

Langley HS Orchestra  
junior Leslie Rivers shows  
a student and teacher from  
the Cherokee School  
(Florida) how to pluck the  
string bass.

# Langley High Orchestra Inspires Florida School

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## Blizzard of Spending

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## Disaster Recovery Practiced in McLean

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**Potholes on North Pitt Street in Old Town Alexandria.**



PHOTO BY MICHAEL LEE POPE/THE CONNECTION

## Blizzard of Spending

**Polar vortex sends financial chill through local governments.**

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

**T**he unusually hard winter has created a blizzard of spending for local governments across Northern Virginia — bursting through budgeted amounts for snow removal and treating roads, leaving a lasting legacy of potholes that will be plaguing roads this spring. Officials at the Virginia Department of Transportation say they spent \$175 million on snow removal this winter, more than twice as much than they were planning to spend. And that's just for starters.

"This is going to be a much worse pothole season than in years past," said Jennifer McCord, spokeswoman for VDOT. "We've been filling them, basically, since the winter started."

Alexandria spent \$1.6 million on snow control. That's more than twice the amount city officials set aside in the budget, which was \$836,000. And Arlington officials say they've already spent more than \$2 million even though they had budgeted only \$1.1 million. Local governments across the region will be forced to dip into their contingency funds to deal with the record amounts of snow dumped on Northern Virginia this year.

"If they don't deal with these potholes quickly, the cost will become much greater," said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Government Leadership. "Waiting longer means they have to dig up the road bed, which is way more expensive than filling a pothole."

**POTHoles FORM** when roads experience moisture and then a rapid freeze and thaw. Moisture gets into cracks in the road, which undermines the road surface. Then traffic pummels the already undermined road surface over and over until the cracks become larger and larger. Over time the cracks start to peel away as pieces of asphalt fly away. When that happens over and over, the cracks start to grow larger and larger.

"That creates a minor depression that can sometimes grow into something much larger that we affectionately call a pothole," said Yon Lambert, deputy director for operations of the Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

Alexandria currently has 574 requests since the beginning of January to March 21, a 552 percent increase over last year, which was 88 requests for service. About 42 of those are still being investigated to see what kind of remedy would be appropriate. That's part of a regional effort to address potholes throughout Northern Virginia, a region that has been hit with a disproportionate amount of precipitation and freezing weather this year. All local governments are trying to figure out how much this year's winter will cost them as the next budget season approaches.

"All invoices for snow-related costs for the last event have not been paid. Some not received yet," said Arlington budget director Richard Stephenson. "In addition, the cost of pot hole repairs will not be known for some time."

**THE COSTS** of the polar vortex are not easy to grasp, partially because it's difficult to know what the final bill will be and partially because nobody knows how much the damage will be inflicted. Anecdotal evidence is overwhelming. Drivers know that their roads are deteriorating rapidly. Alexandria and Arlington have dominion over their own streets, although the roads of Fairfax County are maintained by officials at the Virginia Department of Transportation, who are scrambling to meet all the requests they have been confronted with since the polar vortex swept into town.

"Our roads are in pretty sorry shape," said Del. Scott Surovell (D-44). "The snow removal expense has now begun to eat into the repaving expense for this year, and so VDOT is having to look at deferring paving projects that were planned for 2014 because of the amount of money that it has to spend on snow expenses."

Budget officials across Northern Virginia will not know the final expense of the polar vortex for some time. That's because all the invoices have not yet been received by local governments. Those expenses will probably become more digestible for budget officials during the mid-year review or the third-quarter review, long after the snow has melted and the spring flowers have wilted. Until that time, government leaders will be working overtime to fix the damage of the polar vortex. One day last week, for example, Alexandria had four crews out repairing 375 potholes using six tons of hot-mix asphalt.

"We can't do a really active and intense period of pothole repairs when temperatures are very cold," said Lambert. "We've had more than 30 inches of snow this year whereas we had less than two inches last year, and that combined with the very cold temperatures has a very big impact on our roads."



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/THE CONNECTION

**Katharine Jiang created the CLIPUS Foundation to help underprivileged children receive school supplies.**

## Local Student Starts Foundation

**Katharine Jiang's contribution grants 100 D.C.-area students notebook-laden backpacks.**

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**F**ew high school students can say they have created a foundation. Sixteen-year-old Katharine Jiang of Great Falls is one of those few.

In the pursuit to make a difference in education, she created the CLIPUS Foundation — a group of 30 students who use the profits of recycled office supplies to buy school supplies for underprivileged D.C.-area children.

"I knew I wanted to do something to improve education," said Jiang, a junior at The Madeira School. "Then I found a statistic that 16 million kids in the country can't afford school supplies."

She said the name CLIPUS comes from the "tens of thousands of paper clips we sold" from her father's old office supplies. The last two letters create a promise for togetherness.

The 30 students who form the foundation go to school at Langley High School, Thomas Jefferson School for Science and Technology and Briar Woods High School.

Most of the money is collected by getting cash for recycled toners. She said some toners can fetch \$7 each. The foundation has a partnership with The Langley School — her first school and where she credits her drive to give back to the community — and Adventure Theater in Glen Echo to house toner drives. CLIPUS has also held bake sales at The Madeira School and local grocery stores

to collect more funds.

On Tuesday, she sent 100 backpacks filled with \$2,000 worth of notebooks, pens and crayons to Cannon Road Elementary, located in Silver Spring. It was the first time CLIPUS donated school supplies to a school since the foundation was established in August.

"When we talked to Cannon [Elementary], they seemed very interested and wanted to make it into a big event," said Jiang. "We had talked to schools since November."

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity for our families," said school counselor Lise Valenta.

Approximately 60 percent of the school qualifies for free or reduced school lunch. The school also hosts the Smart Sacks Backpack Program, which is hosted by National Council of Negro Women Potomac Valley section leader Carolyn Shackelford. This program gives families food to eat over the weekend — a time when students cannot depend on a hot meal at school.

Because of the number of underprivileged children in D.C., Jiang hopes to expand the program's outreach to older students one day. However, she's very cognizant of the fact she will be graduating from high school in a year — leaving the CLIPUS Foundation behind. She hopes to pass it along to some of the underclassmen who are a part of the group. "Children's education is a passion of mine, but I think I want to become an engineer," she said. "Or an entrepreneur."

# Budget Competition

**Taxes to increase across Northern Virginia, some more than others.**

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE  
THE CONNECTION

**T**wo things are certain in life, death and taxes. And just as the spring flowers start to bloom this time a year, so do concerns about rising tax bills. As local governments across Northern Virginia consider budget proposals, taxpayers are reaching for their wallets. A review of proposed budgets in the region shows residential property taxpayers in Fairfax are looking at the largest potential increase, more than \$300. Taxpayers in Alexandria are looking at the smallest potential increase, less than \$200.

"There is always a competition among Northern Virginia local governments for who can either cut the most or raise their property tax the least," said Frank Shafroth, director of the Center for State and Local Leadership at George Mason University. "So it is a healthy competition."

Now that government executives have presented their proposed budgets to elected officials, members of the public are presenting their input in a series of formal public hearings and informal discussions. At issue for government leaders is what kinds of investments are necessary to enhance property values, the cash cow for jurisdictions in Virginia. Shafroth says homeowners generally want to see their assessments increase, although nobody wants to pay the higher tax bill.

"All of that, of course, could change significantly if Congress eliminates the deductibility of the property tax and limits the home mortgage deduction," said Shafroth. "Those two changes would make today's whines seem ludicrous in comparison."

**IN FAIRFAX COUNTY**, the county executive has proposed a tax rate of \$1.085 for every \$100 of assessed value. Earlier this month, the Board of Supervisors voted to advertise a real estate rate that's two cents higher, \$1.105 for every \$100 of assessed value. Budget officials say one penny of the tax rate is equal to about \$21.9 million in general revenue, and an additional \$50 for the average residential property taxpayer. That means that supervisors might end up increasing the average bill more than \$400.

"It is important that the board allows for flexibility in considering a tax rate so that debate and discussion is not cut off at the very beginning of the budget process," said Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova. "The board can adopt a tax rate that is lower but not higher than what is advertised."

Last month, County Executive Ed Long presented a proposed budget with flat commercial tax revenues and lower than expected tax revenues for sales taxes, hotel taxes and business and professional license taxes. Budget officials say the only area that is experiencing an upward tick is the assessed value of residential property. That means homeowners are likely to get stuck with a higher tax bill just to keep the current level of service.

"As the county continues to face fiscal challenges, we must persist in our cautious and deliberative approach to budgeting, only funding items that are

## PROPOSED TAX INCREASES

- ❖ **Alexandria:** The average residential property tax bill would increase from \$4,901 to \$5,091. The additional \$190 would be a 3.88 percent increase.
- ❖ **Arlington:** The average residential property tax bill would increase from \$5,278 to \$5,560. The additional \$282 would be a 5 percent increase.
- ❖ **Fairfax:** The average residential property tax bill would increase from \$5,071 to \$5,403. The additional \$332 would be a 6.54 percent increase.

sustainable," said Long. "We also must be ready to make the necessary decisions to maintain investment in our services, infrastructure and development of the community."

**IN ARLINGTON**, county manager has proposed a tax rate of \$1.006 for every \$100 of assessed value, which includes the base rate of \$0.993 and the county-wide sanitary district rate of \$0.013 for stormwater management. Last month, members of the Arlington County Board voted to advertise no increase in the rate, which means elected officials must find a way to balance the budget using the increase in property values. Fortunately for Arlington, property values in the county have been some of the strongest in the region.

"The gap between funding for ongoing county services and revenues that I predicted in the fall was eliminated by our higher-than-anticipated real estate assessments," said County Manager Barbara Donnellan. "But we must still work to achieve efficiencies and continue to invest in our community."

In Arlington, unlike Alexandria, the tax base is split evenly between residential property and commercial property. County budget officials say that's a blessing and a curse. When residential values declined during the recession, jurisdictions that were heavily reliant on them suffered. But commercial properties have been sluggish in the wake of sequestration and shutdown because the local economy is so heavily tied to the fate of the federal government. That means that Arlington finds itself balanced between two different markets instead of tied to the fate of one.

"We like to say we like balanced development in the county," said Budget Director Richard Stephenson. "But that can be good or bad depending on where we are in the cycle."

**IN ALEXANDRIA**, the city manager has proposed a tax rate of \$1.038 for every \$100 of assessed value. Earlier this month, City Council members voted to advertise a tax rate that's half a cent higher. That tax rate of \$1.043 for every \$100 of assessed value would raise the average residential property tax bill by \$230. That's a 7 percent increase compared to last year.

"I did not run to raise property taxes," said Councilwoman Allison Silberberg. "But we have some growing needs."

Unlike Arlington, Alexandria's tax revenues lean heavily toward residential properties. Almost 33 percent of the city's revenues come from residential property taxpayers, while commercial property taxpayers contribute only 25 percent of the tax base. That means the average single-family house, which increased about 3 percent this year, is shouldering a disproportionate amount of the burden for the increased cost of government in Alexandria.

"We have an 18 percent vacancy rate that's devaluing the commercial side of the ledger," said Alexandria Budget Director Nelsie Smith. "If we had a healthier commercial base that wasn't contributing to an 18 percent vacancy rate, we would not have seen the 0.68 percent growth from last year to this year."

**Dozens of AT&T Team Members – many of them volunteers – practiced real-life scenarios so that they can immediately jump into action when disaster strikes.**



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

## Disaster Recovery Practiced in McLean

**L**ast week, McLean was flooded with AT&T Network Disaster Recovery (NDR) trailers, trucks and vans.

Luckily, there was no disaster. But hurricanes, tornados and other types of disasters can occur. Telecommunications is vital for business and government customers following a disaster, both for the impacted area and for the rest of the country. The NDR team is responsible for the rapid recovery of service at AT&T network sites following catastrophic events.

To ensure the company is prepared to respond when disaster strikes, AT&T routinely conducts field tests in different cities around the country. Last week, the company set up technology trailers housing telecommunications equipment at the Hilton in Tysons Corner. Dozens of AT&T Team Members – many of them volunteers – practiced real-life scenarios so that they can immediately jump into action when disaster strikes.

The drills also give AT&T an opportunity to connect with local officials, including David Rohrer, Fairfax County's Deputy County Executive overseeing the county's public safety programming. Forming relationships, making connections and discussing emergency plans with local officials now makes reconnecting during a disaster much smoother and more efficient.

AT&T's preparations enabled them to respond quickly after Hurricane Irene, the Joplin tornados and the wildfires in California. During Superstorm Sandy last year, the network suffered no loss of communications and even set up charging stations for affected residents.

AT&T has invested more than \$600 million in its U.S. NDR program and another \$15 million internationally. Team members have spent more than 125,000 working hours on field exercises and deployments over the last two decades.



**Telecommunications is vital for business and government customers following a disaster, both for the impacted area and for the rest of the country.**



## WEEK IN MCLEAN

### Deadline Approaches for MCC Board Nominations

The filing deadline for the McLean Community Center's (MCC) 2014-2015 Governing Board election is 5 p.m. on Friday, March 28. Residents of Dranesville Small Tax District 1A who are interested in running for a seat can still enter the race. The Board sets policy and provides general oversight for MCC facilities, which include the Robert Ames Alden Theatre and the Old Firehouse Teen Center on Chain Bridge Road. MCC is located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue.

All residents of the Center's tax district are eligible to run for a seat on the 11-member board. Candidates are required to obtain the signatures of 10 (ten) McLean tax district residents in order to have their names placed on the election ballot. Nominating petition forms are available at the Center.

Three adult positions and two youth positions are open this year. Adult board members serve three-year terms. Youth members serve one-year terms. Adult candidates must be at least 18 years old as of McLean Day, Saturday, May 17. Youth candidates must be 15-17 years old as of McLean Day. One youth member who lives within the McLean High School boundary area will be elected; one youth member who lives within the Langley High School boundary will be elected.

Residents of the tax district may cast their votes in the election between the hours of 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturday, May 17, at the McLean Day 2014: Celebrating Our Hometown festival at Lewinsville Park, 1659 Chain Bridge Road. Adults vote for three adult candidates, and youth vote for one youth candidate. Residents may vote by absentee ballot. Applications for absentee ballots will be available at the Center starting on Monday, April 14.

For more information on the MCC Governing Board Election, call the Center at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711, send an e-mail to [elections@mcleancenter.org](mailto:elections@mcleancenter.org) or visit the Center's website: <http://bit.ly/1fHo2Ht>.

### Japanese Students Come to Spring Hill Elementary

Eight fifth grade exchange students from Yabe Elementary School in Japan will arrive this

Wednesday evening, March 26, to Dulles Airport. On Thursday, March 27th, there will be a Kick-off celebration for the whole school in Spring Hill Elementary School's cafeteria at 9 a.m. to honor the Japanese students. The American students who are hosting will introduce each of their partners in Japanese. After reciting the Pledge to the Flag and singing the Star-Spangled Banner, members of Spring Hill's Orchestra, Chorus and Band will perform

pieces which reflect the U.S. history. The Japanese students will serenade the Americans with songs and playing on soprano recorders. Country Line Dances will conclude the assembly.

The Japanese students will go to classes with their exchange partners each day. A Field Trip has been planned for Monday, March 31, to visit the U.S. Capitol (a special tour) and the Japanese Embassy. The Japanese students will depart on Thursday morning, April 3.

### The Claude Moore Colonial Farm Opens for Season

The Claude Moore Colonial Farm opens for the 2014 season on Thursday, April 3. The living history museum and National Park authentically portrays family life on a pre-Revolutionary War era working farm in McLean. The Claude Moore Colonial Farm uses

interactive educational programs to further understanding of everyday life and agriculture in 18th century Virginia. In 2014 the farm will conduct three seasonal market fairs, participatory special events such as Wheat Harvest as well as internships, a Living Experience Series, a Farm Skills program, Fire Workshop and more. In 2014 the museum celebrates 41 years of operations. The Farm is

SEE WEEK, PAGE 15

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## NEWS

### The Alden Awards 15 Local Students Fine Arts Scholarships

Fifteen high school students received scholarships for successfully competing in the 2014 James C. Macdonald Fine Arts Scholarship Competition. Sponsored by The Alden at the McLean Community Center (MCC), the final competition was held on Thursday, Feb. 27. MCC Governing Board Vice Chair Susan Bourgeois and Alden Director of Youth Programs Kathleen Herr presented the awards at the final competition-performance.

The James C. Macdonald Fine Arts Scholarship Competition encourages artistic achievement and promotes study in the arts by high school students who reside or attend school in the McLean district (Small Tax District 1A, Dranesville). Scholarship prizes of \$1,200 are awarded to students placing first in each of five categories: Dance, Instrumental Music, Theatre, Visual Arts and Vocal Music. Second-place winners are awarded \$800 and third-place winners win \$400.

This year's winners were:  
 ♦ Dance - First Place: Xiang Yi, Traditional Chinese, McLean High School; Second Place: Madeleine Walker, Ballet/Lyrical, McLean High School;



PHOTO BY LISA HELFERT PHOTOGRAPHY

MCC Governing Board Vice Chair Susan Bourgeois (on right) with 2014 James C. Macdonald Scholarship winners Alexander Stone (Theatre and Vocal Music), Sean Lim (Instrumental Music), Xiang Yi (Dance), and Kyle Kirkpatrick (Visual Arts).

Third Place - Sotiria Sgouros, Ballet/Lyrical, Langley High School.

♦ Theatre - First Place - Alexander Stone, McLean High School; Second Place - Hayley Wenk, Langley High School; Third Place - Jamie Joeyen-Waldorf, Langley High School.

♦ Music - Instrumental: First Place - Sean Lim, violin, McLean High School; Second Place - Lyric Yu, piano, Langley High School; Third Place - Jennifer Wang, piano, McLean High School.

♦ Music - Voice: First Place - Alexander Stone, McLean High School; Second Place - Lily Lord, McLean High School; Third Place - Claire Hungar, Homeschooled.

♦ Visual Arts: First Place - Kyle Kirkpatrick, Langley High School; Second Place - Jeong-in Seo, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology; Third Place - Jennie Kim, Langley High School

The judges for the competition were: Melanie George, Cynthia Lin and Dana McLeod (Dance); Seyon Lee, Jim Scopeletis and Ethan Watermeier (Instrumental Music); Dana McLeod, Wendy J. Conte and Jim Scopeletis (Theatre); Ephraim Schum, Peggy Feerick and Anthony Brock (Visual Arts); and Wendy J. Conte, Jim Scopeletis and Ethan Watermeier (Vocal Music).

For more information, call The Alden at 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

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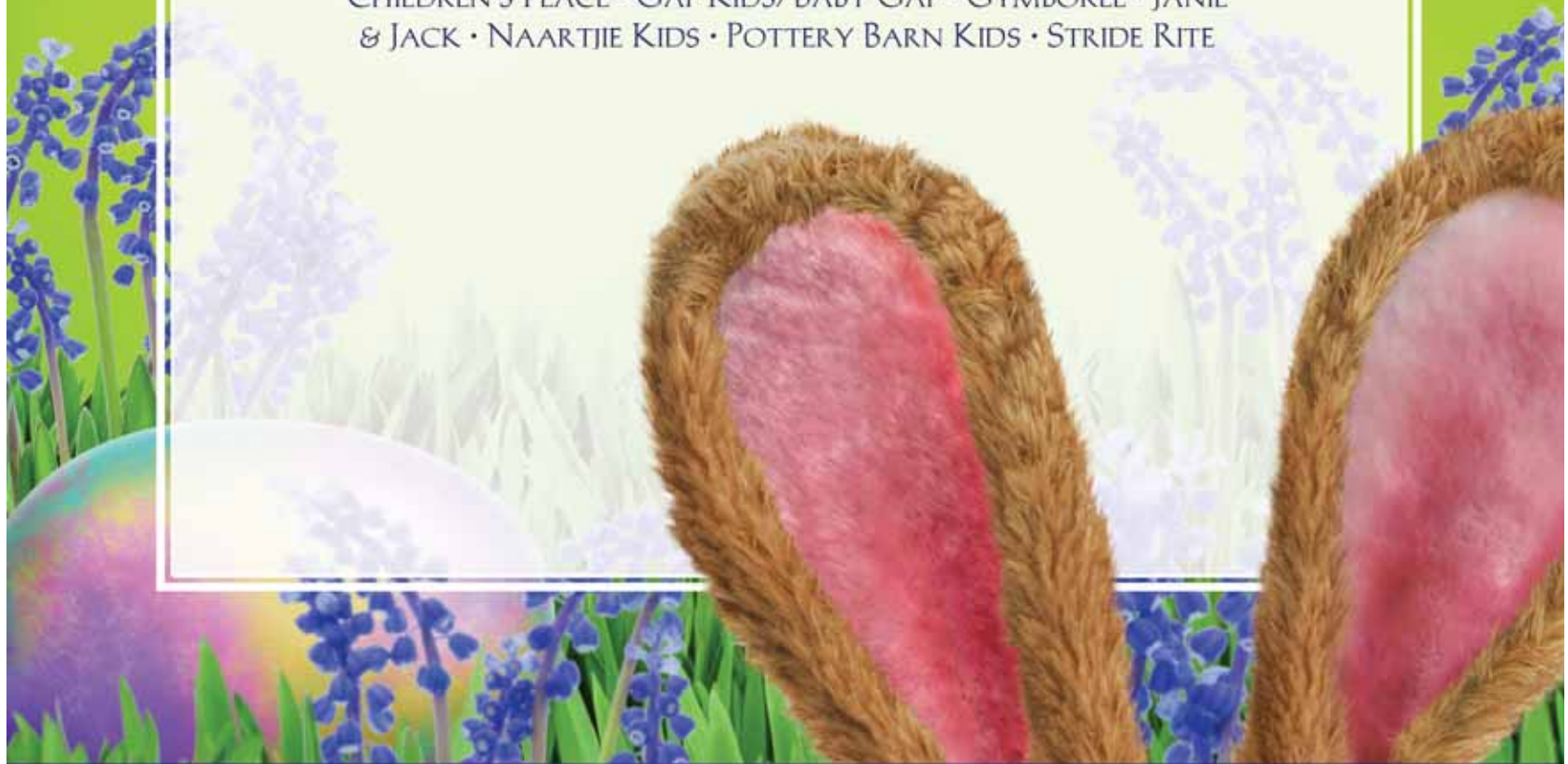
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# OPINION

# Challenging Budgets

Local Government should be able to access income taxes to give relief on real estate taxes.

**N**orthern Virginia governments are facing shortfalls in the classic budget sense: projected revenues are less than last year's expenditures plus increases in costs.

Alexandria City Manager Rashad Young: "This is the seventh straight year of budgetary challenges, where the cost of current services and previous commitments exceeds our revenue growth." His proposed budget includes \$190.6 million for Alexandria City Public Schools, a 2.62 percent increase over FY2014 but \$2.5 million less than requested by the Alexandria School Board.

Fairfax County Chairman of the Board of Supervisors Sharon Bulova: "This will be a very challenging budget." Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Karen Garza proposed an increase of 5.7 percent, \$98 million more than the schools requested last year, but supervisors have said to expect an increase of 2 percent.

Fairfax County, along with Arlington and Alexandria, is wrestling with how to fund increasing financial requests from schools, increasing needs for human services and providing a safety net, and many other areas of local budgets.

In Virginia, localities are allowed few areas of revenue, and local budgets are funded primarily through real estate property taxes. Prop-

erty values have increased this year, and local governments are also considering increases in the property tax rate, meaning homeowners will pay more in taxes.

Fairfax County Real Estate Assessments increased 5.8 percent for single family homes, 8.4 percent for townhouses and 10.5 percent for condos. In Arlington, property values grew about 5.8 percent this year. That includes single-family houses and townhouses, which went up 6.2 percent, as well as condominiums, which went up 5.9 percent. In Alexandria, residential assessments increased 4.8 percent.

But just because a home is worth more this year than last year doesn't actually put any more money in anyone's pocket. The increases are mostly modest and necessary in an area that prides itself on providing an exceptional quality of life and thriving business environment.

Employment and jobs are also strong in Northern Virginia, with unemployment at 3.7 percent in Fairfax, 4.1 percent in Alexandria and 3.2 percent in Arlington. Northern Virginia is the economic engine of Virginia. The overall unemployment rate in Virginia is 5 percent, with these statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These rates are far below the national rate.

## EDITORIAL

But state income tax, paid disproportionately by workers in Northern Virginia, are collected by the state for the state budget. The exact percentage of money that returns to Northern Virginia is debated, but it is definitely small. Localities should have the ability to add a piggyback tax to the state income tax in order to provide needed and expected services while giving relief to homeowners.

Anyone familiar with the political process in Virginia knows that this is a pipe dream with essentially zero chance. It would have to pass the Virginia General Assembly. Nevertheless, it makes no sense for Northern Virginia to pay income taxes to the state without being able to benefit.

Meanwhile, Arlington FY 2015 tax rate public hearing is March 27 at 7 p.m. More on Arlington's budget: <http://countyboard.arlingtonva.us/budget/>

Fairfax County's public hearings, all in the board auditorium at the government center: Effective Tax Rate Hearing 3 p.m., April 8, 2014; Budget Public Hearing 6 p.m., April 8; 3 p.m., April 9; 3 p.m., April 10. More on Fairfax County Budget, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/>

For more on Alexandria's budget <https://www.alexandriava.gov/budget/info/default.aspx?id=75641>.

A favorite guideline on testimony at budget hearings comes in Arlington: "Repetitious testimony is discouraged." Good luck with that.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

## Mental Health and the Expansion of Medicaid

BY BARBARA FAVOLA  
STATE SENATOR (D-31)

**T**here is a growing consensus forming in the General Assembly that now is the time to improve the safety net for mental

health services. Both the House and Senate budgets increase funding for these services by millions of dollars (House proposed a \$10 million increase and the Senate \$20 million) above the proposed budget of \$36 million that Governor McDonnell presented in December.

What Virginians may not know is that under Marketplace Virginia in the Senate budget, the State would gain approximately \$200M a year for mental health services and 77,000 uninsured Virginians needing these services would benefit from this plan.

These dollars would support medication, therapy, community based treatment programs and inpatient hospitalization that individuals could access when the first signs of mental illness show them-



selves. In a recent study funded by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services with the University of Virginia's Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy, (A Study

of Face-To-Face Emergency Evaluations Conducted By Community Services Boards In April 2013), we learned that nearly 50 percent of the voluntary admissions to psychiatric hospitals could have been avoided if early treatment and community based services had been available; 25 percent of involuntary admissions could have been avoided.

A recent report from the organization, Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, entitled "Cut Violence, Cut Prison Costs" noted that "If low-income families receive medical insurance, they are more likely to be routinely screened and treated for their health problems such as substance abuse, depression or excessive aggression. Health care professionals tell us that early treatment can prevent more serious escalation of be-

haviors that can be harmful to the individual, to family members and to the general public.

Senator Deeds' bill (SB 260) and other bills before the General Assembly take important steps to improve the crisis safety net. I applaud those steps but I believe that treating mental illness must begin at a much earlier stage and this will only happen if more people have insurance to pay for these services. In fact, Margaret Nimmo Crowe, executive director of Voices for Virginia's Children, notes: "There is 'no way' Virginia can successfully reform its mental-health-care system without address-

ing the uninsured."

This is why it is so critical that Virginia seize the opportunity to leverage Federal dollars by adopting Marketplace Virginia.

The House budget conferees should not hold Virginians hostage in an ideological lock. Marketplace Virginia has the potential to make us all healthier and safer while the Federal government absorbs a significant amount of the cost.

Now is the time to act.

*Barbara Favola (D-31) is a state senator representing parts of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun counties.*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Lying Already?

To the Editor:

[Barbara] Comstock is not even on the ballot and already she's throwing lies around in a letter designed to raise Republican hackles and raise money for her primary. She reported that John Foust, Dranesville Supervisor on the Fairfax Board and her likely opponent for the 10th District,

"just voted last night for an 8.5 percent tax hike on homeowners." Truth is that Foust actually voted for a cap on property taxes, which was agreed to by Republicans and Democrats working together on the Board. Really, Barbara, a bald-faced lie, and one so easy to catch, doesn't help your image.

Linda Burchfiel  
McLean

McLean  
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# LETTERS

## A Short Walk to Save a Life

To the Editor:

As a kidney transplant recipient, I know firsthand how kidney disease impacts a family and how a little knowledge can go a long way.

I ignored the symptoms of my failing kidneys for three years. I chalked them up to stress, poor diet and lack of sleep. One day I passed out, was rushed to the hospital, and immediately put on dialysis. In the blink of an eye, my family nearly lost me.

This spring, I will be walking with kidney patients, organ donors, transplant recipients, family, friends and co-workers to help raise awareness of the 700,000 individuals and their families affected by kidney disease in the National Capital Area. Join me on Sunday, April 13 at the Northern Virginia Kidney Walk [in Reston Town Center] or on Saturday, May 17 at the National Capital Area Kidney Walk.

Funds raised at the National Kidney Foundation serving the National Capital Area Kidney Walks go directly to vital programs that help fight kidney disease through prevention, advocacy and education.

Take the first step, visit [www.kidneywalk.org](http://www.kidneywalk.org).

**Daryle McGhee**

Assistant Vice President, First Citizens Bank

## County's Urge to Spend

To the Editor:

The power to tax is the power to destroy. When the economy was booming Fairfax County spent (and spent) and most of us were too busy to take as much notice as needed. Now many years later the county urge to spend remains high as if the taxpayers have unlimited resources. My tax rate, based on the assessment letter recently received has a rate in the order of 12 percent in spite of the letter's claim that the increase is (only) 9 percent.

Hopefully the Board of Supervisors will, with taxpayer input, do a line by line review of the draft budget and get the fat out before it's too late.

**Bill Finberg**

Burke

## Students Excel at Science and Engineering Fair

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students earned top honors at the 59th annual Fairfax County Regional Science and Engineering Fair held March 14-16 at Robinson Secondary School.

Winning individual grand prizes were:

❖ Supraja Chittari of Marshall High School in Biochemistry, "Effect of Turmeric on Memory Curves of Planaria."

❖ Matthew Nguyen of Fairfax High School in Chemistry, "Analysis of Lead Leaching by Chlorine/Chloramines."

❖ Parth Chopra of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) in Computer Science, "A Novel Agent-Based Model for the Spread of TB."

❖ Jason Cui of Langley High School in Engineering: Materials and Bioengineering, "Optimized Droplet-Based Microfluidics Screening."

❖ Conor Maddry of Langley High School in Engineering: Electrical and Mechanical,

"Pneumatic Electromyographic Exoskeleton."

❖ Archis Bandarkar of TJHSST in Mathematical Sciences, "On the Unique Roles of Neurocomputational States."

❖ Nicholas Poniatowski of Hayfield Secondary School in Physics and Astronomy, "Varying ISS Reentry Angle to Limit Debris."

❖ Anya Michaelson of Lake Braddock Secondary School in Physics and Astronomy, "Kinetics of a Fencing Flick."

Winning team grand prizes were:

❖ Shi Chan Meng and Shi Yuan Meng of Woodson High School in Medicine and Health Sciences, "Deglycosylation of N297Q Improves Specificity."

❖ Trisha Deshmukh and Cara Golias of Fairfax High School in Microbiology, "Color in Tattoo Ink: Reverse Mutations in E. coli."

Results from the 2014 Regional Science and Engineering Fair, including a complete list of winners, can be found online.

Some people dream of success; others stay awake and make it happen.

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## Alex celebrated her 16<sup>th</sup> wearing her gown, not ours.

Alexandria was diagnosed with bone cancer her first year of high school. Instead of going to an adult hospital, her family got help from a cancer treatment team focused completely on pediatric medicine. Watch how specialized care created a special day at [JustRightForChildren.com/Alex](http://JustRightForChildren.com/Alex).



“Today I’m celebrating. I beat cancer and I had caring people on my side.”

Alexandria Herndon  
Princess for the day



SPRING  
FUN  
2014

The New York  
Neo-Futurists  
in ‘Too Much  
Light Makes  
the Baby Go  
Blind.’



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Neo-Futurists’ ‘Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind’ at The Alden

The Alden in McLean welcomes The New York Neo-Futurists in “Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind,” a fast-paced show that drops the traditional “fourth wall” to allow cast members to interact with the audience. The single performance will be at 8 p.m. on Friday, April 11. Tickets are \$20/\$15 for MCC district residents. The theatre is located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue, inside the McLean Community Center. Free parking is available.

In this show, an underground New York City favorite, the eccentric New York Neo-Futurists race against the clock to perform 30 miniature plays in 60 breathless minutes. The single unifying element of these plays

is that they are performed from a perspective of absolute honesty. With a continually updated menu of vignettes ranging from zany to risqué to profound, it’s a perfect interactive evening. Each act is performed in a random order guided in part by the loudly shouting audience members. Rather than upholding contemporary theatrical conventions of character, setting, plot and the separation of audience and performer, the Neo-Futurists aim to present actual life on stage by creating a world in the theater that has no pretense or illusion.

Tickets are on sale now. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit: [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) or call 703-790-0123, TTY: 711.

The Alden in  
McLean will  
celebrate Charlie  
Chaplin’s 125th  
birthday with an  
evening of silent  
films with live  
musical accompaniment on  
Wednesday April  
16, at 7:30 p.m.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Celebrating Chaplin’s 125<sup>th</sup> Birthday

The Alden in McLean will celebrate Charlie Chaplin’s 125th birthday with an evening of silent films with live musical accompaniment on Wednesday April 16, at 7:30 p.m. A star of the silent era, Chaplin was a British comic actor, filmmaker and composer who rose to fame with such films as “The Gold Rush,” “City Lights” and “The Great Dictator.” Tickets are \$10, \$6 for MCC district residents. The theatre is located at 1234 Ingleside Avenue, inside the McLean Community Center.

Charlie Chaplin, whose name has become synonymous with silent film, is considered one of the most important figures in the history of the film industry.

During this evening tribute, audience members will have the opportunity to enjoy some of Chaplin’s funniest comedies. Film historian and preservationist Bruce Lawton, who has worked with the Chaplin estate to restore the filmmaker’s work, will host the program. Composer Ben Model will enhance the hilarity of this evening of first-class entertainment with his musical accompaniment. These 16mm editions were restored by Lawton.

Tickets are on sale now. For more information or to purchase tickets online, visit: [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org) or call 703-790-0123.

CALENDAR

**TUESDAY/MARCH 25-SATURDAY/MARCH 29**  
**Great Escapes.** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tues.-Sat. Vienna Art Center, 115 Pleasant St., NW, Vienna. Dozens of original artworks by artists throughout the region inspired by travel at home and abroad. Free. 703-319-3971. [www.ViennaArtsSociety.org](http://www.ViennaArtsSociety.org)

**FRIDAY/MARCH 28-SUNDAY/APRIL 20**  
**“The Cripple of Inishmaan”** Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. 1st Stage in Tysons, 1524 Spring Hill Road, Tysons Corner. Excitement ripples through the sleepy Irish community of Inishmaan abuzz with the news that a Hollywood filmmaker plans to shoot a movie on a neighboring island. When young Cripple Billy lands a screen test, the oddball citizens of Inishmaan mount a heartbreakingly hilarious campaign bursting with dark humor and touching devotion. General admission: \$27. Seniors \$22. Students and Military \$15. Purchase online at [www.1ststage tysons.org](http://www.1ststage tysons.org) or 703-854-1856.

**SATURDAY/MARCH 29**  
**Great Falls the World Hub of Innovation & Invention.** 1-3 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Students, hobbyists, and academics from around the world are competing and collaborating in development small robotic aircraft to help protect endangered species including rhinos, elephants, and snow leopards. Using computer aided design, 3D printing and simple arduino-based robotics kits, the teams are able to create unmanned aerial vehicles that are optimized for the mission, exceeding the performance of aircraft that cost thousands of times more.

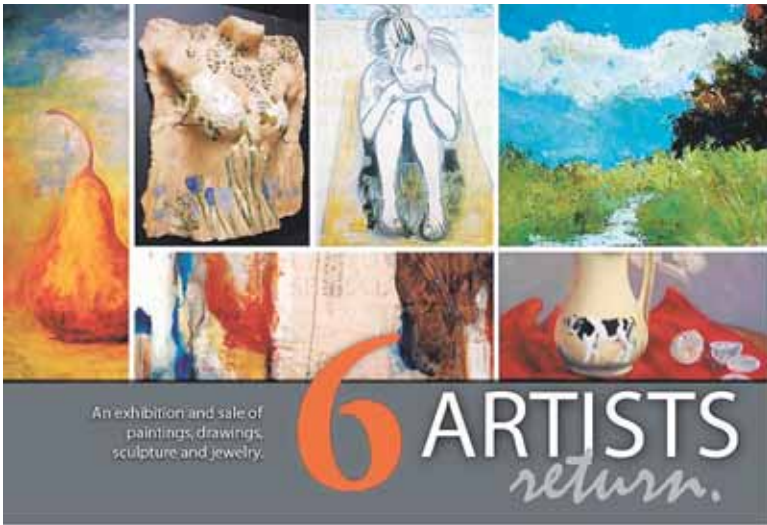
**SUNDAY/MARCH 30**  
**“Capitol Steps” at James Madison High School.** 4 p.m., James Madison High School, 2500 James Madison Dr, Vienna. Capitol Steps, the quick witted multi-faceted congressional staffers, will be performing their popular fast-paced musical political satire live. \$30. [jmhscapsteps@gmail.com](mailto:jmhscapsteps@gmail.com).

**WEDNESDAY/APRIL 2**  
**Vienna Photographic Society Meeting.** 7:30-9:30 p.m. Oakton Elementary School, 3000 Chain Bridge Rd., Oakton. Will Schermerhorn will discuss photography in the context of the Special Olympics. Special Olympics is a worldwide organization of more than 4.2 million people with intellectual disabilities who use the power of sports to reveal the champions within. From a photographer’s perspective, the key is finding the right photos to express the essence of Special Olympics. [www.vpsva.org](http://www.vpsva.org).

**FRIDAY/APRIL 4-MONDAY/MAY 5**  
**Six Artists Return.** 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, The Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. An exhibition and sale of paintings, drawings, sculpture and jewelry by local artists Jackie Elwell, Elaine Florimonte, Debbie Glakas, Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner. [www.theframefactory1.com](http://www.theframefactory1.com)

**SATURDAY/APRIL 5**  
**Six Artists Return Opening Reception.** 2-8 p.m. The Frame Factory, 212 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. An exhibition and sale of paintings, drawings, sculpture and jewelry by local artists Jackie Elwell, Elaine Florimonte, Debbie Glakas,

Send announcements to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday for the following week’s paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.



An exhibition and sale of paintings, drawings, sculpture and jewelry by local artists Jackie Elwell, Elaine Florimonte, Debbie Glakas, Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner, from Friday April 4 through May 5 at the Frame Factory in Vienna.

Lisa Neher, Sarah Swart and Barbara Wagner. [www.theframefactory1.com](http://www.theframefactory1.com)  
**Book Sale.** 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church.

**SUNDAY/APRIL 6**  
**The History of the Country Store.** 4-6 p.m. Freeman Store, 131 Church Street, NE, Vienna. The exhibit utilizes artifacts, period apparel, tools, posters and other materials to tell the story of local general stores which often served as grocery, post office, voting precinct, pharmacy, feed and grain supplier, hardware store, as well as filling a role as community centers. The exhibit is free and open to the public and will be in place through 2014. For more information, [www.historicviennainc.org](http://www.historicviennainc.org).  
**Book Sale Clearance.** 1 – 4 p.m. Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library, 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church.

**WEDNESDAY/APRIL 9**  
**Wildfire Toasts the Silver Line.** 6:30 p.m. Wildfire, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Tysons Corner, McLean. Toast the coming of the Silver Line and the great future for Tysons at Wildfire with a four course custom menu designed by Executive Chef Eddie Ishaq, each course paired with a sparkling wine from around the world. Michael Caplin, executive director of the Tysons Partnership, will be the guest speaker. The Tysons Partnership is a dynamic association of citizens and area businesses working with local government to transform Tysons into the next great American city. Michael Caplin will talk about plans for Tysons and answer questions. \$80/ per person. RSVP Amanda or Erika at 703-442-9110.

**FRIDAY/APRIL 11**  
**“Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind.”** 8 p.m. The Alden, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean. In this show, an underground New York City favorite, the eccentric New York Neo-Futurists race against the clock to perform 30 miniature plays in 60 breathless minutes. Tickets are \$20/ \$15 for MCC district residents. [www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)

**SATURDAY/ APRIL 12**  
**Train Club’s 65th Anniversary Model Railroad Open House.** 1-5 p.m. 231 Dominion Road NE, Vienna. Celebrate the Northern Virginia Model Railroaders’ 65th Anniversary. See and hear model trolleys and steam and diesel trains plus Thomas and some of his friends in the Historic

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

Send announcements to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Friday for the following week’s paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.



McLean  
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Here’s What’s  
Happening at MCC

An Alden Theatre Production  
“Miss Nelson is Missing”  
Sat. & Sun, March 29-30 and April 5-6, 3 p.m.  
\$10/\$8 MCC district residents

Studio Rep  
“Code 20: Proceed to Improv”  
Thursday, April 10, 7-9 p.m.  
Old Firehouse Teen Center  
Free admission



New York Neo-Futurist  
“Too Much Light Makes  
The Baby Go Blind”  
Friday, April 11, 8 p.m.  
\$20/\$15 MCC district residents



Bear Hunt Productions  
“We’re Going on a Bear Hunt”  
Saturday, April 12, 2 p.m.  
\$15/\$10 MCC district residents

McLean Spring Community  
Garage Sale & Recycling Event  
Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.  
1420 Beverly Road  
Free admission

Spring Break Trips  
Mon-Fri, April 14-18, 8 a.m-6 p.m.  
Destinations/Activities vary

The McLean Community Center  
[www.mcleancenter.org](http://www.mcleancenter.org)  
Home of the Alden Theatre  
[www.aldentheatre.org](http://www.aldentheatre.org)  
1234 Ingleside Ave.  
McLean, VA 22101  
703-790-0123, TTY: 711



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## Virginia Bluebells: Native Spring Beauty

Carpets of bluebells coming soon to a park near you.

BY DONALD SWEIG

**T**he Virginia Bluebells are coming!

In early Spring, these beautiful native wildflowers will burst into bloom profusely throughout much of the Washington area. Botanically named *Mertensia virginica*, one of a number of species of *Mertensia*, Virginia Bluebells can be found in many moist, woodland areas, especially along streams and rivers.

Depending on the weather, they first appear in early April as light pink buds, and then open into several shades of pink, blue and even white. In some areas along the local rivers they bloom in stunning profusion, creating a veritable carpet of color.

After perhaps ten-days to two weeks, the blossoms will fade and not appear again until the following Spring. They are not difficult to find in season and most wildflower enthusiasts have a favorite Bluebell haunt.

They are easy to find along the floodplain of the Potomac River at Turkey Run Park, a National Park Service site, on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, just inside the beltway in McLean.

There are also large and popular stands of Bluebells at the Bull Run Regional Park, a Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority site.

Look for them also at Great Falls National Park in Virginia, or along the C&O Canal in Potomac. Take your binoculars; bluebells often grow on the islands in the middle of the river.

Bluebells grow best, and most profusely, in the sandy soils of the floodplain along the local rivers. A particularly stunning and easily accessible stand of Bluebells is in Fairfax County's Riverbend Park, where one can walk the paths both up and down river from the visitor center with copious bluebells on both sides of the path. It's sight to behold. One might also notice other Spring wildflowers along the various trails, along the river floodplains and in the nearby woods.

The annual appearance of the Virginia Bluebells is a treat too sweet to miss. Take your camera to preserve the memory, but please don't pick the wild blue-



**Classic Virginia Bluebells in full bloom. There are many local places to enjoy these native Virginia wildflowers, including Riverbend Park in Great Falls, Bull Run Park in Centreville and the C&O National Historical Park in Potomac. See sidebar.**

PHOTOS BY DONALD SWEIG



**Some Bluebells flower in delicate shades of pink and light blue. There are many local places to enjoy these native Virginia wildflowers, including Riverbend Park in Great Falls, Bull Run Park in Centreville and the C&O National Historical Park in Potomac. See sidebar.**

bells; they are very fragile and will soon wither if plucked.

If you are interested in growing these flowers yourself, they like moist to wet soil in part or mostly shaded areas, according to the Master Gardeners of Northern Virginia: "Best planted at the edge of a woodland path or by a shaded pond." Bluebells appear to be both deer and rabbit resistant.

## Where to Look for Virginia Bluebells

Try these public places for reliable stands of Bluebells. Depending on the weather, early to mid-April is the best time to find them in full bloom.

Turkey Run Park, National Park Service,  
George Washington Memorial Parkway  
<http://www.nps.gov/gwmp/planyourvisit/turkeyrun.htm>

Great Falls National Park, 9200 Old Dominion Dr, McLean,  
VA 22102 (703) 285-2965  
<http://www.nps.gov/grfa/index.htm>

Bull Run Regional Park, Northern Virginia Regional Park  
Authority, 7700 Bull Run Dr, Centreville, VA 20121  
(703) 631-0550  
[http://www.nvrpa.org/park/bull\\_run](http://www.nvrpa.org/park/bull_run)

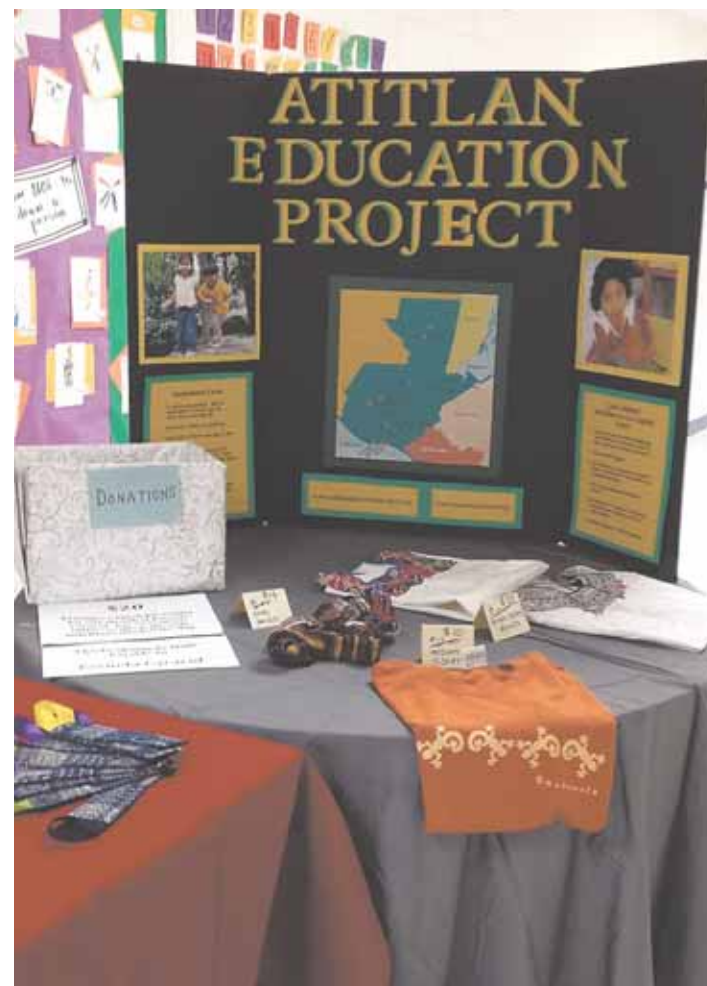
C&O Canal National Historic Park,  
11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac

(301) 582-0813  
<http://www.nps.gov/choh/index.htm>

Look for the bluebells on the floodplain between the canal and the river or on the islands in the river.

Riverbend Park, Fairfax County Park Authority,  
8700 Potomac Hills St, Great Falls  
(703) 759-9018  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/>

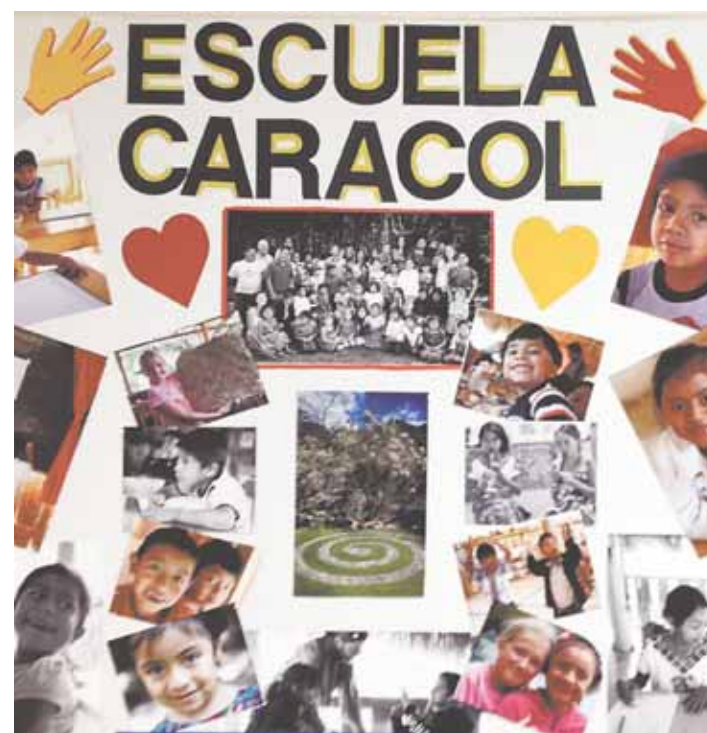
Riverbend is a particularly easy place to see a stunning display of Bluebells. The park is open every day, admission is free. Try calling the park to check when the bluebells are in full bloom. Visitor is center closed on Tuesdays. "Spring is wildflower time. Many species of spring ephemerals grace the river banks from March to June. Take a walk between carpets of Virginia Bluebells and Spring Beauties, and look for Wild Ginger, Dutchman's Breeches and Trout Lilies."



PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH ENDE

## Fun Fair at Chesterbrook Elementary

Chesterbrook Elementary School held its Fun Fair on Saturday, March 15. One of the booths at the Fair was developed as part of Chesterbrook's Service Learning Project. Through the Atitlan Education Project, a nonprofit program of Congressional District Programs, Chesterbrook students help Escuela Caracol, a school in Guatemala. The booth had informational materials and also sold handcrafted goods that were made in the Guatemalan village where Escuela Caracol is located. Chesterbrook teacher, Betsy Butler, staffed the booth and also sold scarves she had knitted. The funds made from booth sales will be used by Escuela Caracol to help support scholarships for the local Mayan children and for books and art supplies for the school. For more information about Escuela Caracol, visit [www.escuelacaracol.org](http://www.escuelacaracol.org)







**Churchill Road Science Olympiad team members, from left: Rupa Siva, Mrs. Rajee Ramesh (obscured), Brian Wang, Daniel Wen, Brandon Torng, Ethan Schoenberg, Dylan Tschampel (obscured), Ms. Jen Ezzell (obscured), Samuel Kim, Anna Krause-Steinrauf, Ethan Li, Alex Zhang (obscured), Cynthia Wang and William Wang. Clockwise from center around trophy: Ethan hsaio, Daniel Kalish, Eric Kim, Nolan Ward, Ryker Bendewald, Victor Bo, Ian Palk, Katie Jeong, Austin Young, Ladan Haiderbaigi, Sahana Ramesh, Ashley Xing, and Yujin Kim.**

## Churchill Road Science Olympiad Team Wins First Place at the Regional Tournament

The Churchill Road Elementary School Science Olympiad team turned in a fabulous performance at the Virginia Science Olympiad Regional Tournament on Saturday, March 1, at Madison High School in Vienna. Competing against 20 other teams from area elementary and middle schools, Churchill Road's team won First Place. The school's fifth and sixth graders competed against other fifth and sixth graders, as well as seventh and eighth graders, in science topics that included Life Science, Physics, Chemistry, Earth Science, Technology and Inquiry and Nature of Science. CRS students placed in the top five in 14 events, and they placed in the top 10 in most other events.

Churchill Road fifth grader teacher Jennifer Ezzell and parent Rajee Ramesh were the team coaches. Ezzell said, "I'm so proud of how hard the kids worked and how great they did competing against the other teams, especially the middle schoolers. The students put in a lot of extra time after school and on weekends preparing for the competition. Many thanks to all of the parents for their support, especially parent coach Rajee Ramesh."



PHOTOS BY JEFF PALK

**Churchill Road Elementary School Science Olympiad coaches Rajee Ramesh (parent) and Jennifer Ezzell (fifth grade teacher) show off the team's first trophy at the Madison Regional Tournament.**

### BULLETIN BOARD

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

#### WEDNESDAY/MARCH 26

**McLean Community Center Governing Board Meeting.** 7:30 p.m. MCC, 1234 Ingleside Avenue, McLean.

#### SATURDAY/MARCH 29

**Ataxia Medical Meeting.** 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. Registration 8:30 a.m. Offices of Dixon Hughes Goodman, 1410 Spring Hill Road, Suite 200, Tysons Corner. Information about the latest ataxia research will be presented at

the annual medical meeting of the Chesapeake Chapter of the National Ataxia Foundation. Admission is free, but RSVP to request a box lunch (\$12.50 donation suggested). 703-759-2008 or [ccnafpres@gmail.com](mailto:ccnafpres@gmail.com). [www.ataxia.org](http://www.ataxia.org).

#### SATURDAY/APRIL 5

**Navigating the Complexities of Lyme Disease.** 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Vienna Presbyterian Church, 124 Park St, Vienna. Topics include: diagnosis & treatment, emotional and spiritual effects, and navigating the medical maze. Cost \$15 preregistration/\$20 at door. To register, visit <http://bit.ly/lymecomplexities>.

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Painting by Torpedo Factory Art Center artist Anna Shakeeva



# Langley High Orchestra Inspires Florida School

BY SUSAN MCQUADE

**T**he smiling high school senior held her violin in her outstretched hands, offering to show the 6-year-olds how to play it. As she plucked the strings, a child recoiled in surprise, afraid that he was close enough to hurt the instrument. Twenty minutes later, that same child was holding the violin and the bow, exclaiming, "I want to play this."

Similar positive experiences occurred in five other classrooms at the Cherokee School in Orlando, Fla., when the Langley High School Orchestra brought student-led educational sessions and performed two concerts during a recent trip. The Cherokee School is a special education elementary school, part of Orange County Public Schools.

In classroom sessions taught by teams of high school musicians, principles of early childhood music were combined with sensorimotor experiences to give the Cherokee students the best possible introduction to a string orchestra. After a demonstration of how vibrations produce sound, freshman Aaron Grossman led a demonstration of the different sounds made by violins and violas. Students in senior Julia Hara's classroom enjoyed stomping their feet to establish a beat, and also learned how a conductor uses the beat to keep the orchestra musicians together. A student in sophomore Haley Simkins' class was fascinated with the conductor's baton. Cherokee students learned how they could use their bodies or hands to demonstrate dynamic changes in music.

**MANY CHEROKEE STUDENTS** enjoyed the opportunity to control the speed of the violins when they tried their hand at conducting in the classroom. Melody and harmony were introduced, and sophomore Erik Toor treated his class to his arrangement of a popular song for two violins and two violas.

When students asked questions, Langley Orchestra members were also happy to share information not related to music. In the classroom led by senior Harrison Nam, Langley and Cherokee students took turns showing on a globe that their families hailed from places such as Vietnam, India, Lebanon, and Haiti. Cherokee students in the classroom led by senior Sara Ibrahim were curious to learn what sorts of other activities the orchestra students participated in. As Langley students identified extra-curricular activities such as Model UN, robotics club, sports, tech crew, scouts, art, and dancing, some Cherokee students requested further explanations and demonstrations. Lively discussions ensued as Langley Orchestra students explained why school is important, and described the many benefits of learning an instrument and playing in an orchestra. Cherokee teachers commended the Langley Orchestra students for their teamwork and leadership, and thanked them for

sharing their diverse backgrounds and



**Langley HS Orchestra and Cherokee School students show each other their family's country of origin.**



**Langley HS Orchestra and Cherokee School students hold violins and violas after the Langley students led an educational session in a classroom.**



**Cherokee students and teachers touch the piano to feel the sound vibrations while Langley HS sophomore Theron Masters plays a familiar tune. Langley HS Orchestra conductor Dr. Scott McCormick and his students enjoy the moment.**

interests.

Langley students were thrilled by the warm welcome that they received at the Cherokee School. Prior to the visit, several

orchestra students wrote letters to the school, introducing themselves and their instruments. Each classroom received a letter, and one was read over the loudspeaker

**"It was surprising how enthusiastic the students were, especially since they had not had much exposure to the instruments prior to the visit."**

**— Langley sophomore Haley Simkins**

to the entire school. The Cherokee students were very excited and curious, and the letter writers were touched to receive some letters back from Cherokee students. Sophomore Armon Moussavi-Nejad said, "I really enjoyed reading the letter that an 11-year-old boy wrote back. In the letter, the Cherokee student shared some of his hobbies, described a recent trip, and said that he was looking forward to hearing me play in the orchestra."

**THE TWO ORCHESTRA PERFORMANCES** were wonderful for everyone involved. Langley Orchestra presented classical music and selections from Disney movies that they performed just days earlier at Downtown Disney. Cherokee students enjoyed hearing so many musicians playing together, and their teachers noted that the introductions to the instruments and to the students were extremely beneficial. Many of the Cherokee students wanted to stand behind the orchestra so that they could get closer to the instruments, and when they did so, they were captivated by the conductor and his baton. Prior to the orchestra performances, sophomores Lyric Yu and Theron Masters performed piano solos, including music the children might recognize. Masters was rewarded when students correctly identified the movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean" and the theme music from the Mario game.

Conductor Dr. Scott McCormick held up his baton at one point, and asked the elementary students if they knew what it was. When the student who had been fascinated with the baton in her class correctly answered the question, sophomore Haley Simkins was pleased. "It was surprising how enthusiastic the students were, especially since they had not had much exposure to the instruments prior to the visit" she said.

Afterwards, senior Alex Blankinship said, "I was glad to visit the Cherokee School because sharing music enabled me to meet children that I otherwise might not have had the opportunity to see." Violinist Julia Hara commented that "many students said that their favorite part of being in Florida was the experience at the Cherokee School. Langley Orchestra students like to get in touch with the community."

*Susan McQuade is a Langley High School Orchestra volunteer who designed classroom sessions.*



## NEWS

### Bestselling Author to Keynote Women's Leadership Forum

Christina Daves, author of "PR for Anyone: 100+ Affordable Tips to Easily Create Buzz for Your Business" will keynote the Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce's Regional Women's Leadership Forum on Tuesday, April 29. Held at Capital One Bank Headquarters (1680 Capital One Dr, McLean). The event will run from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

In her presentation titled "Be Your Own Publicist—PR Made Easy!" Daves will provide insight and expert advice on how she appeared in over 50 media outlets in one year.

"Christina is an extraordinary entrepreneur whose myriad achievements span many years and multiple industries," said Greater McLean Chamber of Commerce President Marcia Twomey.

Named Steve Harvey's Top Inventor, Daves has been featured on The Steve Harvey Show, Dr. Oz, local affiliates of NBC, CBS, FOX, and the CW TV, The Washington Post, Washington Business Journal, Parenting, All You, and more. She was named a 2012 Leading Moms in Business by Startup Nation and was a finalist for 2013 Woman Inventor of the Year, WomenInventor Network.



Christina Daves

PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

An entrepreneur for over 20 years, Daves' background includes event planning, land development feasibility, and retail. She is the designer and manufacturer of MediFashions, which are award-winning accessories to make medical devices fashionable.

Cost to attend The Regional Women's Leadership Forum, including lunch, is \$60 per person. Space is limited. For questions or to register visit [www.mcleanchamber.org](http://www.mcleanchamber.org) or call 703-356-5424.

### WEEK IN MCLEAN

FROM PAGE 5

the only privately operated park in the National Park system and is managed by the non-profit organization, Friends of the Claude Moore Colonial Farm, Inc. Admission is \$3 adults, \$2 children and seniors. Children under 3 free admission. Group rates available. Visit [www.1771.org](http://www.1771.org) for more information and directions.

### 10<sup>th</sup> District Academy Day Set for April 5

Area students interested in attending one of the nation's service academies are encouraged to attend the 10th District Academy Day from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 5, at the Loudoun County School Board Office, 21000 Education Court in Ashburn.

Representatives from the U.S. Military Academy, U.S. Naval Academy, U.S. Air Force Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy will be in attendance. In

addition, representatives from the U.S. Coast Guard, Virginia Military Institute and the Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets have been invited.

Rep. Frank Wolf (R-10), who is hosting the event, said students and parents will have the opportunity to meet with these representatives, as well as participate in panel discussions.

The 2019 Academy nomination season is now "open" for inquiries from students considering attending one of the U.S. service academies. Because Wolf will be retiring from Congress at the end of year, the deadline to submit nomination applications through his office has been moved up to September 15 instead of October 1.

For more information about the congressional nominating process or Academy Day, contact Mary Ann Cannon in Wolf's Herndon office at 703-709-5800, or go to [wolf.house.gov](http://wolf.house.gov) and click on "Academy Nominations" to complete an online Candidate Registration form.

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# SPORTS

## East All-Stars Beat West in Suburban Classic

**McLean's Prock named East MVP; South Lakes' Jensen scores 22.**

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**M**cLean senior guard Cami Prock “took a couple emotional days off” following the Highlanders’ season-ending loss to T.C. Williams in the opening round of the 6A North regional tournament on Feb. 24.

Following her decompression session, Prock returned to the gym to work on her game. While her time with the McLean girls’ basketball team was over, Prock’s hard work paid off a month down the road with a strong performance in Sunday’s 10th Suburban Classic all-star game at Oakton High School.

As a member of the East all-stars, Prock scored a team-high 12 points and earned team MVP honors as the East defeated the West 78-64 on March 23.

**THE SUBURBAN CLASSIC** featured some of the top seniors from the 6A North and 5A North regions. The Northern Virginia Women’s Basketball Coaches Association sponsored the event and helped raise scholarship money for athletes.

The East all-stars, coached by Edison’s Dianne Lewis, led the West squad, coached by Madison’s Kirsten Stone, 34-30 late in the second quarter. Prock helped the East pull away, though, scoring six points in the final 90 seconds of the first half as the team built a 41-30 halftime advantage.

Prock agreed that the environment was a combination of competitiveness and enjoyment.

“It was definitely a great mixture of both,” she said. “I know when I’m competing and having fun at the same time, it’s a great feeling.”



**McLean senior and East all-star Cami Prock, left, defends Centreville senior and West all-star Jenna Green during the 10th Suburban Classic on March 23 at Oakton High School. Each player earned MVP honors for her respective team.**

Prock will attend the College of William & Mary next year and is debating whether to attempt to join the university’s basketball team as a walk on.

South Lakes guard Caitlin Jensen, a member of the West all-stars, was another athlete who didn’t take long to return to the gym after her high school season had ended. Jensen said she went back to work the following day after the Seahawks lost to Centreville in the regional quarterfinals on Feb. 25.

On Sunday, Jensen led all scorers with 22 points, including four 3-pointers.

“I’ve been working really hard since the season ended,” Jensen said. “It’s a great feeling.”

Jensen will continue her basketball career next season at the University of Mary Washington. On this afternoon, she got to play once again with South Lakes teammate Abby Rendle, and with girls she had competed against during her high school career.

“It was a good experience,” Jensen said. “It was nice because I’ve played against these people forever and now playing on

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION



**Madison senior and West all-star Katie Kerrigan goes up for a shot during the 10th Suburban Classic on March 23 at Oakton High School.**

the same team with [Centreville point guard] Jenna [Green] and all them, it’s a new feel, but I liked it.”

Madison senior Katie Kerrigan has also been working hard, but in a different sport. After the Madison girls’ basketball team lost to Stonewall Jackson in the region semifinals on Feb. 27, Kerrigan transitioned to her primary sport of lacrosse, which she will play at Ohio State University. On Sunday, she was back on the hardwood as a member of the West all-stars.

“It was definitely a lot of fun playing with the best players in the region,” Kerrigan said. “It’s definitely a little hard because I haven’t touched a basketball in three weeks. It was fun. It was a great experience. I got to play with a lot of my close friends. It was a great way to end my high school career.”

Kerrigan scored six points, played aggressive defense and got to play for Coach Stone one more time.

“It was fun,” Stone said of coaching Kerrigan in the all-star game. “She’s just a workhorse. You don’t really see many of those. ... I turned to the girls on the bench

and I’m like, ‘I would hate for her to have to guard me.’ And they were like, ‘it’s awful.’”

**THE EAST ALL-STARS** led by as many as 22 points, when West Springfield’s Amy Berglund scored to give the team a 76-54 advantage in the fourth quarter. Berglund finished with 10 points. She was one of four East players to reach double figures, and one of seven to score at least eight points.

Samantha Porter (Mount Vernon/Christopher Newport) and Amber Bryson (Lee) each scored 10 points for the East all-stars. Tykera Carter (T.C. Williams) finished with nine points, while Michelle Noel (Wakefield) and Tatianna Torres (Edison) each had eight. Caitlyn Mandela (Lake Braddock) and De’Ja Jeanpierre (Mount Vernon/Barton College) each had four points for the East, and Angie Schedler (T.C. Williams) had three.

For the West all-stars, Centreville’s Green finished with 13 points and earned team MVP honors. Arnelle Collins (Freedom) scored 12 points and Alexia Johnson (Broad Run) had nine. Kayla Hix (Stonewall Jackson) and Bailey Dufrene (Osborn) each had one point. Freedom’s Nicole Lubovich also competed for the West team. Centreville’s Katie Blumer was a member of the West all-stars but sat out due to injury.

Lewis, who coached Edison to its second consecutive region championship this season, said allowing players to have fun was a priority, but she takes pride in winning.

“Absolutely,” she said. “I hate to lose.”

There was a 3-point shootout prior to the main event, which Berglund won with nine points in the final round. Dufrene produced a final-round score of eight, while Prock and Green each had a score of seven.

Berglund put up 19 points in the first round.

“My heart was racing, I don’t know why,” Berglund said. “I was pretty nervous. It was fun. I felt like I was in the NBA all-star [shootout]. My legs got tired in the second round, that’s why my score dropped so much, but it was fun.”

## Langley Girl’s Lacrosse Opens Season With a Strong Win Against McLean

The Langley girls’ lacrosse team started its 2014 season under a new coach, Rebecca Watkins, with a win over cross town rival McLean, 19-8 on March 20.

Nine different players scored goals, led by senior co-captain Lauren Clubb (3 goals and 1 assist), junior Julia Byrne (3 goals and 1 assist), freshman Becca Bair (3 goals), sophomore Halle Duenkel (2 goals and 3 assists), senior Katherine Gallo (2 goals and 1 assist), sophomore Morgan Kuligowski (2 goals and 1 assist), junior Nicole Lee (2 goals), junior co-captain Aubrey Zarella (1 goal and 2 assists) and freshman Anna Hofgard (1 goal and 2 assists). Freshman goalie Megan O’Hara had a strong game with 11 saves.

Langley reached the state finals each of the last two seasons, but enters the 2014 season with many new starters. The Saxons are captained this year by se-

niors Clubb and Jordan Simonides, and junior Zarella.

Coach Watkins, a former Westfield High School lacrosse star, recently took over the coaching reigns from longtime coach Richard DeSomma after a two-year stint as an assistant coach at Shenandoah University.

“I see a deep and talented team, and am excited to be able to work with these girls to achieve their true potential,” Watkins said. “The McLean game demonstrated that we have a balanced attack, and I look forward to more successful games as the girls come together as a team.”

Langley improved to 2-0 with a 10-9 victory against Centreville on March 24.

Next week will be a real test for Langley with games against Loudoun Valley, Fairfax and Oakton.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

**Langley junior Bethany Bacso fires a shot during a March 20 game against McLean.**



## COMMUNITY

### McLean HS Crew Team Mulch Madness

**T**he 2014 team of rowers and coxswains from McLean High moved 16,000 bags of mulch over a two day period and still managed to finish several hours early. They did this with just under 70 Crew roster members, parents, siblings, friends and faithful alumnae. The event could not be held without the parents who loaded, drove, chased and cleaned the trucks, prepared food, handled the organizational tasks and sat security detail with the mulch, trucks, and equipment overnight.

All were treated to food creations from new food tent captains who put on a show for hungry rowers and parents! They prepared grilled chicken, smoked chicken and pork barbecue in addition to the more traditional hamburgers and hot dogs. Side dishes included a super pasta salad, grilled vegetables and other healthful options.

None of this would be possible without the support from friends, neighbors, and community, who



**Rowers gather at food prep.**

PHOTO BY CHARLOTTE DEJEAN

purchased mulch from dedicated rower's sales efforts. The McLean Crew Team does not receive any financial support from Fairfax County or from McLean High School.

And now, on to regatta season which gets underway this coming weekend.

— CHARLOTTE DEJEAN

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# Another Milestone

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



March 30, 2014. My age 59 and a half (9/30/54 is my date of birth). The age at which money deposited into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) can be withdrawn without incurring a 10 percent early-withdrawal penalty from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Not that I'm retiring. I am remembering though when this cancer-centric life of mine began.

I was diagnosed – in person – on February 27, 2009. Coincidentally around the time of the year when I contribute to my/our previous calendar year's IRA. On that fateful February day, I was age 54 and nearly one half, approximately five years away from having penalty-free access to my own "qualified" money. Having just received a "13 months to two years" prognosis by my oncologist, decision-making on subjects A-Z and/or everything in between – from the sublime to the ridiculous – was challenging at best, and practically impossible at worst. Throw in a time consideration – such as the future – to factor into your planning, and topsy-turvy becomes turvy-topsy.

Now complicate the process further by introducing financial issues – past, present and future – along with the incredible uncertainty of a totally unexpected terminal diagnosis (stage IV, non-small cell lung cancer, NSCLC) and you have inaction, inattentiveness and insecurity overwhelming you at every step – and at every stagger, too; physically and emotionally.

As awkward and unfamiliar as this experience was at the time, I recall pondering the merit of investing money then that I would have limited access to until later, five years later in fact (without penalty that is). I mean, who knew/knows what expenses I might incur during my treatment? Fortunately I had health insurance, but considering co-pays, deductibles, "reasonable and customary"-type reimbursements leaving a balance to be borne by yours truly, alternative medicines/treatment options available (likely a total out-of-pocket cost), home health care, caregivers, loss of employment/income and miscellaneous expenses I was too clueless and uneducated to even contemplate and prepare for, and once again, you have potential trouble at every turn. Thinking positively and maintaining a good sense of humor can only keep so many wolves at bay. At some point – or certainly you think so, you are going to have to pay the piper, figuratively and most definitely, literally.

Still, I remember thinking even then, in the haze of this terrible diagnosis/set of unbelievable circumstances, that if I didn't act/live as if I had a future, I likely wouldn't have one. But five years seemed like an eternity, and given my prognosis, didn't seem like time I should necessarily plan for. After all, my doctor had suggested that perhaps I "take that vacation I had always dreamed of."

Well, here I am, five years later, having invested every year in my/our IRA, still alive and extraordinarily lucky to be so. In truth, given the facts and feelings I was presented with in late February, 2009, I didn't think I'd live to see this day. But I have. And even though I'm not retiring and not needing to withdraw any funds – prematurely or otherwise – from my IRA, March 30, 2014 is a date, to me, worth acknowledging. Having lived this long, I suppose it's time to pick another date – in the future. If I don't plan for it, I likely won't get there.

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

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## 21 Announcements

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## 21 Announcements

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## SCHOOLS

### FCPS Students Win Awards at History Day Competition

Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) won nine first place awards at the regional competition for National History Day, held recently at Mount Vernon High School. The two best entries in each category and in each age division have qualified to compete in the Virginia History Day contest on Saturday, April 26, in Williamsburg.

First place winners included:

♦ Ian Suzuki and Justin Shaw of Langley High School in Senior Group Documentary for "The Rights of the Quebecois."

♦ Basra Bashir of Mount Vernon High School in Individual Website for "Children Without Childhood."

♦ Jonathan Montgomery of West Springfield High School in Senior Historical Paper for "Geneva Convention: Responsibilities of the State Protecting the Rights of Prisoners of War."

♦ Abdullah Choudhury of West Springfield High School in Senior Individual Exhibit for "The Role of Japanese-Americans in World War II."

♦ Glynnis Farleigh and Alexandra Kraus of West Springfield High School in Senior Group Website for "Rights and Responsibilities of German Citizens During World War II."

♦ Zainab Calcuttawala and Swetha Kota of Westfield High School in Senior Group Exhibit for "Miep Gies Fights for Rights."

♦ Maisha Hoque and Raisa Hoque of Westfield High School in Senior Group Performance for "Akbar the Great: How a Mughal Used His Rights to Fulfill His Responsibilities."

♦ Hayley Seal of Westfield High School in Senior Individual Performance for "The Louisiana Purchase Song."

♦ David Sohn and Andrew Yoon of Lorton Station Elementary School in Junior Group Exhibit for "George Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality in 1793: Rights and Responsibilities of the Newly Independent U.S. Foreign Policy."

Sohn and Yoon also won the George Washington Leadership Prize, sponsored by Mount Vernon, and the first place Citizenship History Award, sponsored by the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. Caleb Danen and Chloe Rutley of Lorton Station Elementary School won the second place Citizen History Award, sponsored by the Virginia Society of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Westfield High School student Monica Rudolph won the Newseum First Amendment Freedoms Award, sponsored by the Newseum, for her Senior Individual Exhibit, "Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, Leading the Way for Women's Voting Rights." Whitman Middle School student Anna Jackson won the Newseum First Amendment Freedoms Award in the Junior Division for her Junior Individual Performance, "Ooh, What Should I Wear?"

Second place winners included Emily Vang of Langley High School for Senior Individual Exhibit; Brooke Scutt, Ashley Sowell, and Ivania Canizalez of Mount Vernon High School for Senior Group Documentary; Alison Gray and Eva Du of West Springfield High School for Senior Group Exhibit; Christina Starling, Jonathan Hayes, Gari Jimenez-Lugo, and Stephen Scott of West Springfield High School for Senior Group Performance; Catherine Elwell of West Springfield High School for Senior Historical Paper; Celina Paudel of Westfield High School for Senior Individual Performance; and Ranai Kazi of Whitman Middle School for Junior Individual Exhibit.

Third place winners were Flannery Jamison of Madison High School, Senior Individual Documentary; Molly McClelland of Mount Vernon High School, Senior Individual Performance; Robert Marchibroda and Nicholas Phan of Robinson Secondary School, Senior Group Exhibit; Aya Khalafalla of West Springfield High School, Senior Individual Web Site; Brittany Branch of West Springfield High School, Senior Individual Exhibit; Jisun Lee, Sarah Lim, and Asmita Shah of Westfield High School, Senior Group Documentary; Sara Sturm, Kellie Cleveland, and Skye Koutstaal of Westfield High School, Senior Group Website; Shaleen Haque of West Springfield High School, Senior Historical Paper; and Caleb Danen and Chloe Rutley of Lorton Station Elementary School, Junior Group Exhibit.



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