

Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

SPRING FUN

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Representing Nepal at Chantilly High's International Night are (back row, from left) Sadhana Regmi, Sandhya Dotel and Roshita Upadhyaya; and (front row, from left) Pratibha Pandey and Garima Dhakal.

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

MARCH 27 - APRIL 2, 2014

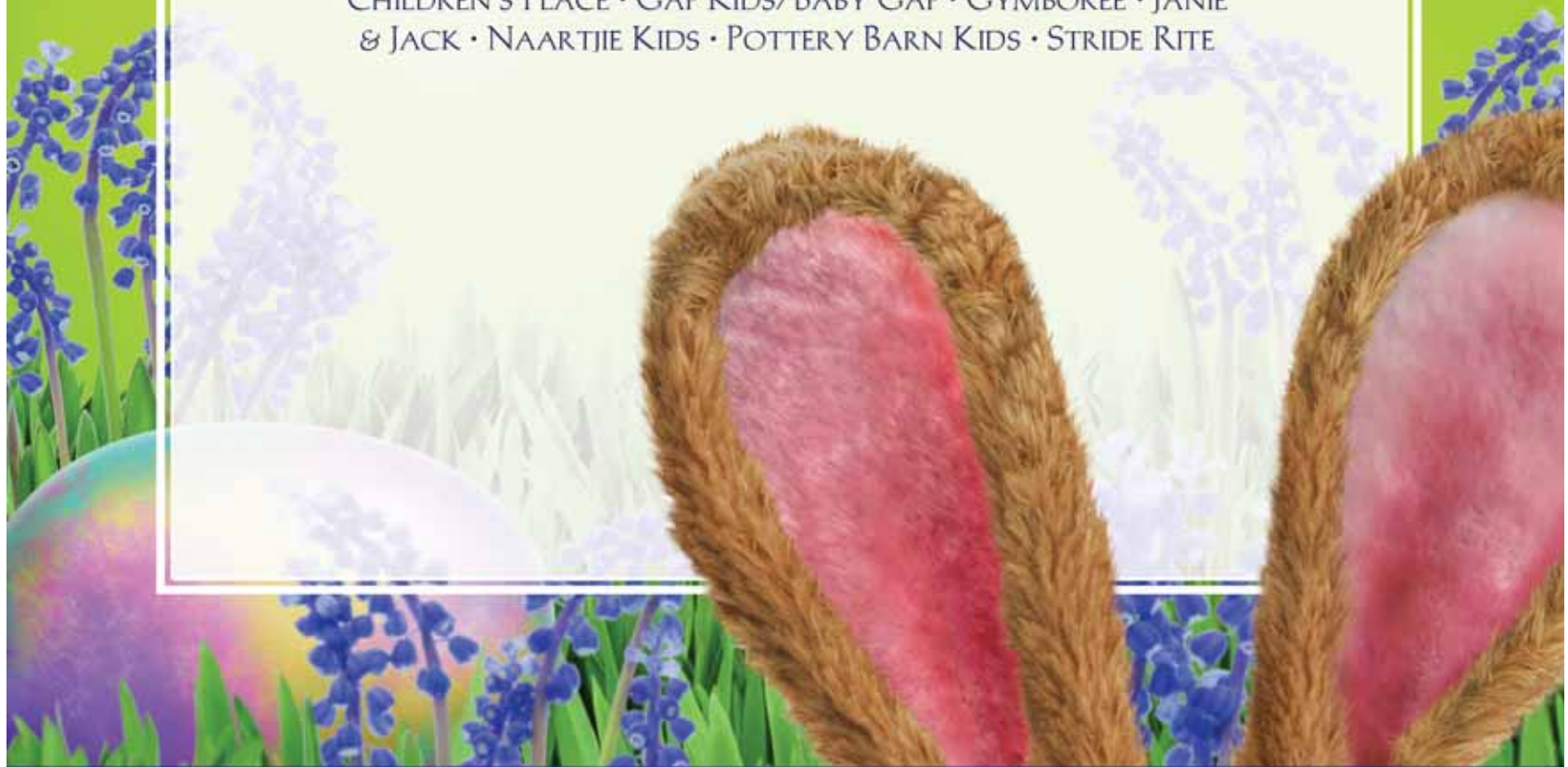
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I-66 AND ROUTE 50 (LEE JACKSON MEMORIAL HIGHWAY) IN FAIRFAX
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ROUNDUPS

Impersonating a Law Officer

Fairfax County police charged a Manassas man last week with impersonating an officer. He is Mark Holt, 32. The incident occurred Tuesday, March 18, at 2:05 p.m. at I-66 and the Fairfax County Parkway.



Holt

Police say an officer from the Fair Oaks District Station performed a traffic stop on a vehicle and, in making contact with the driver, the officer noticed he was wearing a badge around his neck.

According to police, investigation reportedly revealed the badge to be apparently fictitious and the driver to be in possession of other, fraudulent law-enforcement credentials, a stun gun and a firearm. Holt was then arrested and charged with impersonating a law enforcement officer, possession of fictitious identifications, possession of a firearm by a felon and possession of a stun gun by a felon.

Budget Town Hall Meeting

A town hall meeting on the FY 2015 Fairfax County and FCPS budgets is set for Thursday, March 27, at 7 p.m. It'll be held in the cafeteria of Rocky Run Middle School, 4400 Stringfellow Road in Chantilly. Supervisor Michael R. Frey (R-Sully) and Sully District School Board representative Kathy Smith will be on hand, and budget staff from FCPS and the county Office of Management and Budget will make a presentation. Co-sponsor is the Sully District Council of Citizens Associations.

Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, March 27, from 5-8:30 p.m., at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

However, because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

Centreville High International Night

Celebrating its cultural diversity, Centreville High will hold its International Night this Friday, March 28, at the school. A dinner featuring an array of foods from a variety of different countries will be offered in the cafeteria at 6 p.m. Following at 7 p.m. will be the show – highlighting songs, dances and fashions from all over the globe – in the theater. Cost is \$5 for the show only and \$10 for the show plus dinner.

Public Meeting on Parkland

The Fairfax County Park Authority has a new comprehensive plan for local parkland and it's seeking community input. Toward that end, it's hosting a public meeting Wednesday, March 5, at 7 p.m., at Bull Run Elementary, 15301 Lee Hwy. in Centreville. The plan includes the parkland north of Route 29 on the west side of Virginia Run, parkland along Bull Run Post Office Road, the Bull Run stream and parkland along Pleasant Valley Road up to the Loudoun County border.

Food Donations for WFCM

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' food pantry urgently needs donations of spaghetti sauce, fruit juice, cooking oil; pancake mix and syrup, sugar, flour and canned fruit and meat. (Also needed are toothpaste, deodorant, baby wipes and shampoo).

Bring all items to WFCM'S new food-pantry location, weekdays, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., at 13888 Metrotech Drive, near Papa John's Pizza and Kumon Learning Center, in Chantilly's Sully Place Shopping Center.

Thrift-store needs include like-new houseware, plus Bibles in

SEE ROUNDUPS, PAGE 7

NEWS

'To Spot Kids in Crisis'

Police, others take suicide prevention training.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Although there have been four recent incidents of teen suicides in Fairfax County, the Police Department has planned to offer Suicide Awareness and Intervention Training for its officers since October 2013.

So police and others who work with youth recently took a two-day course at the Criminal Justice Academy in Chantilly to learn how they can help prevent people at immediate risk of suicide from following through.

"This is a collaboration between school social workers, counselors, [police] School Resource Officers [SRO] and school security," said police Lt. Christian Quinn, school liaison commander. "SROs are the liaison between the Police Department and the school system."

"This training will give the officers some perspective and help them establish relationships with these other groups because they see the kids first," he continued. "The goal is to spot kids in crisis and provide them with meaningful intervention before they make tragic choices."

The workshop focused on small-group discussions and skills that could help them save lives. Officers learned how to recognize a call for help, reach out and offer support and connect people with the particular resources they need.

"This is the means to identify kids struggling and maybe not voicing it," said Quinn. "Not everybody who's depressed commits suicide, and not everybody who's suicidal expresses this feeling. So we try to see what subtle behaviors they do in advance so we can provide proactive measures."

For example, it helps if police, social workers or counselors can receive a peer referral because of

something disturbing or unsettling that a teen posted on social media. Then, said Quinn, "We can put in a safety plan and try some steps to help [that teen]."

SROs get to know students and their friends personally. So often, said Quinn, "The kids will go to the SRO and say, 'I'm concerned about So and So.' If it prevents even one suicide, it's worth the effort."

He said teens often exhibit some telltale behavior signaling they're having some type of problems. Some of the warning signs to look for are behavioral changes; threatening messages; and a change in grades, friends and/or activities outside of school.

That's why, said Quinn, "Parental involvement is paramount. If parents see changes in their kids, they can bring it to the attention of the SRO. They and

the school social workers and counselors are the first net to provide safety and catch something. Then there can be some intervention and kids can get help, such as a referral for long-term care."

About 30 people signed up for the mid-March class at the Criminal Justice Academy. They were evenly divided between SROs, school security, and school social workers, clinicians and counselors.

Master trainers from the ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) program - offered by a company called LivingWorks - provided the instruction. Also sponsoring the course was the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services; it was funded by a grant.

According to ASIST, as much as 6 percent of the population

has serious thoughts of suicide. In Fairfax County, there were 94 suicides in 2012 and 95 in 2013. So far this year, there have been 19 — and 15 of them were teenagers.

"Suicidal persons find all manner of means to accomplish the act," said Quinn. "They don't choose one way over the other. We take the issue very seriously, and we know this training is critical so the folks on the front line will have a better chance to do something productive to keep kids safe."



BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Police Lt. Christian Quinn, school liaison commander, discusses the new suicide awareness and intervention training.

Compassion Award

The Virginia Federation of Humane Societies has selected the state's top animal shelters and programs that made a difference in the animal welfare in 2013. And the Fairfax County Animal Shelter received the Compassion Award for its demonstration of strong leadership and significant progress toward reducing euthanasia of healthy and treatable dogs and cats in the community. From left are Lee Ann Shenefiel, Business Operations manager; Shelter Director Tawny Hammond; Kelly Willet, Animal Care Operations manager, and Kristen Auerbach, Communications and Outreach director. Last year, Fairfax County was the largest jurisdiction in the U.S. with an animal-placement rate above 90 percent.



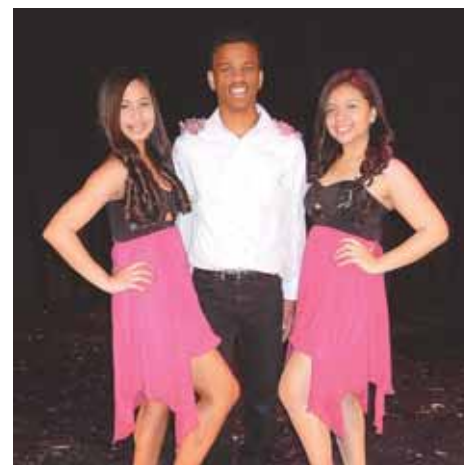
PHOTO CONTRIBUTED



Striking a pose and representing the U.S. are Angela Shakeri and Xavier Goytia.



The Bollywood Dance Team is mainly from India, plus Pakistan.



Ready to entertain are (from left) Cindy Moscote, Nick Marrow and Debanhi Matamoros, representing Mexico, Honduras, Colombia and America.

Chantilly High's International Celebration

Featuring food and entertainment, Chantilly High's International Night was Wednesday, March 19.



Representing Korea are (back row, from left) Esther Mun, Saemi Rood and YeJi Kwon; and (front row, from left) Michelle Kim and Olivia Ryu.



Pallavi Swarup (left) and Priyanka Shah represent India.

PHOTOS BY
BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION



Representing China, Yiran Tang strikes a graceful pose.



Selling flan and empanadas are Spanish Honor Society members (from left) Erika Minock, Newton Himm, Julie Estrada, Ashley Nguyen, Tuleen Hajoun, Sara Sukar and Andy Han.



Members of the Hispanic Leadership Club sell cookies and cupcakes. From left are Vanessa Ferrufino, Nicole Iriarte, Jennifer Sosa, Jocelin Ramos, Annais Peña and Alvaro Chavez.



Some of the participants in last year's 5K Walk and Candlelight Vigil.

Walk, Vigil Honors Victims

Event promotes crime victims' rights.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Fairfax County remembers local people who've been victims of crimes. And on Sunday, April 6, at Fairfax Corner, they'll be honored via the second annual 5K Walk and Candlelight Vigil.

The free event, in front of the movie theater at 4100 Monument Corner Drive in the Fairfax Corner shopping center, kicks off National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 6-12.

Each April, law-enforcement agencies, along with organizations and communities, join together to observe this week. The goal is to promote victims' rights and honor crime victims and the people who work advocating on their behalf.

Fairfax County Police Chief Edwin C. Roessler Jr. and Commonwealth's Attorney Ray Morrogh will welcome attendees and give opening remarks at 5:30 p.m. First, though, check-in and a resource fair featuring more than 15 vendors from local and national service providers will be held from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

The participants include Dr. Will Marling, executive director, National Organization for Victim Assistance. In addition, Steve Shillingford and Peter Khan of the E and Me band will perform live jazz.

The walk will begin at 6 p.m., followed by the candlelight vigil honoring the victims, from 7-7:30 p.m. For more information and to register, go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NCVRW2014>. The first 200 people registered will receive free T-shirts.

The walk and vigil are being hosted by the Victims Services Section of the county Police Department and the Fairfax County Law Enforcement Foundation. And the community is invited to join the professionals who support local victims of homicide, trauma, sexual and domestic violence, child physical and sexual abuse, stalking, human trafficking and suicide as they walk together.

A related event during that week will be held Thursday, April 10, from 11 a.m.-9 p.m., at The Greene Turtle Restaurant, 3950 University Drive, Suite 209, in the City of Fairfax. Sponsored by the Fairfax County Law Enforcement Foundation, it's a fundraiser for the Victim Services Section so it can continue meeting the immediate needs of crime victims.

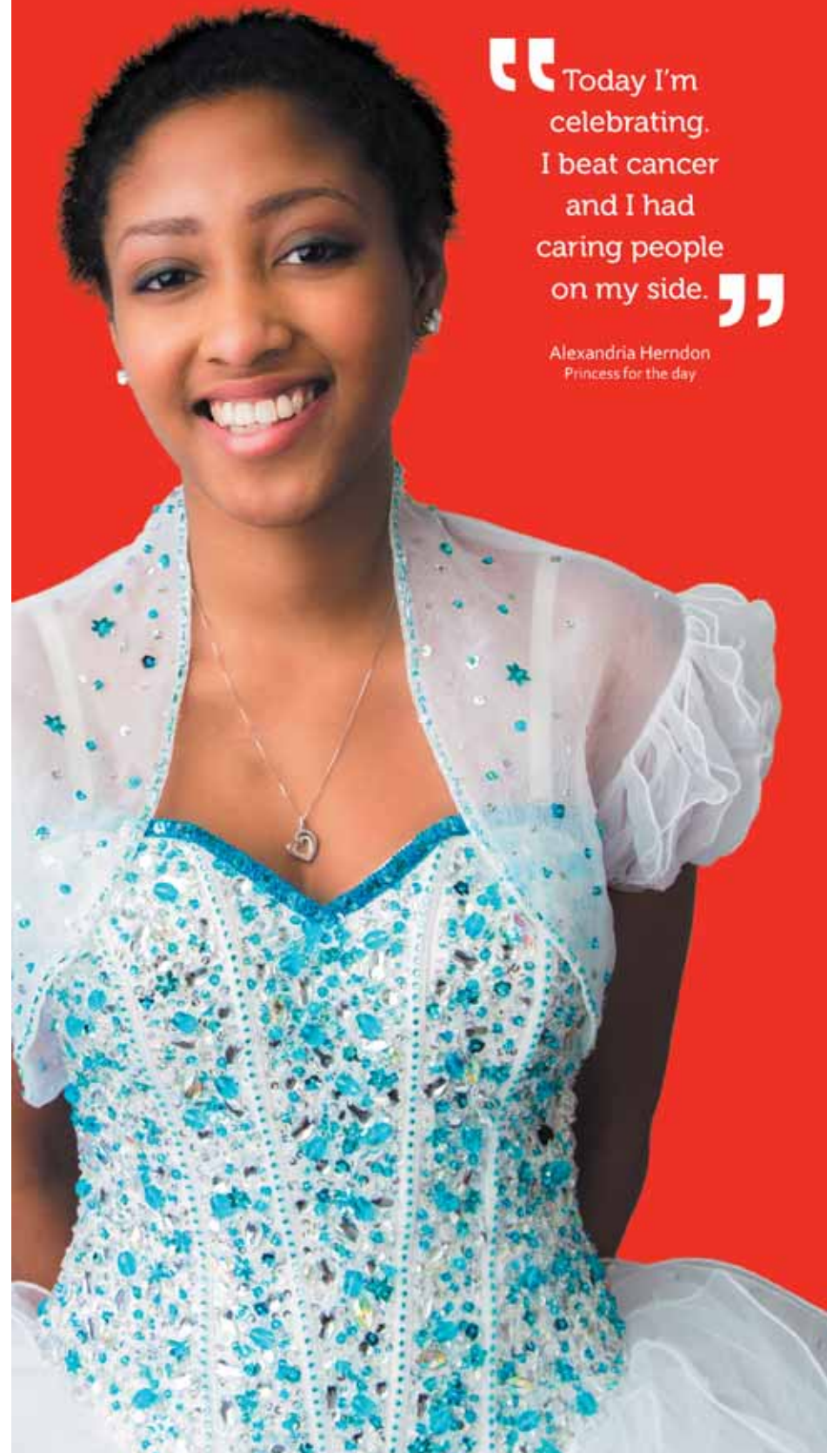
Those eating lunch or dinner that day at The Green Turtle will have 20 percent of the gross proceeds from their meal donated to the cause. To participate, people must download an event flyer at www.fairfaxfoundation.org, print it and present it to their server when they order.

To learn more about the Police Department's Victim Services section, visit the department's website at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/services/victim-services.htm>.



Alex celebrated her 16th 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.



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

Alexandria Herndon
Princess for the day

Challenging Budgets

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

Northern 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 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. Property

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.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Negatives of Income Equality

To the Editor:

I for one, and completely thankful for an income gap in society. Hard work, innovation and that all important "Stick-to-itiveness" allows people to come from a challenged background and succeed. It is the communist ... er ... democrat buzz phrase that the income gap is a concept that is to be loathed and even feared. I cannot begin to mention the myriad people that have come to this great and prosperous nation with the clothes on their back and a dream in their God-given souls, only to rise above the endless challenges placed before them. My grandparents came here with nothing and instilled into their children concepts that are wholly unknown to some entire segments of today's leech society. These concepts are education, hard work, patience and empathy for others. By staying in school, my parents were able to build a successful business through the decades by maintaining a hands-on approach that usually entailed working 7 days a week and 12-hour days. Success did not come overnight and not even for many years but with patience, they were able to learn what works, what does not, and gained the ultimate ability to discern the difference in the future. When someone was short or could not pay from time to time, it was an honor to help others that faced similar challenges. The recipients of such help would not have broken pride but

would take pride in the fact that maybe someday, they could help others in their own future.

Unfortunately, society has changed to those of takers instead of builders and makers; to a society of "I want it all and I want it now", where work is a four-letter word as long as there is WIC, SNAP, Welfare and seemingly endless unemployment benefits and the taking becomes generational. Why work and have self respect when the government will take care of you. In addition to this, once I get mine, I'm not sharing. Society as a whole must adjust to a more stable and sustainable income gap in that those who refuse to participate in actually earning a living are not a taxing burden to those who actually produce, educate and provide opportunities for others in society.

This brings me to my final point: Those who scream income gap have no earthly idea what it's like to live and survive in a soulless society where everyone is to earn the same, live the same, get housed the same and dream the same nightmares. I have seen these countries, physically lived in these countries, and there are too many of these countries. When someone finally escapes, guess what ... they come here to the U.S. of A. I've looked in the eyes of children in foreign lands where this total income equality occurs (and it's not a very high income if any) and there is no hope whatsoever for these little ones. Those that promulgate the phrase income inequality, all they know is that it's a buzz phrase and part of a political campaign of complete misdirection from the total lack of skill

and leadership in today's democrat party and fellow travelers. I for one, revel in an income gap where the fruits of one's labors may be enjoyed, increased and passed on to those who are less fortunate and to be passed on to those in the future. No self-respecting individual could possible want everyone to earn the same, live the same way, and barely survive the same way. This is the gospel of income equality and most of the time, some people become more equal than others over time and your life is not your own. I actually pity the poor misguided souls that spout the negatives of income equality.

Jim Marotta
Centreville

Join with Earth Hour

To the Editor:

At 8:30 p.m. on March 29, hundreds of millions of people will turn off their lights in a worldwide display of commitment to protect our planet.

Earth Hour is a visual reminder that the world's environmental issues don't have to overwhelm us; we all can do something. This single act of turning off the lights is uniting businesses, governments and communities while provoking discussion, capturing imaginations and empowering people to make a difference.

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ROUNDUPS

FROM PAGE 3

English and Spanish. The store is at 13939 Metrotech Drive. In addition, Thrift Store volunteers are needed for two- to four-hour shifts Fridays, between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m., and Saturdays, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

Drive Seniors to Appointments

Fairfax County needs volunteers to **drive older adults to medical appointments** and wellness programs. Call 703-324-5406, TTY 711, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and link to Volunteer Solutions or email VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Meals on Wheels Volunteers

Fairfax County needs Meals on Wheels drivers in Chantilly and group Meals on Wheels coordinators in both Chantilly and Fairfax. Contact Volunteer Solutions at 703-324-5406, TTY 711, VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm.

How to Help the CLRC

The Centreville Labor Resource Center (CLRC) needs volunteers to lead vocational training workshops to increase the workers' job skills. A Wednesday morning ESOL instructor is also needed; contact Molly Maddra at coordinator@centrevilleLRC.org for more information.

In addition, end-of-year contributions to CLRC may be made at www.centrevilleimmigrationforum.org. The organization is supported totally by grants and donations; it receives no government funding.

Long-Term Care Advocates

The **Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in assisted living and nursing facilities. Training is provided in March. Call 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Give Caregivers a Break

Fairfax County needs Respite Care volunteers throughout the county to give family caregivers of a frail older adult a well-deserved break. Volunteers visit and over-

see the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Volunteers are matched with families in or near their own neighborhoods. Support and training is provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov.

How to Hire CLRC Workers

The Centreville Labor Resource Center (CLRC) serves businesses and homeowners needing help with just about any home remod-

eling or maintenance project. And local residents who'd like to hire a worker from the CLRC may do so easily. Either call 703-543-6272 or go to www.centrevilleLRC.org and click on the "How to Hire" link. Tell what kind of work is required, how many workers are needed and when.

The CLRC will match the needs to its registered workers' skills and set up the job. The price for work will be negotiated. After the job is completed, employers are encouraged to provide the CLRC with feedback to ensure that the work was done well and to their satis-

faction and to make sure the workers are fairly paid.

Women's Self Defense Program

The Fairfax County Law Enforcement Foundation is partnering with the Fairfax County Police Department to offer the Women's Self Defense Training program. It's based on the SAFE program formerly provided by the Police Department, but now being taught by C&J Security Corp.

The program is a two-day class

that will meet on consecutive Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:15-9:30 p.m. It's currently offered free and all class materials are included. Program funding is provided through the Fairfax County Law Enforcement Foundation.

The course is offered to females, age 13 and older. A female guardian must accompany girls 13-18. No men other than the instructors are permitted to be present during a class. For more information, call 703-246-7806, e-mail WSD@fairfaxfoundation.org or go to www.fairfaxfoundation.org.

THE FAIRFAX GREEN ENERGY PARK
WILL REDUCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS
BY 3.6 MILLION TONS.



TAKE ACTION! Before It's Too Late!

Go to www.FairfaxGreenEnergy.com/take-action/
Ask the Board of Supervisors to support the Green Energy Park

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SPRING FUN

Virginia Bluebells: Native Spring Beauty

Carpets of bluebells coming soon to a park near you.

BY DONALD SWEIG

The Virginia Bluebells are coming. In early Spring, these 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 10 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.



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.

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 blue-

bells on both sides of the path. It's a 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 bluebells; they are very fragile and will soon wither if plucked.

If you are interested in growing these

Where to Look for Virginia Bluebells

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

❖ Turkey Run Park, National Park Service, George Washington Memorial Parkway. Visit www.nps.gov/gwmp/planyourvisit/turkeyrun.htm

❖ Great Falls National Park, 9200 Old Dominion Dr, McLean, VA 22102. Call 703-285-2965 or visit www.nps.gov/grfa/index.htm.

❖ Bull Run Regional Park, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority, 7700 Bull Run Dr, Centreville, VA 20121. Call 703-631-0550 or visit www.nvrpa.org/park/bull_run.

❖ C&O Canal National Historic Park, 11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac. Call 301-582-0813 or visit 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. Call 703-759-9018 or visit 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 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.

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.

'Carmen' Comes to Area

Virginia Opera brings "Carmen" to Center for the Arts.

BY DAVID SIEGEL
THE CONNECTION

Virginia Opera, the Official Opera Company of the Commonwealth of Virginia, will present Georges Bizet's sultry tragedy about opera's most famous femme fatale, "Carmen." The opera has enthralled audiences for more than a century and is one of the most popular. "Carmen" follows Don José and his ill-fated obsession with the alluring Carmen who tosses him aside for another man leading to jealous rage.

"At the Center for the Arts, we strive to offer programming that appeals to our patrons' diverse artistic tastes. Bizet's 'Carmen' is beloved by opera enthusiasts, and even those who are new to the genre are familiar with the

Where and When

Virginia Opera's "Carmen" at the George Mason University Center for the Arts, 4400 University Drive, Fairfax. Performances are Friday, April 11 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, April 13 at 2 p.m. Tickets are Friday: \$44-\$86; Sunday: \$48-\$98. Youth Discount: tickets are half price for youth through grade 12. Call 888-945-2468 or visit cfa.gmu.edu

music," said Jill Laiacona, George Mason University, Public and Media Relations Coordinator. "One of its most famous arias, 'Habanera,' has been parodied countless times, including by The Muppets and The Marx Brothers. We're thrilled that Virginia Opera chose this work as the finale for its 39th season."

"The team that Virginia Opera brings to lead 'Carmen' has produced incredible opera both on our stage and in opera houses across the world," said Russell P. Allen, president and CEO of Virginia Opera. "Audiences can expect a production of 'Carmen' that will not disappoint."



Ginger Costa-Jackson as Carmen and Dinyar Vania as Don Jose in Virginia Opera's production of "Carmen."

"At the Center for the Arts, we strive to offer programming that appeals to our patrons' diverse artistic tastes."

— Jill Laiacona, GMU Public and Media Relations Coordinator

ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Photos welcome.

ONGOING

The **Airbus IMAX Theater at National Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center**, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway, is showing movies including "Hubble," "Fighter Pilot," "Hidden Universe" and "The Dream is Alive". Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy/> or call 703-572-4118 for the movie schedule.

Super Science Saturdays. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. the second Saturday of each month at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway. Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy>.

Sully Historic Site. 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Enjoy guided tours of the 1794 home of Northern Virginia's first congressman, Richard Bland Lee. \$7/adult; \$6/student; \$5/senior and child. Hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 703-437-1794.

Art Exhibit. Paintings by Centreville artist Rosemary Gallick will be on display Feb. 19-March 28 at the Atrium gallery at the Woodbridge Campus of Northern Virginia Community College, 15200 Neabsco Mills Road. "Diversity in Music: Crossing Gender and Race" honors the talents of many artists. Free. E-mail rgallick@nvcc.edu, visit nvcc.edu or 703-878-5797.

FRIDAY-SUNDAY/MARCH 14-29

Theater Performance. The Providence Players present John Guare's "The House of Blue Leaves," a dramatic farce which illuminates the American dream and obsession with celebrity. Bronx Zoo attendant Artie Shaughnessy is a failed songwriter with an overly medicated wife, an impatient mistress, an AWOL son, and beer-drinking nuns on the day the Pope visits New York City in 1965. Contains mature themes and some strong language. Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday matinees, 2 p.m. At The James Lee Community Center Theater 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church. Order tickets (\$17-\$20) online at www.providenceplayers.org, by email at providenceplayerstickets@cox.net, by phone at 703-425-6782 or at the door.

THURSDAY/MARCH 27

Toddlin' Twos. 10:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children age 2 can enjoy stories and activities. Free. Registration required. 703-502-3883.

Chantilly Library Teen Advisory

Board Meeting. 7 p.m. at Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Free.

FRIDAY/MARCH 28

Student-Built Robotics

Competition. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Patriot Center, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive. Students will showcase their remote-controlled robots in a tournament. Winners will qualify for the World Robotics Championships. Free. There will be displays and more. Visit www.dc-first.org for more.

Ready for School Storytime. 1:30 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children ages 4-5 can enjoy stories and more. Free. 703-502-3883.

Jazz Festival. 4 p.m. at Chantilly High School, 4201 Stringfellow Rd, Chantilly. Jazz bands and combos from area middle schools and high schools will compete for bragging rights and learn about jazz in the process. Featured groups this year are The Mark Brandt Trio, George Mason University Jazz Ensemble, National Jazz Workshop Invitational Winter Jazz Ensemble, the group No Explanations and the United States Army Blues. Exhibition performances will be given by Chantilly High School's own Workshop Jazz and Chantilly Jazz. Free, open to the public. Visit www.chantillyband.org for more.

BEGINNING FRIDAY/MARCH 28

Easter Bunny. Bunnyville will be located in the lower level of the Fair Oaks Mall's H&M wing, opposite Charming Charlie and Payless ShoeSource. Bunnyville will welcome visitors Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m. and Sundays, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. through Saturday, April 19. Fair Oaks will be closed on Easter Sunday, April 20. All children who visit the Easter Bunny at Fair Oaks' new Bunnyville will receive a gift from the Bunny just for visiting. Visit www.shopfairoaksmall.com or call 703-359-8300.

SATURDAY/MARCH 29

Jazz Festival. 8:40 a.m. at Chantilly High School, 4201 Stringfellow Rd, Chantilly. Jazz bands and combos from area middle schools and high schools will compete for bragging rights and learn about jazz in the process. Free, open to the public. Visit www.chantillyband.org for more.

Student-Built Robotics

Competition. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Patriot Center, George Mason University, 4400 University Drive. Students will showcase their remote-controlled robots in a tournament.

SEE CALENDAR, PAGE 16

GMU Parenting Mindfully Study

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Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj



Invitation

For parents whose children are entering
Kindergarten for the 2014/15 School Year

Kiddie Country Developmental Learning Center, 9601 Old Keene Mill Road, will be presenting an overview to assist those parents who are seeking a high quality educational kindergarten experience for their child(ren) on Thursday, April 10, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

This presentation will be conducted by Karen Duffy, Curriculum Specialist, and Tricia Daniels, Virginia Licensed Kindergarten teacher. Together Ms. Duffy and Ms. Daniels have a total of forty-four years of teaching experience between them and are eager to talk with you and answer any questions you may have.

Kiddie Country's Kindergarten program is highly recognized for its advanced curriculum and outstanding students who meet with great success in first grade and beyond. Come join us for a relaxed session that will fully describe the many outstanding attributes of this highly acclaimed curriculum and the reasons why Kiddie Country's Kindergarten is a "best choice" placement for your child.

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'Wonder of Wonders, Miracle of Miracles'

Liberty Middle presents the musical, 'Fiddler on the Roof Jr.'

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Featuring a cast and crew of 45, Liberty Middle School presents "Fiddler on the Roof Jr." Show times are Thursday-Saturday, April 3, 4 and 5, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$5 at the door and during school lunches.

"This is an old-fashioned musical that tells a wonderful story of how tradition can change from one generation to another — and the music is a big part of it," said Director Jody Scott. "There are beautiful harmonies and the soloists have fantastic voices; but it's not just the singing that makes it so special, but the emotion behind it. And all our actors are very talented, whether in leading roles or character parts."

The story takes place in 1905 Russia and centers around a poor, Jewish family in the town of Anatevka. Said Scott: "This is a marvelous show to introduce at middle-school level because it's based on Russian history and Jewish tradition, so the students are also learning from this play."

They've been rehearsing since January, and Scott says the music really sets the mood for each scene. She also praised the two musical directors, Gary Verhagen and Nancy Hayes, who've worked with her on Liberty's musicals since the school opened, 12 years ago.

"They do an outstanding job of guiding the students singing the exquisite music in this show," said Scott. "All the songs will stay in the audience members' heads long after they've left the theater."

Eighth-grader Margot Vanyan plays the mother, Golde. "She's strict and protective of her five daughters and wants them married and well-off," said Margot. "She and her husband, Tevye, argue a lot, but do love each other. She just wants to keep a proper, stable, Kosher family."

Margot says Golde isn't easy to play, but it's fun learning how. "She provides comic relief and gets to yell at her husband," said Margot. Her favorite song is "Sunrise, Sunset" because "it has pretty harmonies and the parents realize how quickly their chil-



PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION
The lead actors include (standing, from left) Caton Gayle, Brooklynn Pendleton, Paul Anderson, Laura Cantagallo, Margot Vanyan, Jared Renaud, Jensyn Volpe and Maxwell Leitch; and (kneeling, from left) Mya Baptiste and Savannah Gregory.

dren have grown up."

She said the audience will enjoy "the four love stories going on at the same time and seeing them from each couple's viewpoint. The show also teaches Jewish history and tradition and how strict they were about marrying within their faith."

Portraying the family patriarch, Tevye, is eighth-grader Jared Renaud. "He's a tough, stern, stubborn man who doesn't normally share his feelings," said Jared. "He channels his emotions so he doesn't have to express them. And he thinks he wears the pants in his family, but his wife really does."

It's difficult having so many lines, he said, but he likes "feeling as if I am the papa, making sure everyone's OK. But I couldn't [do it] without Margot's support as Golde." Jared likes the song, "Do You Love Me?" because it's one of the few times where Tevye is sensitive. "I'm asking Golde if she

loves me, after all these years," he said.

Classmate Laura Cantagallo plays the oldest daughter, Tzeitel. "She loves Motel the tailor, but is supposed to marry the person her father arranged for her," said Laura. "But she's a determined person and looks out for both her and her sisters. She's very sweet and understanding."

"It's fun having a lead because I'm in lots of scenes," continued Laura. "And I like playing Tzeitel because she's upbeat and positive and I'm the same way. And even though there's sadness in the show, there's also comedy. It tells a story of a family who stays together, despite their differences."

Seventh-grader Mychal Eichenlaub, who was born in Russia, portrays the constable. "He's a Russian Army officer and is a big, tough guy," said Mychal. "But around the villagers, he's nice because he's gotten to know them. He has orders to carry out, but



Margot Vanyan and Jared Renaud act out a scene as the mother and father, Golde and Tevye.

it's hard for him because he likes the people so much."

Mychal's having fun with his role because, like his character, he's "a big guy, but also nice. So it reminds me of me." He likes the number, "To Life," because "it's one of the happy and joyful songs, and the kick-dance they do is cool. All the songs are really emotional, so they'll make the audience feel what the characters are feeling."

Portraying one of the mamas in the village is eighth-grader Maggie Flynn. She said her character's "determined to keep her family in order. She's fierce, but also friendly and nice. She's so much fun to play because I get to be in charge of everybody in her family. She's also intolerant of nonsense and it makes me feel strong."

Maggie's favorite number is "Anatevka" because "it's an emotional song about their town. And it makes me think how sad I'd be to leave a place where I know everybody — and then be a stranger in a new place." She said the audience will especially love Golde because she's funny while being straitlaced. And, she added, "The cast is really close so we all work well together onstage."

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Photo by Ed Knepley

Blizzard of Spending

BY MICHAEL LEE POPE
THE CONNECTION

The 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. "Wait-

ing 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.

"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 re-

ceived yet," said Arlington budget director Richard Stephenson. "In addition, the cost of pothole 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 during the mid-year review or the third-quarter review, long after the snow has melted and the spring flowers have wilted.



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East All-Stars Beat West in Suburban Classic

Centreville's Green named West team MVP.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Centreville point guard Jenna Green spent the final two seasons of her high school career battling with the Oakton girls' basketball team for Concorde District/Conference 5 supremacy.

As a junior, Green led the Wildcats to their first district title since 1993, beating the Cougars 44-41 in the district tournament championship game after splitting the two regular-season meetings. This year, Oakton beat Centreville 48-47 in overtime of the conference final after splitting the regular-season meetings. After Centreville beat Oakton on Jan. 17, Wildcats head coach Tom Watson said games against Oakton "mean everything."

On Sunday, Green took part in her final high school basketball event: the 10th Suburban Classic all-star game at Oakton High School. While her West all-stars fell short, Green was named team MVP. After the game, Green received her award at midcourt and posed for pictures with none other than Fred Priester, head coach of the rival Oakton Cougars and president of the Northern Virginia Women's Basketball Coaches Association.

"I feel honored to have been named MVP because I was playing with so many talented players," Green wrote in an email. "It was my final accomplishment of my high school career. I really admire Coach Priester. I think he is a very good coach and I am definitely going to miss the Centreville and Oakton rivalry."

Green, who will play for the College of William & Mary next season, finished with 13 points but her West all-stars lost to the East 78-64. The East all-stars, coached by Edison's Dianne Lewis, led the West squad, coached by Madison's Kirsten Stone, by as many as 22 points in the second half. Katie Blumer, Green's teammate at Centreville, was also on the West roster but didn't play due to injury.

The Suburban Classic featured some of the top seniors from the 6A North and 5A North regions. The NVWBCA sponsored the event and helped raised scholarship money for athletes.

T.C. Williams teammates Tykera Carter and Angie Schedler played for the East all-



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

stars, finishing with nine and three points, respectively. Carter buried a 3-pointer and scored on a putback in the fourth quarter, giving the East a 68-49 lead.

Carter and Schedler are undecided about their respective college plans.

"It was great," Schedler said about getting to play one more game with Carter. "I'm going to miss playing with her, a lot."

McLean senior Cami Prock finished with 12 points for the East and earned team MVP honors. Prock "took a couple emotional days off" following McLean's 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 the Suburban Classic. The East all-stars led 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."

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 mem-

ber 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 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.'"

Amy Berglund (West Springfield), Samantha Porter (Mount Vernon) and Amber Bryson (Lee) each scored 10 points for the East all-stars. Michelle Noel (Wakefield) and Tatianna Torres (Edison) each had eight. Caitlyn Mandela (Lake Braddock) and De'Ja Jeanpierre (Mount Vernon) each had four points for the East.

For the West all-stars, 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. 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."

Sunday's Suburban Classic started with a 3-point shootout — the perfect competition for West Springfield's Berglund to show off her sharpshooting skills.

After posting the top score of the first round (19), Berglund won the event with a score of 9 in the finals, beating McLean's Prock, Centreville's Green and Osborn's Dufrene.

Berglund, who scored more than 1,000 points in her high school career, knocked down countless 3-pointers in her four years as a Spartan, but she said performing in front of a small crowd in a quiet Oakton High School gym was more nerve-wracking than playing in a big game.

"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."

Centreville senior Jenna Green was named MVP of the West all-stars during the 10th Suburban Classic on March 23 at Oakton High School.

News



Cindy Del Rocco of CC Hair Salon shaves NOVA student Chris Benoit, a 2012 Chantilly High grad.



Ava Buhr, 4, of Fairfax was one of the children honored at the event. A leukemia survivor, she just finished 2-and-a-half years of chemotherapy on Friday and is now in remission. In photo, she helps start her dad Steve's head-shaving. "In 2012, Ava lost all her hair," said her mom Jeannie. "But now it's come back and she can wear it in pigtails."

Hair Today, Gone to a Good Cause

The St. Baldrick's Day event, March 23, at Fast Eddie's in Centreville raised more than \$41,147 toward a cure for childhood cancer. Some 40 people, including two women, got their heads shaved for the cause.



CC Salon's Tiffany Hogan shaves Fast Eddie's door-man Mehdi Benidir.



Magali Pennines of Valon Salon prepares to shave Country Club Manor's Lisa Lanser.



Wayne Malick gets a shave, as did his wife, Lisa Lanser.



Tammy and Steve Ratliff, the event's treasurer and organizer, respectively. Steve shaved his head for the 11th time.



Centreville's Jan Moomjian holds up two ponytails of her hair.



Cub Run fourth-grader Tanner Moomjian and mom Jan after being shaved.

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5:00p.m. - 7:00 p.m. There is no charge.

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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LETTERS

FROM PAGE 6
ference.

Earth Hour is a chance for our area to be a leader in environmental solutions. Now, more than ever we need to address climate change one person, one town, and one city at a time. It's local governments and communities that are feeling the brunt of climate change especially when it comes to caring for citizens during extreme weather like tornadoes, floods, droughts, polar votexes and heat waves and it's local governments like ours that must lead the development of sensible solutions to this global crisis.

So I'm asking our area leaders to do two things: First, commit to participating in Earth Hour by turning out all non-essential lighting in government offices and buildings. Let's show the world that our city is committed to a future where humans can live in harmony with nature.

Second, I urge our local officials to continue to build on the momentum created by Earth Hour. Let's find ways to power our area with renewable electricity to reduce our impact on our planet and help our community actively reduce its contribution to climate change.

Kristen Van Tassell
Centreville

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.

Daryle McGhee
Assistant Vice President,
First Citizens Bank

WRITE

The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. Letters must include writer's full name. Include home address and home and business numbers. Email chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to centreview@connectionnewspapers.com. Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos welcome.

COUNSELORS-IN-TRAINING PROGRAM

The Fairfax County Park Authority is seeking applicants (age 14-17) to serve as Counselors-in-Training (CITs) during the 2014 summer Rec-PAC program. Counselors-in-Training work as part of a team to facilitate activities for children during the summer Rec-PAC program, a structured recreation program with emphasis on leisure skills designed for elementary school children. The cost is \$135 for six weeks of training, but CITs can commit to as little as one week of camp. This year the Rec-PAC program will operate in 50 elementary school locations around Fairfax County on weekdays from June 30 through Aug. 7, 2014. During the summer, students will be assigned to a site and work daily from 8:15 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/rec-pac/cit-volunteer.htm or call 703-222-4664 for more.

FREE TAX ASSISTANCE

Tax Help. Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive will hold free tax help hosted by AARP Tax-Aide on Tuesdays from 4-8:30 p.m.

and Wednesdays from 1-5 p.m. Free. For taxpayers with low- and middle-income and special attention to those age 60 and older. Bring photo ID, social security card and prior year's tax return.

THURSDAY/MARCH 27

Town Hall Meeting. 7 p.m. at Rocky Run Middle School, Cafeteria, 4400 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Topics include the 2015 Budgets for Fairfax County and Fairfax County Public Schools, with Supervisor Michael Frey, School Board Representative Kathy Smith, Fairfax County management and budget staff, and Fairfax County Public Schools budget staff. Co-hosted by The Sully District Council.

MONDAY/MARCH 31

Kindergarten Registration. 2-4 p.m. at Colin Powell Elementary School, 13340 Leland Road, Centreville. Visit www.fcps.edu/start/kindergarten.htm for forms and information.

TUESDAY/APRIL 1

The Affordable Care Act. 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Hilton Washington Dulles Airport, 13869 Park Center Rd, Herndon. \$45,

members; \$60, prospective members. Call 571-323-5304, or email info@dullesregionalchamber.org.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 2

Kindergarten Registration. 6-8 p.m. at Colin Powell Elementary School, 13340 Leland Road, Centreville. Visit www.fcps.edu/start/kindergarten.htm for forms and information.

Sully Woodland Planning Open House. 7 p.m. at Bull Run Elementary School, 15301 Lee Highway, Centreville. Give input on the planning of Sully Woodlands. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/plandev/sullywoodlands.htm or 703-324-8662.

MONDAY/APRIL 7

Kindergarten Registration. Brookfield Elementary School will host a kindergarten registration for the 2014-2015 school year. Parents of children who will be five years old on or before Sept. 30, 2014, and are living within the Brookfield Elementary School boundaries should contact the school at 703-814-8700 in order to make an appointment.

Korean Immersion Showcase. 2-3 p.m. at Colin Powell Elementary School, 13340 Leland Road, Centreville. Colin Powell Elementary

School will share information about their Two-Way Korean Immersion Program. The Korean Immersion Program is open, primarily to students who live within the Colin Powell boundaries; however, a limited number of seats will be opened for pupil placement of students from neighboring FCPS schools. Interested parents of kindergarten, first grade or second grade students should come to the showcase to learn more about the program. Contact Mrs. Apperson at 571-522-6000.

WEDNESDAY/APRIL 9

Fairfax County Park Authority Board Meeting. 7:30 p.m. in the Herrity Building, 12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Free. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/boardagn2.htm for meeting materials, archives and more. Call 703-324-8662.

THURSDAY/APRIL 17

Republican Women's Club. 6:30 p.m. at the Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Liberty Republican Women's Club meeting with Del. Jim LeMunyon as guest speaker. Everyone is invited to attend. Social hour from 5:30-6:15. Free. Call 703-378-2519.

CALENDAR

FROM PAGE 9

Winners will qualify for the World Robotics Championships. Free. There will be displays and more. Visit www.dc-first.org for more.

Small Wonders. 10:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children ages 12-23 months can enjoy rhymes, songs and more. Free. Registration required. 703-502-3883.

Bouncin' Babies. 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Babies up to 11 months can enjoy rhymes, songs, stories and more. Free. Registration required. 703-502-3883.

Bull Run Swamp Stomp. 7 p.m. at Bull Run Regional Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. Join naturalists from Potomac Overlook on a night hike and search for salamanders, spring peepers, woods frogs and more. Rubber boots and warm clothes recommended. Adults and children age 6 and older. Call 703-528-5406 to make a reservation and get directions.

MONDAY/MARCH 31

Bouncin' Babies. 10:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Babies up to 11 months can enjoy rhymes, songs, stories and more. Free. Registration required. 703-502-3883.

Small Wonders. 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children ages 12-23 months can enjoy rhymes, songs and more. Free. Registration required. 703-502-3883.

Book Buddies. 2:15 p.m. at Chantilly Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children in kindergarten can discuss a book. Free. 703-502-3883 for title.

Afternoon Adventures:

Amphibians Abound. 3 p.m. at Centreville Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Children ages 6-12 can meet live native amphibians including frogs, toads and salamanders. Free. Registration required, 703-830-2223.

SUNDAY/APRIL 6

Fine Arts and Music. 6 p.m. at Jubilee Christian Center, 4650 Shirley Gate Road, Fairfax. Jubilee Christian Center is having a Fine Arts & Music performance sponsored by the Youth Department. Free, the public is invited. Call 703-383-1170 or visit www.jccag.org for more.

FRIDAY/APRIL 11

Used Book Sale. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Large selection of adult and children's fiction and non-fiction, including Korean books, and DVDs, CDs and audio books. Sponsored by the Friends of the Chantilly Regional Library to fund special programs, renovation projects, activities and equipment for the library. Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Call the library at 703-502-3883 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/events.

SATURDAY/APRIL 12

Passion4Community. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at the nZone, 14550 Lee Road, Chantilly. Cost of Admission is a can of food or other non-perishable item, which will be used to help families in need throughout our local communities. Visit <http://artscraftsfair.weebly.com>.

Spring Upscale Resale. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at The Salvation Army Fairfax, 4915 Ox Road, Fairfax. Visit www.SalvationArmyNCA.org.

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