

OPINION, PAGE 6 ♦ ENTERTAINMENT, PAGE 14 ♦ CLASSIFIEDS, PAGE 18 ♦ SPORTS, PAGE 16

PHOTO BY REENA SINGH / THE CONNECTION

## Great Falls' Summer on the Green

NEWS, PAGE 3

## The Petunias Are Back

NEWS, PAGE 15

**Bill Canis, Great Falls Citizens Association vice president, stands next to a 150-year-old white oak by The Grange.**



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## Protecting the White Oak in Great Falls

### Village-wide Legacy White Oak program announced.

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**B**ill Canis is an advocate for Great Falls' mighty white oak. As the sturdy trees, a legacy of the village's rural history, die off and get cut down, the Great Falls Citizen's Association Vice President hopes to replenish another generation of the white oak.

"White oaks thrive here," said Canis. "There used to be a lot of them in the village center. We lost seven or eight of them recently. Most of them were cut down."

He said white oak trees tend to last between 150 to 200 years, and many of them are now at the end of their life cycle. Because of this, he is starting the Legacy White Oak Program to allow residents to make a tax deductible contribution to pay for a 10-foot tall tree to be planted, staked and watered for two months around September. He said bigger trees are needed in order to make them deer-proof.

Each tree, plus the cost of watering and planting, is \$435.



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION  
**This white oak, about 150 years old, is older than The Grange built in 1929. The White Oak Legacy Program was started to plant a new generation of the trees.**

"In a few years, these trees that are emblematic of the semi-rural nature of Great Falls are going to be gone," said Canis. "Our goal is to get 15 trees."

These trees will be planted at the Great Falls Library, Turner Farm Park, the Colvin Run Mill, Lockmeade Park, and Nike Park

near Forestville Elementary School in pre-designated areas determined by the Fairfax County Parks Foundation.

According to Fairfax County Tree Commission Chairman Robert Vickers, white oak trees are important to American history, not just the history of the village, because "it's

a stately, long growing tree."

"They were used as boundary markers in colonial times," he said.

Vickers noted that Great Falls used to be known as Forestville before the 1950s due to the number of white oaks in the village.

"We're trying desperately to save the ailing white oaks in Great Falls," he said. "Every time a white oak is threatened, we make a note of it and try to save it."

GFCA member Robin Rentsch remembers how the village used to look like before the white oak trees began to get cut down to make way for businesses and roadways and hopes the program gains momentum.

"I've lived here for 40 years," she said. "When I moved here, all these legacy oaks were still living."

Although about 40 red and white oak trees are thriving behind the grange, according to Vickers, the trees are a rare site in the village center.

"We have one of the original white oaks left on the corner of Walker Road and Georgetown Pike driving towards McLean," said Rentsch. "It's doing ok, but it's kind of the lone ranger. You've got to start somewhere, or we're never going to get a good tree base here."

To find out how to contribute to the project, contact Canis at [bcanis@yahoo.com](mailto:bcanis@yahoo.com).

## Great Falls' Summer on the Green

### Concerts on the Green Series to run through Aug. 17.

BY MACKENZIE REAGAN  
THE CONNECTION

**O**n Sunday afternoon, a crowd gathered on the Great Falls Centre Green to enjoy the summer sunshine and the bluesy jazz stylings of GRAMMY winner Daryl Davis.

Davis, a graduate of Howard University, is also an accomplished author, best known for his 1997 book "Klan-Destine Relationships: A Black Man's Odyssey in the Ku Klux Klan." He's also an actor, having appeared on stage in area productions as well as on television programs such as "The Wire and Roseanne."

Rounding out his list of talents, according to his website, are judo, karate and speaking French. Singing a mix of blues, rockabilly and country, he kept the crowd of Great Falls locals well entertained during his two-hour performance.

The event, part of the town's Concerts on the Green series, was sponsored by Celebrate Great Falls, an organization dedicated to coordinating events that bring the town together and keep traditions such as the concert series alive. The organization also donates funds to local schools and projects that benefit the community.

"Great Falls is such a special place to live," Celebrate Great Falls director Erin Lobato said. Lobato, who moved to the area in October of 2012, says she

was "pleasantly surprised how welcoming and warm [the community was]."

The concert series, which began June 1 and continues every Sunday 'til Aug. 17, drew quite the crowd for Davis's show last week. Families took advantage of the summer sun and dined on picnic dinners while the more athletically inclined concertgoers played football and Frisbee in the back of the green.

Great Falls resident Nora Lee Brown credits the series with helping to maintain Great Falls's "family oriented, small-town feeling." Brown has been attending the concerts "since they started. I go whenever I can. I really appreciate [what it does for the community]."

Janice Thrush, another local concertgoer, echoes Brown, calling Great Falls "a friendly community," and a great place to live.

The free concerts, which go from 6 to 8 p.m. every Sunday, often feature local artists, many of whom have performed there in the past. This year, Lobato says, the schedule features only two new artists. Upcoming performers include rockabilly group Four Star Combo, cover band the remedy and blues guitarist Tom Principato.

All of the series' corporate sponsors are local, too — businesses like John Nugent & Sons, The Old Brogue and Great Falls Auto Service help to keep this community's tradition going.



PHOTO BY MACKENZIE REAGAN/THE CONNECTION  
**Daryl Davis performs as part of the Celebrate Great Falls Concerts on the Green series.**

## Dancing for a Cause at Colvin Run

A fundraiser on Saturday, June 21, at Colvin Run Community Hall will feature dance lessons from local instructors including Ed Cottrell, Gail Crum and Erica Smith. The day-long event, part of the Alzheimer's Association's worldwide The Longest Day fundraiser, will benefit Alzheimer's disease research. Attendees are invited to join Colvin Run's team, Step and Swing for Elaine, in memory of local dancer Elaine Krawitz. The team has surpassed its \$10,000 fundraising goal, having raised nearly \$13,000 at press time. The event will run from 10 a.m. to 7:45 p.m. and will feature refreshments and silent auctions. The team suggests a donation of \$40 for the whole day or \$15 for one activity. At 8 p.m., following the last lesson, the hall will host its Third Saturday Ballroom Dance for a separate \$15 fee.

## Don Fowler's Work on Exhibit

Veteran photographer and longtime Great Falls Studios member Don Fowler will be hanging examples of his work in Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls for the month of July. Fowler also has a few of the images on display in June at the Artist's Atelier, 1144 Walker Road, Suite G, Great Falls and the Great Falls Library meeting room, and has posted entries to the GFS Virtual Gallery. Visit [www.greatfallsstudios.com/gallery](http://www.greatfallsstudios.com/gallery) for this and previous months.

## Great Falls School of Art Announces June Workshop

Great Falls School of Art has announce its June workshop, Alla Prima Floral Still Life Intensive! with Michela Mansuino.

Adult Class: Beginners, Intermediate & Advanced.

Tuesday, June 24 & Wednesday, June 25, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

Tuition: \$150.

Paint from little floral still life compositions under artificial light. Our objective is to study the color and form intensely, and finish the painting in one session.

We will be working in oil on canvas in sizes smaller than 16 X 20 inches. You may bring your own prop and flowers or paint from the ones set up.

Class is held in a studio at Great Falls School of Art, 1144D Walker Road, Great Falls.

GF School of Art is run by the Great Falls Foundation for the Arts (GFFFTA), a charitable non-profit organization committed to enhancing the Arts in Great Falls, Virginia.

Visit [www.greatfallsart.org](http://www.greatfallsart.org) or email: [school@greatfallsart.org](mailto:school@greatfallsart.org)

# Langley High Renovation Moves Forward

Three phases of renovation will span three and a half years.

BY JEAN T. JIANOS  
THE CONNECTION

The plan for renovation of Langley High School was presented to parents by Langley High School Principal Matthew Ragone and Mr. Brady Rauch, Fairfax County Public Schools Coordinator, Design and Construction, at a presentation in the LHS auditorium on Wednesday morning, June 11. The FCPS Office of Design and Construction, working with the Washington, D.C. office of Perkins Eastman Architects, P.C., put the LHS renovation project out for construction bids on June 5; bids are due from general contractors on July 9; and by the time students start back to school on Sept. 2, preparation for Phase I construction will be underway.

**THE LHS RENOVATION** is what the Office of Design and Construction refers to as a "phased occupied renovation," meaning that construction will take place year round. The work has been divided into three phases that will span three and a half years. Phase I primarily consists of building an addition on to the rear of the school for new classrooms and labs, and constructing another addition toward the front of the school for the Performing Arts wing and school administrative suite. In order to accommodate the rear addition, the tennis courts will be relocated to the athletic fields. Relocation of the tennis courts is one component of an overall site plan that also includes parking improvements, incorporation of outdoor learning spaces and full accessibility to the athletic fields. Phase I is scheduled to be completed by December of 2015.

Rauch assured the parents that the Office of Design and Construction has proven expertise in construction management, ex-

### VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Fairfax County's Respite Care Volunteers** give family caregivers of a frail older adults a well-deserved break so they can go shopping, attend a doctor's appointment or just have coffee with a friend. Volunteers visit and oversee the safety of the older adult for a few hours each month. Support and training are provided. Contact Kristin Martin at 703-324-7577, TTY 711, or [Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Kristin.Martin@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**The Herndon Senior Center**, 873 Grace Street, Herndon, needs a volunteer mosaic instructor and knitting instructor. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**The Lewinsville Senior Center**, 1609 Great Falls Street, McLean, needs a certified volunteer Zumba instructor and an office assistant. For these and other volun-



PHOTO BY JEAN JIANOS/THE CONNECTION

**Brand-new "quads" of portable classrooms have been installed at the rear of the Langley High School parking lot in preparation for renovation.**

perience with phasing and isolating work areas, and that, "we finish on time." Rauch introduced Jay Zayas, the Construction Manager with the Office of Design and Construction responsible for oversight of the complete school renovation and expansion of FCPS George C. Marshall H.S. that is due to be completed at the start of the 2014 - 2015 school year. Zayas will be responsible for oversight of the LHS renovation, as well.

**MANY OF THE PARENTS** asked questions about health and safety issues, and about logistics. In answering their questions, Rauch and Principal Ragone referred to the many policies, procedures and standards that have been established by Fairfax County Public Schools, its Office of Facilities Management, and the Office of Design and Construction. Any work that interrupts electric, water, heating or air conditioning services is scheduled for when staff and students are not in the building to minimize disruption of the school's learning environment.

teer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Fairfax County** needs volunteer On-Call IT Specialists are needed to help older adults. Schedule is flexible. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**The Bailey's Senior Center**, 5920 Summers Lane, Falls Church, needs office assistance with the front desk and data entry, Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Meals on Wheels** needs drivers in Franconia, Reston, McLean and Falls

Both Rauch and Principal Ragone were open about the extensive adjustments needed to initially stage the construction and during Phase I, the longest phase of the renovation. As this school year draws to a close, teachers are currently preparing to relocate. Classrooms within the existing school building will be moved and rotated through 32 portable classrooms to facilitate the renovation. The brand-new "quads" have already been installed at the rear of the parking lot. The Band, Chorus, Orchestra and Theater Arts programs will hold performances off-campus at alternate performing arts venues while the Performing Arts wing is being constructed; and LHS Principal's Coffees will be held at Cooper Middle School.

"When I saw the phasing for this, I was really excited. ...We are really at a great crossroads here for innovations," said Principal Ragone, later reiterating that, "I am going to appreciate everyone's flexibility and patience throughout the whole process, but in the end, we are going to be rewarded for that flexibility and patience."

Church. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**Fairfax County** needs volunteers to drive older adults to medical appointments and wellness programs. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

**The Wakefield Senior Center**, 8100 Braddock Road, Annandale, needs a volunteer art teacher, certified instructors for Zumba Gold and Pilates, a coin collector to lead groups, an experienced canasta player to lead groups and Spanish-speaking interpreters. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults) and click on Volunteer Solutions.

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### ~ At The Great Falls Village Centre ~ Concerts on the Green

#### Sunday, June 22

**Four Star Combo** sponsored by Keller Williams Realty Great Falls/McLean. A heapin' helpin' of red-hot 1950s Rockabilly!

#### Sunday, June 29

**The Dusty 45s** sponsored by The Old Brogue and Katie's Coffee House. Rockin', high-energy music at just the right throttle to keep fans on their feet, begging for more.

#### Sunday, July 6

**Diamond Alley** sponsored by Dr. Donna Greco, Great Falls Family & Cosmetic Dentistry. A diverse mix of contemporary and classic hits highlighting their unusual vocal talent.

#### Sunday, July 13

**The Remedy** sponsored by Bic DeCaro, Westgate Realty Group, Inc. From Duran Duran to Van Halen to the Rolling Stones... rock at its best

#### Sunday, July 20

**Ruthie & The Wranglers** sponsored by Great Falls Auto Service. High-energy Americana country with brilliant songwriting and vibrant harmonies

#### Sunday, July 27

**The Morrison Brothers** sponsored by AOG Wealth Management. The premier country/rock act in the Washington, D.C. area, soon to be a national contender.

#### Sunday, August 3

**Atlas Road Crew** sponsored by Glynis Canto & Kevin Canto, Realtors. A band that punctuates its rock vibe with Southern gentleman swagger.

#### Sunday, August 10

**Tom Principato** sponsored by Capital One Bank, Great Falls. Guitarist combining rich blues with high energy rock.

#### Sunday, August 17

**High Five Worldwide** sponsored by The Simmons Team, George Mason Mortgage. Fusing high energy modern pop with yesterday's hits, High Five Worldwide combines four of the region's finest talents into one dynamic package.

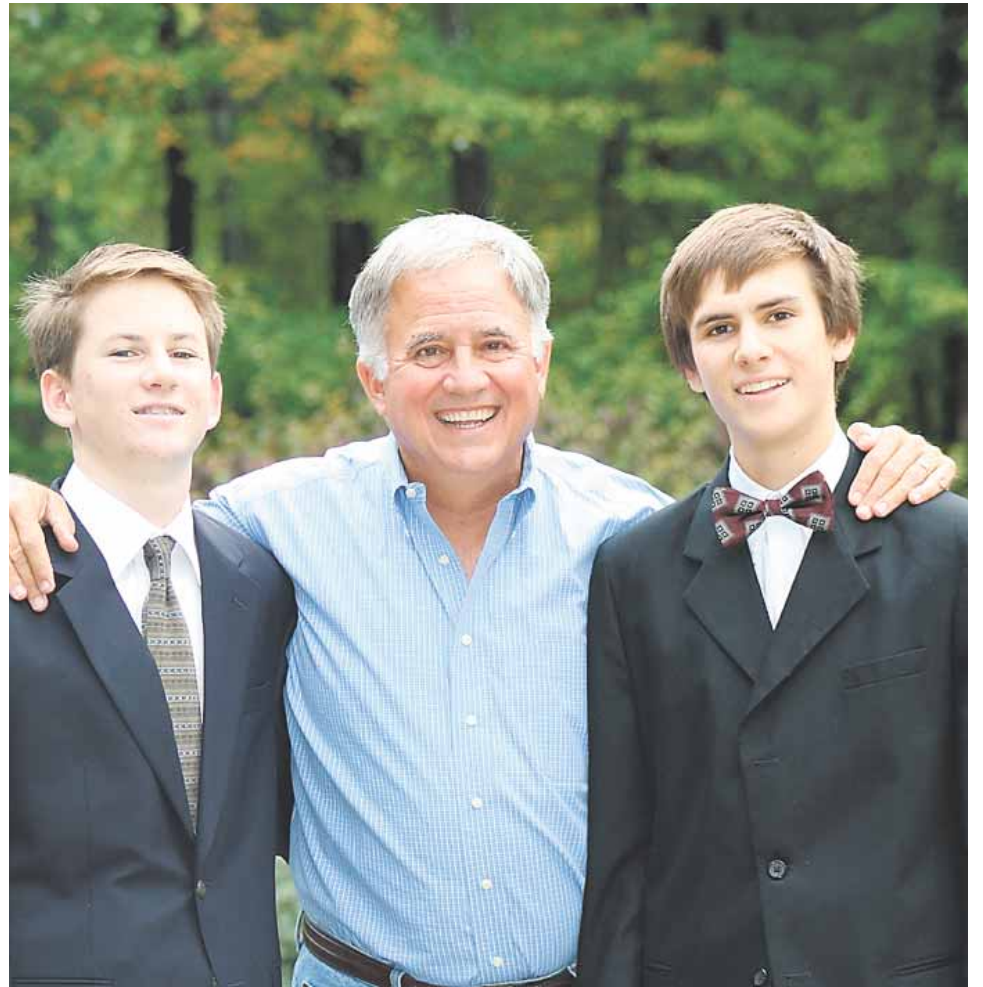
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## FATHER'S DAY PHOTO



Greg Beckwith, of Great Falls, with sons Gage, 17, and Spencer, 15.

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## More Affordable Housing Needed

**Anticipated job growth to exacerbate problem.**

In Northern Virginia, affordable housing means more than human services or helping those who are less fortunate. It means more than housing the chronically homeless, although that is not optional.

In Northern Virginia, having enough affordable housing is critical to economic health, based on housing the workers needed at a variety of income levels. It is also critical to traffic management. If workers on the lower end of the income scale can't afford to work near their jobs, those workers will have to drive longer distances, creating gridlock and air pollution.

Consider that in the Washington Metropolitan Region, the established median rent for a two-bedroom apartment, according to HUD, is \$1,589 monthly. To afford that rent, paying no more than 30 percent of gross income, requires an income of about \$60,000 annually. And it is obvious that rents in Northern Virginia are more expensive than the region.

Consider for example, that right now in Alexandria, there are more than 8,300 workers in the accommodations and food service industry who earn on average \$470 weekly, or less than \$25,000 a year. (Employment statistics from Virginia Employment Commission.)

In Arlington, there are more than 15,400

workers in accommodations and food service, with an average weekly wage of \$491, or \$25,500 annually.

In Fairfax County, in food service and accommodations, there are more than 48,400 workers with an average wage of \$426 weekly or an annual income of just over \$22,000.

These are people working full time in jobs that are important to our economy who cannot afford market rate rents, and rents are climbing.

The George Mason University School of Public Policy Center for Regional Analysis forecasts that, based on predicted job growth, over the next 20 years this region will need an additional 344,624 single-family units and 203,674 multi-family units.

From the report:

"The region's new housing must be priced so that it is affordable to these new workers. Based on the housing need forecasts, 44.1 percent of rental units will need to have rents of less than \$1,250 a month, while only 2.4 percent of the rental demand will be for units priced at \$2,250 a month or more. About 16.4 percent of the owner-occupied units forecasted need to be valued at less than \$200,000 and only 13.5 percent at over \$600,000."

For example, the report predicts adding more than 71,000 health services workers with a median income of \$39,500; more than 45,000 hospitality workers with a median income of \$18,300; and 17,700 retail workers with a median income of \$22,500.

The units to house the current and future workforce will not materialize on their own. It will require a variety of incentives and interventions to make sure those units are part of new development.

As the Silver Line opens, it's important to remember that the coming years will bring the last great boom in building in Fairfax County. No matter what the immediate impediments, the local economy cannot thrive unless developing affordable housing is built into all of those development plans, current and future.

—MARY KIMM

### EDITORIALS

## Call for Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish on July 23, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 16.

Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans. Please tell us a little bit about your pet, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your town name). We welcome short stories about how you got your pet, a noteworthy talent or anecdote about your pet, explanations of the bonds between your family and your pet, plus drawings, paintings or other artwork of your pet by children or adults. Email to editor@connectionnewspapers.com.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Contamination Monitoring Continues

To The Editor:

I want to take this opportunity to provide your readers, a status report on the ongoing effort to remediate the groundwater contamination from the former Exxon station on the west side of Walker Road at Georgetown Pike, and to recognize citizens working on this issue.

About a year ago, the Great Falls Citizen's Association Special Committee on Groundwater Contamination began to evaluate the contamination, conduct a survey and educate the public, and work with the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the site owner, Fairfax Petroleum Realty, which purchased the site from Exxon in 2010. The GFCA Special Committee includes co-chairs Amy Stephan and Glen Sjoblom, and Phil Pifer, Dr. Ralph Lazaro, Jackie Taylor, and Ed Behrens. There has been much cooperation among all parties. We also are grateful for the pro bono expert assistance by Dr. Matt Tonkin, President, SS Papadopolus and Associates of

Bethesda, as well as Dr. Kent Campbell, Manager, HP Environmental of Herndon. Their expertise added substantially to the value of review efforts.

The public opinion survey results of over 600 Great Falls residents confirmed our understanding of the importance of clean well water to our residents, and gave us insights into how we should proceed. Over the past 12 months, we corresponded with and met with the involved parties and held two Public Information Meetings at the Grange.

Last December (2013), GFCA reached agreement with owners of several business properties, to permit additional groundwater monitoring wells to the north, south, and southeast of the original site, to verify the extent of the plume of methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE), the toxic gasoline additive. This had apparently leaked from the underground gasoline storage tank system into the ground at the former Exxon site at 9901 Georgetown Pike. I am pleased to thank Dr. Ralph Lazaro, President of the Great Falls Business and Professional Association, and owner of the Professional Center, Mr. John Colby, part owner of the Crossroads Building, and Mr.

Charlie Sherrin of the BFSaul Company, owner of Great Falls Center, for working with Mr. Mark Steele, Kleinfelder East, the environmental engineering firm hired by the site owner, to make arrangements for these additional monitoring wells.

Also last December, Mr. Eyob Mamo, President of Fairfax Petroleum Realty, formally agreed by exchange of letters, with the Great Falls Citizens Association, that the groundwater extraction remedy would be designed to have the capability and capacity to address MTBE at depth and off site and will be used to remediate the entire plume to a Virginia DEQ-approved end point.

Mr. Alex Wardle and Ms. Cynthia Sale of the DEQ Office in Woodbridge, Va. have been helpful to our community, by holding a public meeting on the Corrective Action Plan and by reviewing and responding to our technical comments on the Corrective Action Plan. They have facilitated the additional groundwater monitoring and efforts to remediate the soil and groundwater. A system to remove the volatile MTBE in the shallow soil column beneath the site was approved by DEQ in the initial CAP. Underground piping to

five shallow suction wells on site and a small equipment building have been installed on the west side of the service station building and will begin operating this week.

In the most recent review of monitoring data with the Special Committee last week, the Kleinfelder East firm has confirmed that the MTBE groundwater contamination remains in an area on both sides of Walker Road, slowly moving to the southeast, and is not moving to the north or west of the original source. MTBE has been detected in a new monitoring well just south of the site, along a geologic fracture zone. As a result, Fairfax Petroleum Realty, Kleinfelder East and the DEQ have confirmed that they will monitor additional locations just farther south. They have also decided to install a groundwater pump and treat system on site to remediate the groundwater contamination. They indicated that this system is to be installed in about 90 days, and have stated that the system should withdraw and treat contamination from all directions within the contaminated plume.

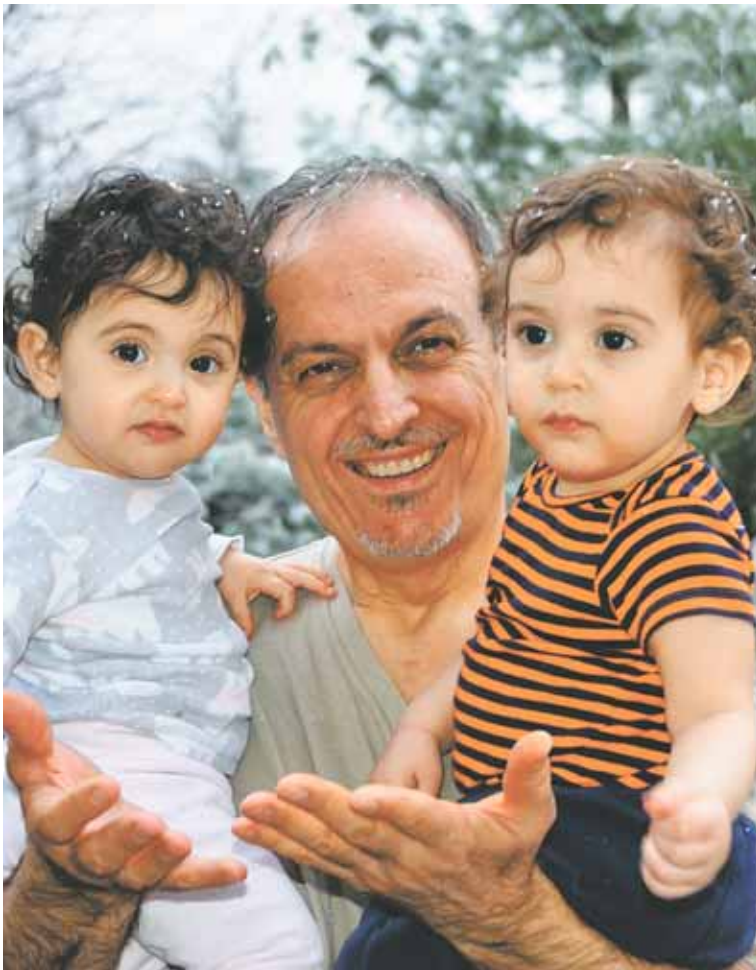
In summary, we are grateful that

SEE KNUDSEN, PAGE 13





FATHER'S DAY PHOTO



Mr. and Mrs. M. Joseph Fayyad's children. Father and twins Julia and Yousef enjoying their first snow together. — Proud Aunty Hindy, Great Falls



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# Gifts for New Grads

Local tastemakers offer suggestions from the sentimental to the practical.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

After the tassels have been turned and the diplomas received, it is usually time for a graduation celebration. Whether you're shopping for someone who is heading to college or venturing out into the workforce, choosing a present for the graduate in your life can be perplexing, but local tastemakers are here to help, offering suggestions for graduation presents that range from the practical to the sentimental.

Frames for displaying graduation photos or family photos that remind graduates of home can make great gifts. "We have gorgeous, heirloom-quality frames by Elias Artmetal that are made in the U.S.A. by an old established company," said John Brown, owner of J. Brown and Company in Old Town Alexandria.

Leather goods, such as a well-made key chain, journal or passport holder are also gifts that will not only be treasured, but will come in handy long after the pomp and circumstance of the big day are over.

Reminders of the college the graduate attended or will attend can make cheerful presents. "Collegiate products make great gifts," said Randy Fabian, manager of The Dandelion Patch in Reston Town Center and Vienna. "There are platters, wine glasses and koozies for not only Virginia colleges, but a lot of schools outside of Virginia. They could be a commemorative item for a college graduate or a gift for someone who is heading off to college."

"Nest Fragrances has a line of scents that young people love ... especially beach and bamboo."

— John Brown, owner of J. Brown and Company in Old Town Alexandria



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PICKET FENCE

Personalized jewelry can serve as a reminder of a graduate's special day.

Another option is a scented candle or diffuser, which can add a touch of elegance to a first apartment or dorm room. "Nest Fragrances has line of scents that young people love ... especially beach and bamboo," said Brown.

Backpacks, overnight bags and totes make practical gifts for new graduates, perfect for a quick trip home or a first business trip. "Fun graphic totes are a great gift for grads,"



PHOTO COURTESY OF J. BROWN AND COMPANY

Heirloom-quality frames, such as these by Elias Artmetal, can make ideal graduation presents.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE PICKET FENCE

Backpacks, overnight bags and totes make practical gifts for new graduates.

said Courtney Thomas of The Picket Fence in Burke. "Perfect for travel, the gym or toting things around campus, they are something every grad can use."

Fabian said that Scout bags (www.scoutbags.com), which come in an array of colors, sizes and styles, are easy to clean and appropriate for a wide variety of lifestyles.

Don't forget jewelry, which can last for a

lifetime: "Personalized items like our initial pendant necklaces make a great gift and can serve as a remembrance of the graduate's special day," said Thomas.

For high school graduates, consider warm pajamas or cozy throws for chilly dorm rooms. Also, "Kate Spade makes nice desk sets that are a bit jazzier than your average desk, and would add a nice touch to a dorm room," said Fabian.

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to [vienna@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:vienna@connectionnewspapers.com) by Friday.

**Eight Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students** have been named winners of Merit Scholarship awards by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC). The students are part of a group of more than 2,500 National Merit® finalists chosen to receive scholarships financed by higher education institutions.

Winners of the scholarships, with their probable career fields in parentheses, are:

- ♦ Benjamin Espey of Langley High School (computer engineering), National Merit Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Scholarship.

- ♦ Timothy Sheridan of Madison High School (economics), National Merit University of Oklahoma Scholarship.

- ♦ Samuel Clayton of McLean High School (mechanical engineering), National Merit Brigham Young University Scholarship.

- ♦ Ashwin Basana of Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJHSST) (engineer-

- ing), National Merit Northwestern University Scholarship.

- ♦ Eric Levonian of TJHSST (computer programming), National Merit University of Southern California Scholarship.

- ♦ Christine Nguyen of TJHSST (medicine), National Merit University of Central Florida Scholarship.

- ♦ Andrew Pan of TJHSST (engineering), National Merit University of Alabama Scholarship.

- ♦ Tyler Shepherd of TJHSST (computer science), National Merit Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Scholarship.

Each award provides between \$500 and \$2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study at the institution financing the recipient's scholarship.

**Ten Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) students** earned top 10 finishes at the DECA International Career Development Conference held recently in Atlanta.

The following FCPS students earned a top 10 fin-

ish at the national level:

- ♦ Paige Ahmed, Sophie Eaton, and Lauren Fisher of Robinson Secondary School, Learn and Earn Project.

- ♦ Conor Boyle and Emma Heiden of Marshall High School, Marketing Communications Team.

- ♦ Sydney Applegate and Mason Hawkins of Oakton High School, Hospitality Services Team.

- ♦ Michael Briody and Wes Hammerschmidt of Marshall High School, Buying and Merchandising Team.

- ♦ Claire Heiden of Marshall High School, Principles of Marketing.

A total of 37 FCPS students were recognized as finalists at the 2014 competition.

**Seth McNair** of McLean, a student at Landon School in Bethesda, Md. will participate in the 2014 U.S. Naval Academy (USNA) Summer Seminar program. USNA invited a select group of approximately 2,550 young men and women from around the nation and abroad to attend the Naval Academy Summer Seminar program this year. Summer Sem-

inar is a fast-paced leadership experience for rising seniors in high school. This program helps educate, motivate and prepare selected students who are considering applying for admission to USNA.

For more information about the Naval Academy, visit: [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu) or the USNA Admissions Facebook page.

Longfellow Middle School students **Aaditya Singh, Franklyn Wang, and William Sun** have qualified to the United States of America Junior Mathematical Olympiad (USAJMO) 2014. The USAJMO is an invitation only competition where the MAA invites the top scoring 230 students (10th graders and below across the US) based on a combination of their performance in the AMC-10 and AIME competitions. See more at: <http://www.maa.org/node/79/#USAMO>

**Courtney Cross**, of Great Falls, graduated from Bishop O'Connell High School. She is a sophomore at Villanova University and was named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of 2013.



PHOTOS BY CHRISTINA TYLER WENKS

## Launching Rockets at Great Falls Elementary

Under the guidance of Astronaut Dan Tani, fifth-graders at Great Falls Elementary School watch as rockets they built are launched Tuesday, June 10. One rocket carried altimeter to measure the height to which the rocket soared. Another carried a small camera.



Together, Anderson Zhu and Elizabeth Augenblick of Great Falls Elementary School ignited the fuse that launched a rocket built by the fifth-grade class of Serena Castleda and Laura Gray as Astronaut Dan Tani and classmates watch. As an experiment, the rocket decorated with glitter and stars carried super giant worms in the payload, but no worms were harmed in this payload.



After retrieving her class rocket, a fifth-grader examines the payload of the rocket to determine the effects of the launch and flight. Under the careful watch of Astronaut Dan Tani, teachers and parent volunteers, students at Great Falls Elementary School learned about the effects of launches on crickets, flowers, and giant super worms last week.



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- July 4: An American Celebration at Mount Vernon
- July 12: USA & Alexandria Birthday Celebration
- July 12-13: Fort Ward Civil War Reenactment Weekend
- July 19: Cinema Del Ray, "Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs 2"
- July 19: Comcast Outdoor Film Festival, "The Hunger Games: Catching Fire"

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR:

- Up Late With the Boutiques, Thursdays May-July
- First Thursdays Del Ray
- Second Thursday Art Night at the Torpedo Factory Art Center

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## NEWS



PHOTO BY ANTHONY LAMANNA

### Varsity Squad 2014 Wins Langley Alumni Game

The 2014 Varsity Langley High School squad (with a little help from some veterans) used a walk-off HR in the seventh to squeeze past the Alumni squad in a slugfest (15-13) at the Third Annual Langley H.S. Alumni Game held on Saturday, May 31 at Nike Fields. The game is part of the Celebrate Great Falls spring weekend of activities.

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# LETTERS

## Questionable Presumption

To the Editor:

The Fairfax County School Board has proposed four options for public discussion on changing school start times. None of the options includes the current school schedule. We are not in Russia, we must be given a fair choice, including the no change option. The presumption that if children start school later, they will get more sleep is questionable. They may simply go to bed later. The \$3M to \$7M cost to change the school schedule is a waste. Teachers are being laid off due to budget issues,

we should not spend millions of dollars on transportation at the expense of the teachers. Starting an hour later adds as much as two hour of commute time for the parents who live in the western end of the county and work in Washington, D.C. After school activities will start and end at later times, just in time for rush hour traffic and therefore may have to be curtailed. The current school schedule must be maintained.

**Yoram Carmi and Margo Rowles**  
Great Falls

## Update on Groundwater Cleanup

FROM PAGE 8

DEQ, Fairfax Petroleum Realty and Kleinfelder East continue to cooperate with the community of Great Falls and will do all they can to ensure the contamination does not reach any private wells in Great Falls. Mr. Monty Berhane of Fairfax Petroleum Realty stated his company wants to be a good neighbor in Great Falls. Fairfax Petroleum

Realty and the TD Bank plan to install a drive-in TD Bank on the site being remediated. The Great Falls Citizens Association will continue to pay attention to this issue until it is fully resolved.

**Mark Eric Knudsen,**  
President  
Great Falls Citizens Association

## Wild Horse and Burro ADOPTION



Thank you for supporting the Wild Horse and Burro Program since 1971.

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Directions: From I-95, take exit 163 for Lorton and VA-642. At the end of the exit, travel East on VA-642 briefly (.4 of a mile if you're coming from the North and .2 of a mile if coming from the South). At the light intersection for Lorton Market St., turn right. There will be a grocery store and strip mall on your left. At the light intersection for Route 1, continue on straight ahead. This will put you on Gunston Cove Road, which changes to Gunston Road/VA-242. In about 2 miles you'll pass the main entrance to the Meadowood Recreation Area on your right. Don't turn here, rather continue on another half of a mile. You'll turn right through a gate onto a dirt drive. If you use Google Maps, Mapquest, or other GPS, you can use these coordinates as your destination and it will take you right to the location: 38.670731,-77.190827



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# CALENDAR

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

## FRIDAY/JUNE 20

**Pixar in Concert.** 8:30 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. All your favorite animated Pixar films on the big screen paired with memorable scores played by the National Symphony Orchestra. Tickets: \$30-\$58. [www.wolftrap.org/](http://www.wolftrap.org/)

**Great Falls Library Drop-In Chess.** 1-5 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess. All skill levels and ages welcome. 703-757-8560.

**Look at the Stars! Observatory Open.** 7:30-10:30 p.m. Turner Farm Park, Springvale Road, Great Falls. Come to the observatory park for Friday Night viewings. [www.analemma.org](http://www.analemma.org).

**Playdate Café.** 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Play area for toys for children. Coffee and conversation for grown-ups. Ages 0- Preschool with parent or caregiver.

**Drop-In Chess.** 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop in and play chess. All skill levels welcome.

## SATURDAY/JUNE 21

**Dance to Fight Alzheimer's.** 10 a.m.-7:45 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Dance workshops and dance practice, various styles. Donations, silent auction, refreshments in support of The Longest Day (Alzheimer's Assoc). Attire is ballroom casual, everyone is welcome. 703-759-2685,

[stepandswingforelaine@gmail.com](mailto:stepandswingforelaine@gmail.com) or [www.colvinrun.org](http://www.colvinrun.org).

**Grease Sing-A-Long.** 8:30 p.m. Wolf Trap, 1645 Trap Road, Vienna. Rev up your vocal chords for an ultimate summer night with the Rydell High gang and sing-a-long with the hits you're hopelessly devoted to as the original 1978 film is projected in-house and on the lawn with lyrics on screen. Tickets: \$25-\$38. [www.wolftrap.org/](http://www.wolftrap.org/)

**Sunrise Kayak Tour.** 7-9 a.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Paddle with a naturalist and learn about the historical and natural beauty of the Potomac. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

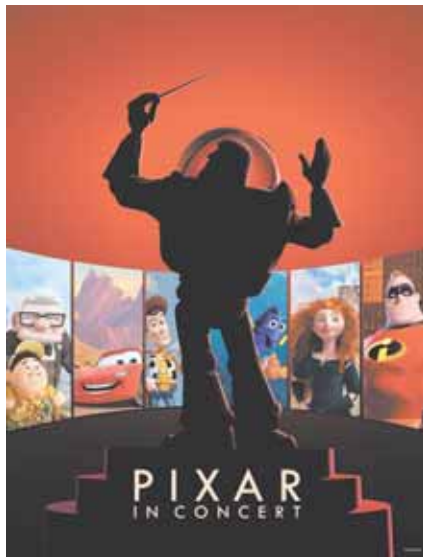
**Cars & Coffee.** 7-9 a.m. Katie's Coffee House, 760 Walker Road, Great Falls. Early on Saturday mornings you'll find a gathering of cool cars - antique, custom, hotrods, exotic, sports cars, they're all here. 703-759-2759.

**Craig Bukowski's Ballroom Dance at Colvin Run.** 8 p.m.-12:30 a.m. Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. First hour - quick step lesson with Craig. Join your neighbors and make new friends. \$15. 703-759-2685.

**Great Falls Farmers Market.** 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Year round. Great Falls Village Centre, 778 Walker Road, Great Falls. [www.celebrategreatfalls.org/FarmersMarket.html](http://www.celebrategreatfalls.org/FarmersMarket.html).

## SUNDAY/JUNE 22

**Intro to Kayaking.** 12-12:30 p.m.



**Watch all your favorite animated Pixar films on the big screen including Finding Nemo, Up, Toy Story, and Monsters, Inc., paired with memorable scores played by the National Symphony Orchestra on June 20 as Wolf Trap presents Pixar in Concert.**

Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Learn about different kayaks, paddles and safety gear; on the water, learn to move the boat in every direction. Ages 12+. \$28-\$43. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks>.

**Concert on the Green - Rock/Rockabilly.** 6-8 p.m. Great Falls Village Centre, Georgetown Pike & Walker Road, Great Falls. Come out with your picnic baskets and chairs for an entertaining evening of live

music.

**Dance to Fight Alzheimer's.** 10 a.m.-7:45 p.m. Colvin Run Dance Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Dance workshops and practice, various styles. Donations, silent auction and refreshments in support of The Longest Day (Alzheimer's Assoc). 703-759-2685.

## MONDAY/JUNE 23 - JULY 9

**Teen Yoga.** 5 - 6 p.m. Margaret Haddad Studio of Classical Ballet, 9911 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Classes are held Mondays and Wednesdays. The cost is \$60/session. No previous experience required. Please bring a yoga. To register, email [JidoFAH@aol.com](mailto:JidoFAH@aol.com).

## MONDAY/JUNE 23

**Great Falls Library Read to the Dog.** 4:30-5:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Beginning readers can practice reading to a furry friend. Call branch to sign up at 703-757-8560.

**McLean & Great Falls Celebrate Virginia Meeting.** 5:30 p.m. McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean. Finalizing plans for the August 24th commemoration of the bicentennial of the burning of the nation's Capitol during the War of 1812. 703-356-8223.

**Around the World with Miss Susan.** 10:30 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Go around the world, and learn songs from other cultures with Miss Susan. Ages 6 mos- 5 yrs. Register by calling 703-757-8560.

## TUESDAY/JUNE 24

**Colvin Run Dance for Everyone.** 6:30-10:30 p.m. Colvin Run Community Hall, 10201 Colvin Run Road, Great Falls. Weekly Dance/Lesson Series with Ed Cottrell & the NVA Dance Crew. Lesson series for

'Dance of the Month,' intermediate West Coast swing lesson, and 'Dance for Everyone.' \$12. 703-435-5620.

## WEDNESDAY/JUNE 25

**Great Falls Library Pokemon League.** 4:30-6 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Come play Pokemon with your friends. Ages 5-15. 703-757-8560.

**Pokemon League.** 4:30 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Come play Pokemon with your friends! Ages 5-15.

## THURSDAY/JUNE 26

**Artists Meet for Coffee.** 8:30-10 a.m. Katie's Coffeeshouse, Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Local artists drop in to meet for coffee. 703-759-275

## FRIDAY/JUNE 27

**Kayak Tour Island Hopping.** 5-7 p.m. Riverbend Park, 8700 Potomac Hills St., Great Falls. Explore the upper Potomac River islands by kayak. Ages 14+. \$59-\$74. Register at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/riverbend-park/kayaktours.htm>.

**Great Falls Library Drop-In Chess.** 1-5 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop-in and play chess. All skill levels and ages welcome. 703-757-8560.

**Look at the Stars! Observatory Open.** 7:30-10:30 p.m. Turner Farm Park, Springvale Road, Great Falls. Come to the observatory park for Friday Night viewings. [www.analemma.org](http://www.analemma.org).

**Playdate Café.** 10 a.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Play area for toys for children. Coffee and conversation for grown-ups.

**Drop-In Chess.** 1 p.m. Great Falls Library, 9830 Georgetown Pike, Great Falls. Drop in and play chess.

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**Be Part of The July Pet Connection**

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Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, and identify all people and pets in photos. Submission deadline is July 17.

NEWS

# The Petunias Are Back

The faces behind the village's beautification project.

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

Three times a week, George Benza drives around the village with 250 gallons of water and a sprayer in the back of his pickup truck.

When other residents are getting ready to leave for work at 7 a.m., his job is half way done.

As the owner of SGB Land Management, Benza is paid to water 65 baskets of pink, purple and white petunias adorning lamp-posts.

"Seven o'clock in the morning is the best time to do it," he said. "It's the easiest and sets them up for the heat of the day."

Merchants pay \$182 per basket, but Great Falls Citizen's Association subsidizes the project.

The baskets have been hung up for the third summer in a row, but they do not maintain themselves. Benza takes note of the weather, watering them more during the dry season and less when summer thunderstorms take over a few days.

"Once a week, we'll put some miracle grow on it," he said.

Watering the plants takes place between 6 and 8 a.m., while Great Falls residents are busy waking up and getting on the road for work. However, he said he sometimes has conversations with people who see him with sprayer to reach the hanging baskets. When they ask, they find that Benza, a Great Falls local, started his landscape business six years ago to give back to his community.

The petunias were purchased from Joanne Shumpert, Landscape Design Associates formerly known as Treefrog Nursery.

"They are particularly hardy," she said about why the flowers were chosen for the summer baskets. "They have a large bloom and can stand the sun and the heat."

The plants are nurtured at the nursery before being hung throughout the village in mid-May.

"It gives a visual unity to the area," said GFCA vice president Bill Canis. "A lot of communities have gone to the flowering baskets. They've become a staple of the American summer."



PHOTO BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Joanne Shumpert, owner of Landscape Design Associates, chose the petunias that George Benza, owner of SGB Land Management, maintains during the early hours.

**"A lot of communities have gone to the flowering baskets. They've become a staple of the American summer."**

— GFCA vice president Bill Canis

Canis hopes local businesses can contribute more next summer to the village beautification project.

"GFCA contributes significantly to the project, both financially and by managing it," he said. "We would like to identify some local residents who enjoy them and, for next year, would like to step in and sponsor the baskets financially."

To help contribute to next year's flower baskets, contact Canis at bcanis@yahoo.com.

## Your Letters

The Connection welcomes letters on local issues. Letters must be signed. Include home address and phone number. We print names and town names, not full address. Letters are routinely edited for libel, grammar, good taste and factual errors. Email: editors@connectionnewspapers.com

## Call for Pet Connection

The Pet Connection, a twice-yearly special edition, will publish on July 23, and photos and stories of your pets with you and your family should be submitted by July 16. Our favorite pictures include both pets and humans. Please tell us a little bit about your pet, identify everyone in the photo, give a brief description what is happening in the photo, and include address and phone number (we will not publish your address or phone number, just your name and town name. Email to editor@connectionnewspapers.com.

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# SPORTS

## Langley Boys' Lax Falls to Robinson in State Final

Saxons make fifth state final appearance in six years.

BY DAVID BALICK  
THE CONNECTION

From 1991-2007, the Robinson boys' lacrosse team won nine state championships. They were a powerhouse that dominated Virginia lacrosse for nearly two decades. Since 2007, however, this domination has fizzled and the state title has eluded them.

On Sunday night, the Rams were able to get it back by defeating Langley 9-7 in the 6A state championship game at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

"It is unbelievable," said sophomore Austin Henry, who led the team with three goals in the win. "We brought (the title) back to Robinson, home of the champions."

The Rams fell behind early, but scored two goals in the final two minutes of the opening quarter to lead 2-1 at the end of the first.

The key for Robinson was its force. The Rams dominated the Saxons physically and never allowed them to get comfortable on the field. Senior Joe Bynum set the tone early for the Rams with a couple crushing checks, and the rest of the team followed



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION  
**Brian Weingast, right, and the Langley boys' lacrosse team fell short against Robinson in the 6A state championship game on June 15.**

suit.

Langley scored again early in the second, but Robinson then strung together three straight goals and went into halftime with a 5-2 lead.

In the third quarter, Robinson came out even stronger, outscoring Langley 4-1, with goals from four different players, giving the

Rams a 9-3 lead entering the fourth quarter. Robinson moved the ball well throughout, with everyone getting involved in the action.

Senior goalie Nick Kondracki came up with save after save in this quarter. He looked like a brick wall, and would follow his saves with sprints up the field, showing

agility to start the counter attack for Robinson.

Head Coach Matt Curran said of Kondracki: "Quite frankly, we probably wouldn't get here without how he played in goal all season long for us."

At the start of the fourth, the lead seemed insurmountable for the Saxons, but they showed why they made it to state title game with four goals of their own, aided by a couple of Robinson penalties, cutting the lead to 9-7 with 3 minutes left in the game.

But once again, the Robinson defense and Kondracki shut the door when they needed it most. Langley was only able to fire off two shots in the closing minutes, even though the Saxons possessed the ball for most of it. Langley simply could not find any openings in the defense and seemed to know a long distance shot was a waste of possession against Kondracki.

As the horn went off to signal the end of the game, the Robinson team threw their equipment up in the sky and rushed Kondracki to celebrate a season well done.

"It feels incredible," Curran said. "We have worked so hard and we got what we have been after. We had a great group of seniors who really helped lead the way tonight."

The seniors finished their high school lacrosse careers on the highest of all notes with a memory that will undoubtedly last them a lifetime.

## Oakton Girls' Lax Finishes State Runner-Up

Cougars lose to Westfield in 6A state final.

BY DAVID BALICK  
THE CONNECTION

The Westfield girls' lacrosse team was playing the Oakton Cougars for the third time in the past three weeks. The first two games were for the Conference 5 and 6A North region championships, and the Cougars came out victorious.

But in the biggest game of the year, the Westfield Bulldogs came out firing and brought home the program's first state championship with a 13-11 victory on June 15 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

Oakton came into the game with a 15-2 record. The Cougars were experienced winners with 11 seniors who had already experienced winning a state championship in 2012. But Westfield would not be intimidated.

Off the opening faceoff, senior Grace Horgan stormed down the field and scored the first goal of the game 13 seconds in.

Oakton responded a few minutes later with a goal, but then senior Meghan Heick



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION  
**Oakton's Danielle Palmucci shoots during the 6A girls' lacrosse state final against Westfield on June 15.**

scored three of her five goals on the day in a 5-minute span. Combined with another goal from Horgan, Westfield now had a 5-1 lead.

"Without our seniors this year, we never could have made it this far," Westfield head

coach Katie Ruch said. "They were everything we needed tonight."

Following this spurt, Oakton head coach Jean Counts took a timeout in an effort to inspire her players, and they responded.

Oakton went on a 5-1 run of its own in

the final 10 minutes of the half to tie the game at 6 heading into halftime.

The question coming out of the half was who would come out with momentum to start? Heick answered this question with a goal immediately off the opening faceoff, giving Westfield the lead. This goal took only 8 seconds to materialize.

However, Oakton refused to take a back seat to the Bulldogs and continued to fight. The game was tied at 10 with 13 minutes left. But then senior captain Molly O'Sullivan gave Westfield the lead for good.

Down the stretch, freshman goalie Abby Smith came up with save after save to preserve the victory.

"We had lost to them twice in title games this season," Ruch said, "so we had nothing to lose tonight."

Westfield dominated possession throughout the game. Heick played well in the final game of her career, scoring five goals and rallying her team to victory. Grace Horgan and O'Sullivan also added three goals of their own for the Bulldogs.

Westfield finished the season with a 15-3 record. The Bulldogs came into the season with one goal in mind. They beat the defending champions from Madison in the semifinals and finished the season off with the taste of victory on Sunday night.



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

## Fairfax County Retired Educators Award Scholarships

The recipients of scholarships from the Fairfax County Retired Educators gather at a luncheon honoring their accomplishments on June 12. All of these students have plans to obtain a teaching career and some are hoping to return to teach in Fairfax County. Scholarship recipients include: Anna Barr, Robinson Secondary School, Emily Colon, West Springfield High School, Kimberly Drummond, Lake Braddock Secondary, Julia Gurdak, Marshall High School, Sydney Kiran, Lake Braddock Secondary School, Elizabeth McCune, McLean High School, and Sandra Richie, James Madison High School.



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## A Dream Come True, Sort Of



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

(Not a cancer column, by the way.)  
Growing up in the 60s, if you loved sports, as I did/still do, you spent hours listening to games on a transistor radio. There certainly wasn't "Cable" television back then; heck, there wasn't even color television, let alone "HD," "interactive," or whatever else television technology has evolved into. And of course, there were no "big screen" television sets either. We had a 19" Zenith black and white television and we received three channels: 4, 5 and 7 (in Boston), and as much as sports was/is important in Boston/New England, viewing options, given the limited VHF/UHF band frequencies, meant listening to games on radio – AM radio. Games were regularly televised on weekends, more so if the home team was playing on the road.

As the decades have passed, so too have transistor radios, black and white televisions and limited viewing on only three channels. Between "Cable," computers, and more recently, the introduction of hand-held devices, access to and familiarity with sports has grown exponentially. Add in the explosion of sports-talk radio and the abundance of sports-themed content on television (regardless of whether the games are at home or on the road) and one could be in his "man cave" for hours on end "channeling" his – or her – passion, for any team, in any city, at almost any time.

I don't have a "man cave," but I do have a passion. Annually, I buy the MLB Baseball package so I can watch my beloved Boston Red Sox whenever and wherever they play. It is not the bane of my existence, it is quite the opposite; it is my *raison d'être*, if truth be told. And instinctively, whenever I'm in the car driving somewhere, if the Orioles or Nationals are playing, I am listening to them on radio, as a long-time habit. It conjures images, memories and dreams of a lifetime (adolescence, really) stretching back over 50 years: Curt Gowdy, Ned Martin and Ken Coleman on radio for the Red Sox, the legendary Johnny Most for the Celtics and Fred Cusick and Bob Wilson for the Bruins. I hung on their every word nightly during the week, and afternoons on weekends; typically when their games were played. What I heard affected my life – to this day. As a result (partially), I am a "sports" guy. Not a "tool" guy. Not a "car" guy. Not a "do-it-yourself/fixer-upper" guy. Nor am I any other category of "guy" you know of or can think of. "I yam what I yam." Though I've never been a sailor man, either.

And as a "sports" guy, my dream was to play in the Major Leagues for the Boston Red Sox. As much as I practiced, it didn't happen (although I did play for the Little League Red Sox from 1964–67, ages 9–12). But through the staying power of radio – and the frequency of baseball games (162-game schedule) – I have realized my dream of playing in the Major Leagues, or at least hearing my last name called during Major League games.

There is a player for the Toronto Blue Jays named Brett Lawrie, an infielder, third baseman, mostly. When the announcers call his last name, it sounds nearly identical to mine, Lourie. And when I hear his name called on radio by Oriole's radio voices, Joe Angel and Jim Hunter (the Blue Jays were in town this past weekend for a four-game series), it almost brings a tear to my eyes. Obviously it's not me they're "calling," but it sure sounds like it. And for that moment, my dream seems like a reality.

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

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