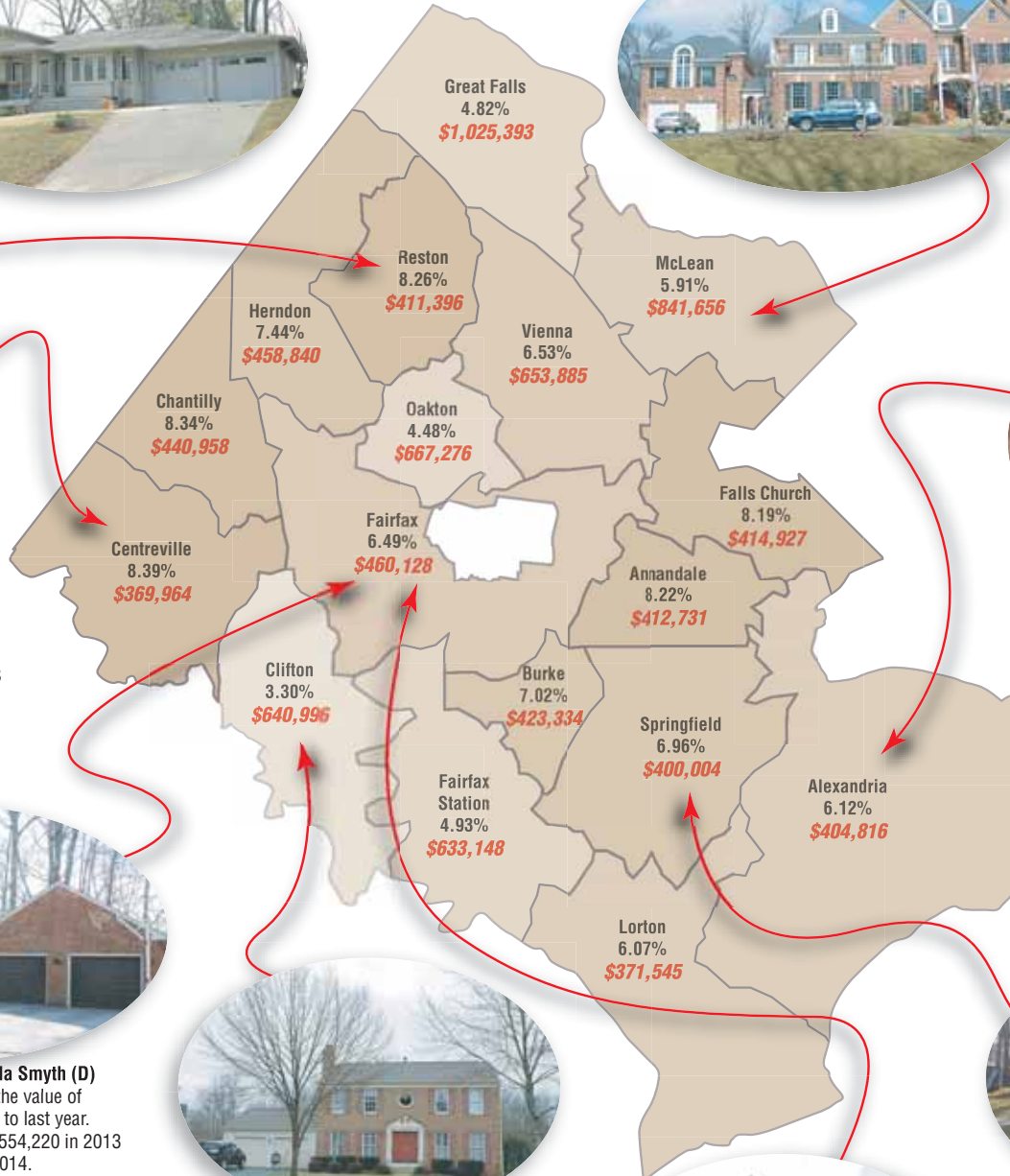
Fairfax County REAL ESTATE

2014 Assessments by Area

Hunter Mill Supervisor **Cathy Hudgins (D)** saw her assessment go up 10.80% from \$575,910 in 2013 to \$638,100 in 2014.



Dranesville District Supervisor **John Foust (D)** saw a 6.16% drop in his property value when compared to 2013. The county valued Foust's house at \$3,109,050 last year and \$2,917,660 this year.



Sully Supervisor **Michael Frey (R)** saw a 11.96% increase in the value of his home over the last year. Frey's home was assessed at \$225,820 in 2013 and \$252,830 in 2014.



Lee Supervisor **Jeff McKay (D)** saw no change in his home assessment. This year, his home was worth \$710,220, same as last year.

Mount Vernon Supervisor **Gerry Hyland** has no property listed.



Providence Supervisor **Linda Smyth (D)** saw a 7.22% increase in the value of her house when compared to last year. Smyth's home was valued at \$554,220 in 2013 and \$594,220 in 2014.



Springfield Supervisor **Patrick Herrity (R)** saw a 3.56% gain in his property value when compared to 2013. Last year, his home was worth \$553,770 and this year it is valued at \$573,460.



Braddock Supervisor **John Cook (R)** saw a 13.37% increase in the value of his home over the last year. Cook's home was assessed at \$586,220 in 2013 and \$634,760 in 2014.



Fairfax County Chairman **Sharon Bulova (D)** saw her home value go down 2.62% from \$617,750 in 2013 to \$601,550 in 2014.



2014 County Average (Percent Change)
 Single Family Detached **\$598,711 (5.82%)**
 Townhouse **\$370,849 (8.39%)**
 Condos **\$247,943 (10.51%)**

ZIP CODE AREA	2013 MEAN	2014 MEAN	PERCENT CHANGE
Alexandria/Mount Vernon	381,426	404,816	6.12
Annandale	381,386	412,731	8.22
Burke	395,580	423,334	7.02
Centreville	341,337	369,964	8.39
Chantilly	407,026	440,958	8.34
Clifton	620,491	640,996	3.30
Fairfax	432,104	460,128	6.49
Fairfax Station	603,429	633,148	4.93
Falls Church	383,502	414,927	8.19
Great Falls	978,233	1,025,393	4.82
Herndon	427,060	458,840	7.44
Lorton	350,288	371,545	6.07
McLean	794,688	841,656	5.91
Oakton	638,692	667,276	4.48
Reston	379,741	411,096	8.26
Springfield	373,964	400,004	6.96
Vienna	613,796	653,885	6.53

for single family, townhouses and condominiums

The average assessed value of a single family home in Fairfax County for 2014 is \$598,711, up 5.82%

SOURCE: FAIRFAX COUNTY