

Wana Chiwevu receives the Faculty Award from chemistry teacher Ana Rose Tuszka at Mountain View High's June 17 graduation ceremony.



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PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

The memorial outside the Fair Oaks District Station tells Thor's story.

Memorial to a K-9 Hero

Thor, a Fair Oaks firefighters' search-and-rescue dog, is honored.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
 THE CONNECTION

When the Fair Oaks District police and fire station renovations were dedicated June 14, part of the ceremony was for a dog named Thor and service dogs like him. A memorial to Thor now stands outside the entrance to the police station.

An all-white German shepherd, Thor is described on the memorial as "a beloved and highly respected search-and-rescue canine for the Fair Oaks Volunteer Fire & Rescue Company." His handler, Blair Miller of Oak Hill, called the recognition "quite an honor" and thanked Fairfax County for honoring Thor in such a special way.

Miller, also a volunteer with the Fair Oaks fire station, said that station has always been involved with Virginia Task Force One, FEMA's urban search-and-rescue team.

He learned to officially become a K-9 handler and Thor was certified by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management as a search-and-rescue K-9 at age 2.

"Thor was trained for disaster," said Miller. "He retired at age 12, so he had a long tenure. I'd get called by the county — especially by law enforcement — to help find missing persons, suicide victims and occasionally homicide victims, looking for remains. And in areas where people had covered up a crime scene, the dog could hit on it."

Miller and Thor also did educational work in the schools. "I taught kids what to do if they were ever lost," he said. "And I told them the dog would come find them."

With Virginia Task Force One, Miller and Thor deployed to the Pentagon on 9/11, at the FBI's request,

SEE MEMORIAL TO A K-9. PAGE 5



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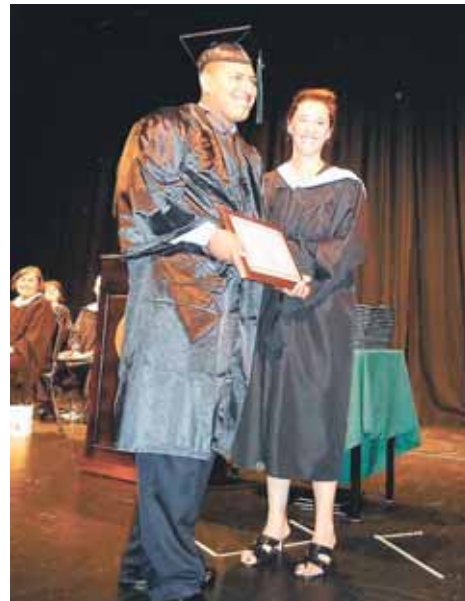
From left: Wade Miller, dad Blair Miller, Michael Frey and Board of Supervisors Chair Sharon Bulova applaud after the memorial's unveiling.



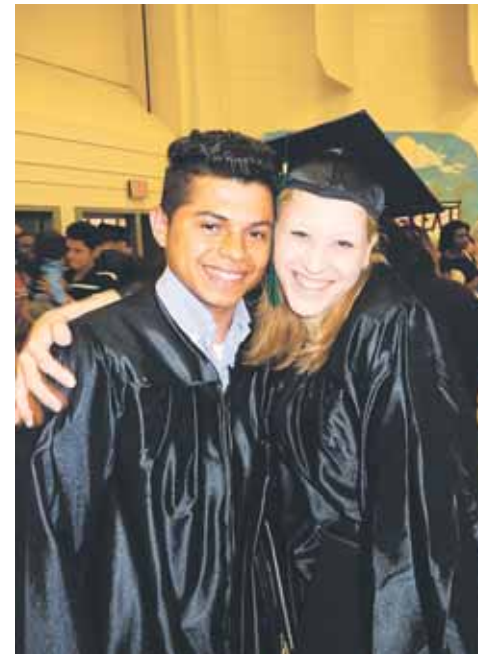
Elizabeth Scarcella received a standing ovation after singing "That's Life."



Karla Bolanos receives the Citizenship Award from math teacher Anne Hoffman.



Antonio Perez receives the Personal Achievement Award from Math Department Chair Emilie Woolard.



Chantilly's Ray Chavez and fellow grad Janna McKnight.

'Thank You to Everyone Who Believed in Me'

Mountain View High holds spring graduation.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

At the start of Mountain View High's June 17 graduation ceremony at Centreville High, Principal Dave Jagels told his students how honored and privileged he felt "to be the principal of one of the best schools in Fairfax County."

Congratulating them on their "monumental accomplishment" of graduating, he said, "As I look out at you, I'm in awe of life's obstacles that some of you overcame to be where you sit today."

The two student speakers, who shared their stories with the audience, were examples of some of the many obstacles Mountain View's students had to hurdle to reach graduation.

The first to speak was Peter Shin, who initially headed down the wrong path, but

was able to turn his life around and even receive a scholarship.

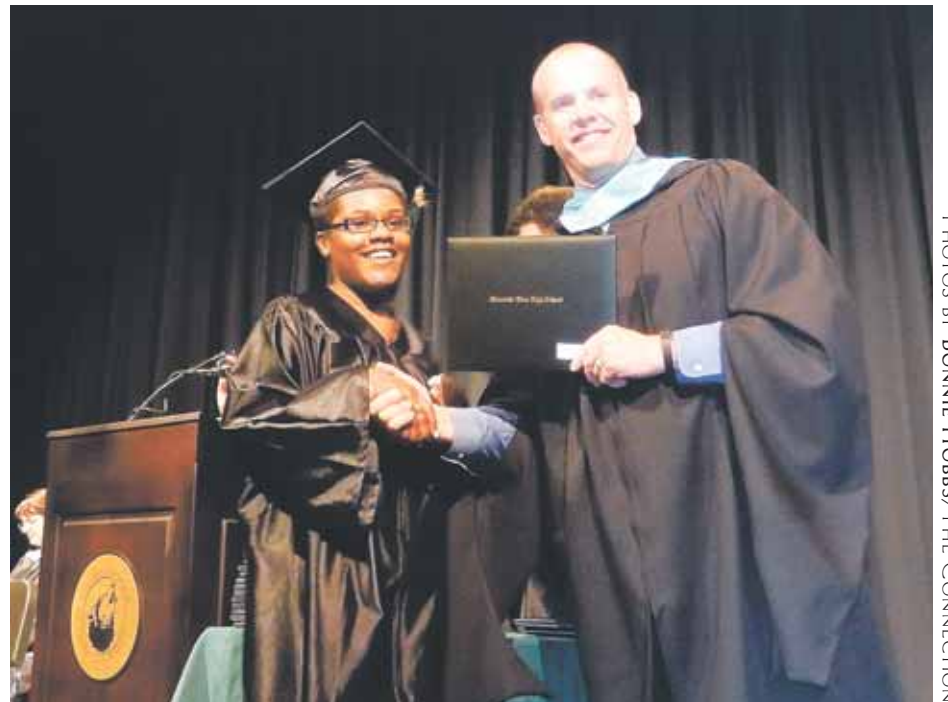
"In 2013, I did a terrible thing and was sent to the JDC [Juvenile Detention Center] on a felony charge," he said. "I realized I was throwing away my potential and I knew I needed to change. For my sentence, I had to do 100 hours community service and go to school and make progress."

Shin's first step was enrolling in Mountain View. "Everyone here treated me well," he said. "When I didn't believe in myself, they believed in me."

I stopped hanging out with friends who'd get me in trouble, and I stopped worrying about things I couldn't change." As a result, his grades improved, his relationships became stronger and he participated in school events.

Now, said Shin, "I want to go to law school and become a defense attorney and help

SEE THANK YOU, PAGE 8



Shawnea Owens gets her diploma from Principal Dave Jagels.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Jagels: 'Go Lead a Life of Inspiration'

Principal offers words of wisdom to the graduates.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

When students first come to Mountain View, they often tell Principal Dave Jagels that they "hope" to graduate. But hoping, alone, won't make it happen. Hope, he told his school's almost-graduates, is a function of struggle.

And in the case of Mountain View students, he said, it's a struggle like "having a child, trying to complete high school and ending an abusive relationship; being homeless and utilizing county/community resources to finish high school, learning English to be able to pass the classes you need to earn your diploma. It's also working a 40-hour week [while] going to school full time, or enduring a trauma early in adolescence that changes one's path in life."

Jagels said hope happens when people are able to set realistic goals and figure out how to achieve them, even if alternative routes are necessary. It takes persistence, the ability to tolerate disappointment and try again, and a belief in one's strength to reach the

finish line.

Quoting author Shane Lopez's book, "Making Hope Happen," Jagels said when people feel overwhelmed, they need to remember who makes them feel like they matter and what really matters to them. Doing so reminds them what they have to offer the world and helps them reconnect with their sense of identity and purpose – which can spur them to action.

Thinking of these things, Jagels told the students, makes him realize that "the magic of Mountain View might be some of the difference in where you are today. In those three little words of 'family, love and respect,' Mountain View has helped you realize your own potential."

He said this school helps students see what they may not be able to see, themselves. "When I think of Mountain View, I think of hope," said Jagels.

Quoting from "Lessons Learned in Life," he said, "People come into our lives for a reason, a season or a lifetime."

"When someone is in your life for a reason, it's usually to meet a need you have," he said. "They've come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. Then, when our need has been met, they're gone and it's time to move on."

"When people come into our life for a
SEE PRINCIPAL OFFERS, PAGE 8

Colleagues Mourn GBW Instructional Assistant

After four decades there, Agnes Gordon dies at age 79.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

After 43 years at Greenbriar West Elementary (GBW), instructional assistant Agnes Gordon decided she'd retire after school ended in June. So her friends and colleagues were prepared to say goodbye to her.

What no one expected, however, was that they'd be saying farewell permanently. On May 26, over Memorial Day weekend, she died on her 79th birthday.

She's survived by her husband of 54 years, Harry, three children and eight grandchildren. Gordon's cause of death wasn't revealed, but memorial contributions may be made to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation at www.jdrf.org.

"She had worked here at Greenbriar West since its opening in 1971 – first, as a parent volunteer when her children attended the school, and then as an instructional assistant," said strings teacher Kate Belasik. "She will be missed very much by the staff, students and school community."

Noting that Gordon has been "a very special part" of the GBW community for more than four decades, school Principal Lori Cleveland said Gordon's specialty was teaching children to read.

"She delighted in the accomplishments of her students, praising their learning of a new sound or word by calling them 'smart cookies,'" said Cleveland. "The children loved learning with Mrs.



Agnes Gordon with kindergarten teacher Meghan Himmelrich's class on Dr. Seuss Day.

PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

Gordon, and she made a huge difference in the thousands of students with whom she worked."

In 2006, GBW celebrated its 40th of major renovations to enlarge and modernize the school. Cleveland said her favorite memory of that event is "when we unveiled the Agnes Gordon Reading Room in her honor."

Describing Gordon as "always upbeat and positive about the staff, students and community of Greenbriar West," Cleveland said that – even though Gordon planned to retire – she wasn't done teaching children.

"Before submitting her retirement papers, she asked me if I would write her a reference so she could serve as a volunteer in a school closer to her [Gainesville]

home," said Cleveland. "She said to me, 'I'm not going to just sit at home.' She had spirit and determination; I can only aspire to be like her when I am 78 years old."

SCHOOL COUNSELOR Jeanne McKinley said Gordon was also a huge help in the parking lot as the children arrived at school. "Every week, I spend half an hour stopping parents' kiss-and-ride traffic so our buses can turn into the school parking lot," said McKinley. "There are so many buses, cars and children at the crosswalk that we can't keep track of them all. Thank goodness Agnes did."

"We couldn't wait for her to yell, 'All buses!' and wave her arms at us from afar, so we didn't have to be out in the freezing cold, wind,



Agnes Gordon in her GBW shirt.

"She delighted in the accomplishments of her students, praising their learning of a new sound or word by calling them 'smart cookies.'"

— Principal Lori Cleveland

snow, driving rain or wilting heat for one minute longer than we had to. Of course, she was out there with us, standing guard faithfully, with humor and calm graciousness. We'll miss Agnes."

Kindergarten teacher Meghan Himmelrich was new to GBW, this past school year, and initially didn't know very many people there. "But I did get to know Agnes a little because we sat together at lunch," she said. "I knew she was a cool lady early on because she drank a root beer every day for lunch, and root beer is the best."

"She shared lots of interesting stories about her life and family and would always ask me about my upcoming wedding," continued Himmelrich. "She brought me a wedding magazine one day and shared tips from her son's wedding. Agnes made me feel very welcome here at GBW and I am going to miss our chats together."

Second-grade teacher Chris Yardley worked with Gordon at GBW for 11 years and is mourning her loss, along with everyone else who knew and loved her. "Every child should be so lucky to know someone like Agnes Gordon," said Yardley. "She had a genuine love for children, and it showed with every encounter she has with a child."

"That being said, Agnes has always been a positive ray of sunshine with everyone – students and adults. She had an incredible memory for names and specific events, and she always made you feel special." Saddened by her death, Yardley called Greenbriar West "so fortunate to have had the pleasure of Agnes's involvement with students and staff at our school for all these years. I know that hundreds of kids will fondly remember Mrs. Gordon as they continue through life's challenges, successes and all the twists and turns in between. What a special lady."



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ROUNDUPS

Police Seek Robbers

Fairfax County police are seeking the group of teens who assaulted two other teens and robbed one of them. The incident occurred Monday, June 30, in the Sunset Ridge/Little Rocky Run Court area of Centreville.

Police say a boy, 17, and girl, 16, were walking on the sidewalk when they were approached by four or five teenage boys. One of them struck the male victim, knocking him to the ground. The other assailants also struck him and took property from him. The girl ran away. Neither victim required medical treatment. The suspects were described as black and in their late teens.

Burglary in Centreville

Fairfax County police are also looking for a man who recently burglarized a Centreville home while the occupants were in it. The incident occurred Tuesday, July 1, in the 14900 block of Rydell Road.

According to police, the residents were awakened by a man inside a room. But when they challenged him, he jumped off the balcony and fled with an undisclosed amount of cash he'd taken from the home. The suspect is described as white, about 5 feet 8 inches and 135 pounds.

July 4th Safe Rides

WRAP will provide safe rides home during the Fourth of July holiday. Those needing one may call 1-800-200-TAXI (AT&T customers dial #WRAP) for a free ride home, up to a \$30 fare, from Friday July 4, at 10 p.m. through Saturday, July 5, at 4 a.m. People must be 21 or older to use this service. Some restrictions apply; see www.soberride.com for further details or call WRAP at 703-893-0461.

Memorial to a K-9 Hero

FROM PAGE 2

and were involved in recovering all the remains.

"And since Thor was a resource for the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the FBI, we went on searches throughout the country," said Miller. "He was also a member of my family."

Thor died in 2010, at age 14; and after the memorial's unveiling, Miller was both touched and over-

Farmers Market On Thursdays

Each Thursday, from 3-7 p.m., the Fairfax County Government Center hosts a farmers market in its parking lot. The Government Center is at 12000 Government Center Pkwy. in Fair Oaks, and the next markets are slated for July 10 and July 17.

Host a WFCM Food Drive

WFCM needs the community's help over the summer months when it has a critical shortage of food. "For instance, of the 24 schools that we serve, one has over 900 students who count on free and reduced lunches during the school year," said WFCM Community Outreach Manager Jennie Bush. "This creates a financial strain on families looking for food help."

But she said local residents can make a tremendous difference by hosting a food drive with their sports team, camp, swim team or place of employment.

To arrange a food drive for WFCM, contact the organization's summer intern, Annie Cecil, at intern@wfcma.org.

2014 Fairfax 50+ Plan

Fairfax County projects a dramatic increase in its older population. Between 2005 and 2030, the county expects the 50-and-over population to increase by 40 percent and the 70-and-over population by 88 percent. So the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, together with the Fairfax Area Commission on Aging and local residents, has been working with the community to create the 2014 Fairfax 50+ Plan.

What's proposed is at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/fairfax50plus.htm> under the topic headings of Safety & Health, Hous-

ing, Transportation, Community Engagement, Services for Older Adults & Caregivers, and Long-Range Planning & Trends Analysis. Comments may be emailed to DFSCommunity@fairfaxcounty.gov until June 30.

Food Donations For WFCM

Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' food pantry urgently needs

donations of canned vegetables (no green beans), vegetable oil; dry pasta, flour, canned fruit and meat, white or brown rice (1- or 2-lb. bags), cold cereal, pancake mix, powdered and evaporated milk. Also needed are toilet paper, diapers, shampoo and baby wipes. (WFCM clients cannot purchase toiletries with food stamps).

Bring all items to WFCM'S food pantry, 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 spring and summer clothing, quality shoes and like-new houseware. The store is at 13939 Metrotech Drive.

In addition, food-pantry volunteers are needed Tuesdays, 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m., and Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m.

Contact Annette Bosley at 703-988-9656, ext. 110, or abosley@wfcma.org.



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County Falling Behind on Its Housing Goals

BY MICHELLE KROCKER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NORTHERN VIRGINIA AFFORDABLE
HOUSING ALLIANCE

On June 9, the Residential Studio Committee of the Fairfax County Planning Commission voted to recommend that the review of the Zoning Ordinance Amendment for Residential Studio Units be tabled. This recommendation will be voted on by the full Planning Commission at its July 24 meeting and it is almost certain that it will be adopted. After months of committee hearings and community meetings throughout the county, the RSU amendment will be quietly put to rest.

COMMENTARY

What were the factors that defeated this proposal? They were many and varied, including:

- ❖ virulent community opposition;
- ❖ fear of overcrowding, which is a real issue in some parts of the county;
- ❖ an abject lack of knowledge by the larger community about the issue of housing affordability — who needs it, current housing costs, income levels of the workforce, the impacts on our quality of life;
- ❖ a zoning ordinance that didn't allow the flexibility needed to develop these units;
- ❖ absence of leadership from the Board of Supervisors in communicating the county's growing unmet housing needs and helping to shepherd a community discussion that was balanced and respectful.

Is Fairfax County committed to providing housing that is affordable for all its residents?

While the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted the Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness in 2007 and the Blueprint for Housing in 2010, they have done very little in the ensuing years to provide the resources needed to implement these plans. In 2009, when the county reduced

the Penny Fund for Housing to a half cent, the financial resources to leverage private capital to preserve and develop new affordable housing were lost (the remaining half cent is used to pay the debt service on the bonds issued for the Wedgewood Apartments acquisition). From 2005 to 2009, the One Penny Fund preserved over 2,200 units of affordable housing. Since 2009, the number of new or preserved units serving households earning less than \$64,000 or 60 percent of area median income has declined significantly.

The FY2015 Housing and Community Development budget provides \$5 million for new construction or a preservation project of 120 units, and approximately \$3 million for Bridging Affordability, a rental subsidy for households moving out of homelessness. This is a paltry amount of funding for a county of this size and wealth. As has been famously said, "show me your budget and I'll show you your priorities."

Other policies to provide funding for housing have been studied and tabled by the Board of Supervisors, the most recent being the "3-2-1 policy" which would secure a contribution from commercial development in transit and high density areas of the county to support the development of workforce housing. This policy is currently in place for the Tysons redevelopment area, but board members felt that if applied to other areas of the county, it could deter new commercial development which has slowed down in the last few years. However, both Arlington and Alexandria have commercial development fee policies in place, and the result has been a significant increase in resources for affordable housing with no apparent impact on commercial development.

The unwillingness to adopt new, proven funding strategies, combined with minimal local investment in housing programs means that the county is falling farther and farther behind in meeting the goals for the 10 Year

Plan and the Blueprint for Housing. How can homelessness be addressed in a meaningful way if the stock of affordable housing isn't growing? How does Fairfax County ensure that there is housing in its communities for the workforce in the retail, hospitality, health care, public sector and entry level jobs? How does the county promote the development of stable, affordable housing for homeless children, youth aging out of foster care, persons with special needs, seniors on fixed incomes and low wage working people?

The final motion on the RSU amendment at the June 9 meeting included a recommendation stating that "there be a broader community dialogue about affordable housing, including a discussion on how best to provide for a range of housing opportunities that will serve the county's current and future residents at all income levels." The Alliance enthusiastically endorses this recommendation, and believes the time for discussion is now. An honest community discussion would hopefully break down some of the barriers of mistrust and misunderstanding surrounding housing, and engage more members of the community in building consensus for solutions.

The growing shortage of affordable housing and the severe cost burden for an increasing percentage of the county's population is not unique to Fairfax County. This is a challenge that threatens the vitality and sustainability of the entire region, and some jurisdictions have made progress in increasing their affordable housing stock through a variety of financial and land use tools.

As the largest jurisdiction and the engine of job growth for the region, Fairfax County should be the leader in addressing the housing issue.

Instead, they are lagging far behind due to negligible investments and the absence of vision to address the unmet housing needs of its residents both today and in the future.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Safe, Sober And Sensational

To the Editor:

Spotlights in the sky over Centreville heralded their arrival. At 11 p.m. on the evening of June 18, graduates of Westfield High School's Class of 2014 began arriving for a graduation celebration designed for one primary reason: to keep these teens safe and sober on one of the most dangerous nights of their young lives. But don't tell them that. To them, it was an evening of fun, games, dancing, food, friends and lots of prizes; a celebration of their four years of hard work and success. They had earned the right to celebrate. And their parents could rest easy, knowing they were having fun at a safe, sober, and chaperoned event. But it wasn't always this way.

In 1987, the Department of Motor Vehicles identified a spike in alcohol and drug related accidents specifically on high school graduation nights. This study prompted the Virginia Department of Education to develop the "Virginia Operation Graduation Project," to pro-

vide guidelines to schools on hosting drug and alcohol free graduation celebrations. Thus began the tradition of PTAs hosting All Night Grad Parties, which Westfield High School adopted from its start. Although the event has changed in venue and activities over the years, the one thing that hasn't changed is the amount of community involvement needed to make this event a success.

For the past few years, Westfield's ANGP has been held at Fast Eddies' Sports & Billiards in Centreville. Though Fast Eddies' recently changed ownership and the soon-to-be-named "The Revolution" was not yet open to the public, the new owners embraced their community by continuing as Westfield's ANGP venue and hosting the graduates in style, mechanical bull included.

In addition to a DJ, dancing and a laser light show, graduates enjoyed casino tables, a live "Jeopardy" game, photo booths, airbrush tattoos, a "blizzard of bucks," games, food and much more until 4 a.m., ... when a large number of graduates left with their arms full of fabulous prizes. Thanks to the generosity of our Centreville, Chantilly and extended com-

munity, more graduates than ever were able to win raffled prizes donated by the following local businesses: Ace Hardware – Westfield; Alex Sax, Allure Salon and Spa; Amazing Nails Centreville; Applebee's Chantilly; Avion Drycleaning, Inc.; Baskin Robbins Centreville; Buffalo Wing Factory; Chick-Fil-A Chantilly; Catalina D'Italia Restaurant; Chipotle Corporate; Cinemark Theaters – Centreville; Dulles Golf Center; Dunkin Donuts – Greenbriar; El Fresco; Fosters Grille Chantilly; FirstWatch, The Daytime Café; Genghis Grill; Giant – Stone Road; GNC Live Well – Fair Lakes; Go Vacuum Outlet; H.H.Gregg Appliances & Electronics – Fair Lakes; Hair Cuttery – Chantilly; Jersey Mike's – Chantilly; Lids – Monmouth Mall; Lifetime; Marshalls – Greenbriar; Minerva Indian Cuisine; Modell's; Mr. Juan Valdez; Mr. Keith A. Harrison; Mrs. Green's Natural Market; Noodles and Company; Om Spices – Indian Grocery Store; Paisanos; Pho Aura – Centreville; Picante Restaurant; Plato's Closet; Radio Shack; Santini's New York Style Deli; Sears – Centreville; Soccer Post D.C – Fairfax;

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LETTERS



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED



Graduates from Westfield's Class of 2014 celebrate at their All Night Grad party on June 18.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

FROM PAGE 6

Starbucks – Fair Lakes; Sweet Frog – Chantilly; Texas Roadhouse Chantilly; Tony's NY Pizza; UFC – GYM; VA Tech Bookstore; Victoria's Secret, and Walmart – Fairlakes.

The Westfield High School PTSA would like to ex-

tend our deepest gratitude to these businesses and all the individuals whose generosity and hard work made a safe and sober All Night Grad Party a sensational event for the WHS Class of 2014.

Westfield HS PTSA/ANGP Committee

Great Falls Travel Soccer Tryouts

Great Falls Soccer Club, is establishing a new rising U14 Travel Team who will play in the National Capital Soccer League (NCSL) for the 2014/15 campaign. We are seeking serious rising U14 players born after 08/01/00.

Rising U14B NCSL

Training sessions are normally held three (3x) a week in the Great Falls/Reston area.



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Community Service Project

Members of the Lane's Mill Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter participated in a community service project in the Sully Station II neighborhood during May. Members placed plastic decals on storm drains that read, "No Dumping, Drains to Occoquan Reservoir." The labels remind residents not to dump any pollutants down storm drains, which are part of watersheds.

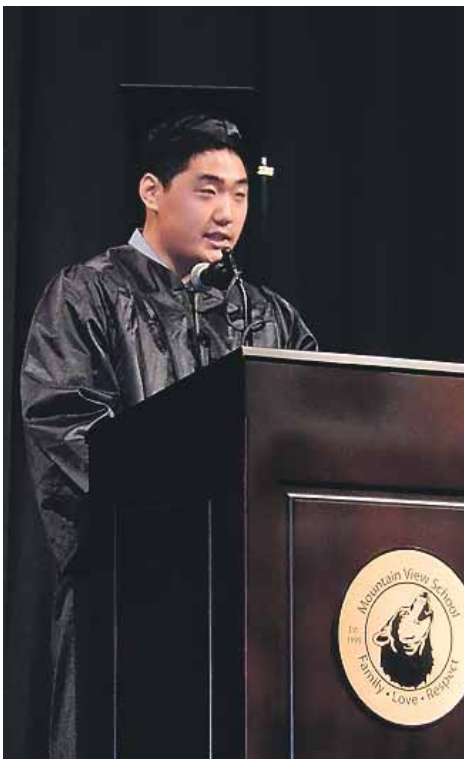
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Student speaker Peter Shin



Grad Karla Bolanos of Centreville's London Towne community, with her sister, Carolina Bolanos, and mom, Sandra Mejia.



Syed Ali Shah of Fair Lakes and girlfriend Zubeyda Tebra, a junior.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

'Thank You to Everyone Who Believed in Me'

FROM PAGE 3

other people because they helped me. My parents and girlfriend supported me and pushed me to do my best. I've matured and I'm proud of myself today. Graduating high school has given me confidence, and I'm looking forward to the challenges ahead."

"Mountain View has been a blessing to me," he continued. "If I hadn't come here, I don't know what I would have done. Thank you to everyone who believed in me and gave me the confidence to believe in myself."

Meanwhile, Karla Bolanos wasn't just getting used to a new school, she was adjusting to a whole, new country where the English language was foreign to her. "I left my family in El Salvador and had to get used to a new life, new culture, new language and a new environment," she said.

She attended a Chantilly school, but it might as well have been on Mars. "My first day of school, I was terrified," said Bolanos. "I didn't know any English; I practiced, but couldn't answer when people just asked me my name."

I soon became frustrated and depressed; people talked to me and I couldn't understand."

"School was so hard for me," she continued. "I wanted to communicate with people,



Grad Byong Hyuk Park with dad Chon Hwan Park and mom Mikyong Park, of Centreville's Singleton's Grove community.



Elizabeth Scarcella (left) and Olga Perez of Centreville's Sully Station community.

but couldn't, so I was angry at myself for not learning English quickly. I started skipping classes and my counselor said it would

take me five or six years to graduate." But that summer, she heard about Mountain View. Her sister was transferring there and

Bolanos decided to join her.

"My mother said Mountain View was
SEE MOUNTAIN VIEW, PAGE 11

Principal Offers Words of Wisdom to the Graduates

FROM PAGE 3

season, they bring you peace or make you laugh. They may teach you something you've never done. They usually give you joy or encouragement and belief in yourself. It's usually short and sweet.

"Lifetime relationships teach you a life-

time of lessons you must build upon to have a solid emotional and academic foundation. Accept the lessons, love the people and put what you've learned to use in all other relationships and areas of your life."

Jagels said some of Mountain View's seniors have only been at the school for a short

time, a reason; some for a semester, a season; and some for much longer. "It is my hope that the impact Mountain View has had on your lives will last a lifetime," he said. "Your impact on us, the staff, certainly will."

"Seniors, go be the hope and lead a life

of inspiration," he continued. "Take some of the values of 'family, love and respect' and apply them to your life.

Have hope and be the person you want to be. Thank you so much for being part of Mountain View; we are so very proud of you."

Summer Health and Safety Hazards

Keeping danger at bay during warm weather months.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Summer comes but once a year. From picnics and days at the pool to backyard barbecues and day-long hikes, many people spend the season outdoors. Danger, from water-related illnesses to heat stroke, often comes with the fun. Public safety officials say people can prevent accidents and illnesses by taking safety measures and staying informed.

"One of the core messages with public health is that we can't be everywhere all the time," said Glen Barbour, public safety information officer for the Fairfax County Health Department. "It is really in the hands of the public to take precautionary measures and protect themselves."

Celebratory sparklers are popular during the summer, but they're a source of danger. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that 60 percent of fireworks injuries occur around July 4. Hand, eye and face injuries are among the most common.

"The first thing that we recommend is viewing fireworks displays in a public place that has been permitted and checked for safety," said Dan Schmidt, spokesman for the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. "It saves them money and provides a safe environment to view fireworks."

Other safety officials agree. Fireworks are banned in the City of Alexandria. "We have close to 100 percent compliance, so we don't see many injuries," said Tony Washington, spokesman for the City of Alexandria Fire Department.

For those who decide to use consumer fireworks, there are a few safety considerations to keep in mind: "Fire them from a flat surface and make sure there are no combustible materials near the fireworks," said Schmidt. "Have bystanders at least 25 feet away, read the directions and don't let chil-



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

Water-related injuries and illnesses increase during the summer. Among the best defenses against such hazards are awareness and good safety practices like teaching children how to swim.

dren handle or light fireworks."

OTHER SUMMER HEALTH HAZARDS are equally preventable. From recreational water illnesses to sunburns, staying informed about potential hazards and strategies for keeping them at bay can lead to a more fun and relaxing summer for everyone.

"The best way to prevent recreational water illnesses is to keep germs, pee and poop out of the water," said Kurt Larrick, spokesman for the Arlington County Department of Human Service. "Check diapers frequently and take a shower with soap before going into the water."

Fairfax County issues the same message. "The main thing that we at the health department emphasize is gastrointestinal illness caused by feces in the water," said Barbour. "We encourage people, especially the parents of small children, to not go to a public pool when they have diarrhea."

Barbour warns of factors that might give the public a false sense of security. "We want parents to be mindful that not all germs are killed right away, even in chlorinated water, and that leak-proof diapers don't always keep feces out of the water."

Other preventative measures include frequent hand washing, taking a shower before entering a public pool, discouraging children from drinking water that is used for swimming and giving young children

bathroom breaks at least every 60 minutes.

IN ADDITION TO ILLNESSES, other water-related dangers spike during the summer. "There are a lot of accidents like drowning," said Barbour. "Teach kids how to swim, watch young children very carefully when they are near water."

Swimming with a partner and wearing a life vest when boating are also important. "Should someone fall in the water and injure their head, the life vest will keep them floating," said Barbour.

Heat-induced ailments like sunburns, heat rashes, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are other hot-weather culprits. "The three most important things to do to prevent them are drink enough fluids, wear proper clothing and choose the best times to be outside," said Caroline Sutter, RN DNP-BC, assistant professor of nursing, George Mason University. "Avoid the extreme heat of midday."

Wearing sunscreen, staying hydrated and avoiding alcohol when in the heat are also good ideas. "Most of the research shows that you should drink water before going out into the heat, even if you don't feel thirsty. Thirst is the last warning sign of dehydration," said Sutter. "After you come in, you can add back water with sports drinks that have electrolytes."

Know the warning signs that it is time to get out of the heat: "Heat cramps are the first thing that you'll feel," said Sutter. "Your muscles will get tired and cramp easily because they aren't getting enough blood flow."

Nausea, vomiting and headaches are also clues. "Your body is good about giving you warning signs," said Sutter. "If you listen to your body you can avoid some of these major complications."

The elderly and very young children are at greatest risk of heat illnesses.

"Children in sports camps or outdoor camps should wear sunscreen and have regular rest breaks in the shade," said Rosemarie Berman, RN, Ph.D., chair, B.S.N. program; assistant professor of nursing, Marymount University in Arlington. "A well-regulated camp will have regulated rest periods."

More on Summer Safety

Fairfax County Emergency Information Blog

fairfaxcountyemergency.wordpress.com/

Fairfax County Health Department

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/

Barbour said, "Parents of infants and small children should be aware because a baby can't tell you when they're sick. Check on elderly neighbors who don't have air conditioning."

Avoid leaving the elderly, young children and pets in small, enclosed spaces like cars. "They could die even after a short period of time like when you're running to get gas," said Sutter.

Stay informed about potentially dangerous weather like heat waves. "We have cooling centers open on really hot days," said Barbour. "You can also go into an air conditioned public space like a library."

BITES FROM MOSQUITOES and ticks can also pose health threats. "People should be mindful that we do have West Nile virus and Lyme disease in our area," said Barbour. "When summer comes, people are outside and are exposed to insects that cause people to get sick."

Heavily foliated spaces, like those with tall grass, are where such bugs hide. "If you're in an area where the grass is high, on the fringes of a park or even your backyard, be aware," said Barbour.

When hiking or working outside, wear light-colored, loose fitting clothing, long sleeves and long pants. "Ticks are sneaky," said Barbour. "They will crawl up your leg without you knowing it."

Other precautionary measures include checking your body carefully for ticks after coming inside and eliminating standing water from around a home. "At least once a week, we encourage people to walk around their house and dump water from places like bird baths and your dog's water bowl."

Health and safety officials say that most summer hazards are avoidable. "Summer safety pretty much all boils down to common sense and reducing your exposure to risks," said Larrick.



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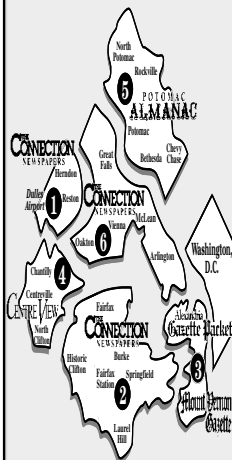
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Look Out Below



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

I think I know what a rampaging bull feels like; and I don't mean one on Wall Street, either. I mean one in the figurative sense: when one has a need, an overwhelming, unstoppable-type urge, to scratch that itch, to gratify that which has been delayed. What am I talking about? (You sound like my wife, Dina.) I am talking about food. More specifically, I am talking about a side effect I've been experiencing of late from the chemotherapy drug Alimta, with which I've been infused every three weeks since late September, 2013 (successfully I may add, given the shrinkage noted in my most recent CT Scan).

I would say that sometime within the last three months, for seven to 10 days immediately after my Friday infusion, food doesn't taste right; it doesn't feel right (its texture in my mouth), it doesn't digest right, its after-taste is not right; it doesn't do anything right. In fact, it's downright wrong. Oh, I still have an appetite, but the idea of actually eating doesn't appeal to me, almost instinctively, if that makes any sense. And when I do think about eating now/eating later, it's way less than thrilling and way more than simply distressing. You see, I'm an "oral-fixator" and not being able to gain any pleasure from eating is making me feel null and void.

Apparently, according to my oncologist, (If I understand him correctly, and there's a huge chance that I don't), my taste buds are being adversely affected by the Alimta, doing the same kind of damage to them that chemotherapy, generally speaking, does to hair: eliminating it/slowing its growth/changing its properties.

Consequently, my taste sensation is not sensational. It's quite the opposite. Throw in some lingering post-chemotherapy nausea and related burping, and another side effect: hiccuping, and you have a recipe not for food/eating. Not that I'm thin as a result; hardly, but I am not exactly bursting at my seams, either. Certainly I could stand to lose a pound or two, but I'd rather pick my own battles, if you know what I mean.

Fortunately, (so far) my taste issues seem to resolve themselves within the time frame I've mentioned. And oddly, therein lies a problem. After not eating much – or deriving any pleasure from eating during the previous week or so, once food regains its appeal and I can eat "normally" – for me, it's Katie bar the door. I might as well be Dan Aykroyd as Beldar from the Saturday Night Live Conehead sketches eating "mass quantities." It's not merely a slippery slope I'm on, it's more like an avalanche threat with "falling rocks." Once I start eating, I'm not stopping – until I hit bottom; of the bag, the box, the plastic container, the carton, anything. I'll admit, it's not a pretty sight, but as yet, it's a sight unseen by either man or beast. (At present I'm eating my way through a bag of Starburst Fruit Chews; I'm not proud, just hungry.)

At least I'm smiling again, and feeling more positive, which of course is a must as a cancer patient. However, that pent-up demand from a week of not eating is a killer. I wish I could stop it, but being interested in eating again feels so good – for which I'm exceedingly grateful – and so far, there's seems to be very little I can do to slow down the train. (I imagine Nabisco and M&M/MARS are grateful, too. At least now they won't have to declare bankruptcy.)

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

Mountain View

FROM PAGE 8

where the bad kids went," she said. "But I came here three years ago and it was the best decision of my life. The teachers gave me extra help and told me to study hard and believe in myself. I made honor roll and read my first book here."

The ESOL teacher and librarian helped Bolanos improve her English, and she said reading was a big factor in her success at school. "I had to work extra hard," she said. "But Mountain View gave me hope that I could graduate from high school and be the first person in my family to attend college."

Referring to the school motto, she said Mountain View gave her "family, love and respect." Bolanos, an honor graduate and scholarship recipient, then thanked counselor Michael Todd, Assistant Principal Amy Parmentier and all her teachers "who were there to push me whenever I gave up hope. This is not only my victory, this is all of our victories, Timberwolves!"

After those two speeches, Assistant Principal Susan Lee said, "This is what keeps Mountain View teachers coming to school every day. We hear stories like these about students who won't quit."

Next, graduating student Elizabeth Scarcella sang such an outstanding rendition of Frank Sinatra's "That's Life" that she received a standing ovation. Then school staff presented three special awards.

Math teacher Anne Hoffman gave the Citizenship Award to Bolanos. It recognizes students who help build a positive school community, and Hoffman said Bolanos was involved in Mountain View's reading buddies and environmental programs and praised her tenacity and drive.

Receiving the Personal Achievement Award was Antonio Perez. "He had a past filled with negative choices, anger and poor behavior," said Math Department Chair Emily Woolard. "But he comes here today as the definition of determination and resilience – and as someone who's transformed himself into a respectful young man."

The Faculty Award for achieving academic and personal success, despite significant obstacles, went to Wana Chiwevu. "She's been an exemplary student – hard-working, independent, kind, funny, disciplined and determined," said chemistry teacher Ana Rose Tuszka. "She completed 1-1/2 years of classes in one year, attending both day and night classes, and taking public transportation to get there."

"She read extra books and researched topics at home," continued Tuszka. "She's a classroom leader, helping others, and supported women in need through the Brave Girls Club. She's found a family here at the View, and it's been a joy and a pleasure watching her relentlessly pursue her education."

After that, Jagels presented the diplomas and the graduation celebrations began.

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ONGOING

Art Gallery: Panolia. Through Aug. 2. 7 p.m.-midnight. at Epicure Cafe, 11104 Lee Highway, Fairfax. A collection of paintings and mixed media work by local artists, curated by The Bunnyman Bridge Collective. Free admission, one item purchase required. Visit www.epicurecafe.org or www.facebook.com/TheBunnymanBridgeCollective.

Fine Arts Open Exhibition. Through Aug. 19. at Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax. All media will be represented, from drawing to ceramics. Entry fee is \$10 for members and \$18 for nonmembers. Contact 703 323-0880 or visit www.jccnvarts.org for more.

Evenings on the Ellipse Summer Concert Series. Thursdays through Aug. 28. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax. Whether you like jazz, big band, bluegrass, or Latin pop, there is sure to be something for everyone. Rain or shine. Free. Visit <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances/ellipse.htm> for more.

Blue Star Museums. Through Sept. 1. at more than 2,000 locations. The program provides families an opportunity to enjoy the nation's cultural heritage and learn more about their new communities after a military move. Free for Military families. Visit <http://arts.gov/national/blue-star-museums>.

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.

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Girls Basketball Camp. The Chantilly High School Girls Basketball Program will be hosting its summer basketball camp for girls ages 7-15 this summer. Session III runs July 7-July 11, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., for ages 7-15. Tuition is \$150. Session I has been canceled this year. Information and registration forms at www.chantillysports.org under Varsity Girls Basketball, Camps and Clinics. Walk-ups for each session are welcome.

Young Actors Workshop. For elementary students in rising grades 2-6 to learn about theatre arts. Runs July 21-25, 9 a.m.-noon at Westfield

High School, 4700 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Tuition is \$125. The musical theatre camp includes theatre games, improvisation, acting exercises, songs and dances and culminates with a show from musical comedy classics. Sponsored by Westfield Theatre Boosters and led by Westfield Theatre alumni and current students. Visit www.westfieldtheatreboosters.com for or call 703-488-6439. Space is limited.

Sizzlin' Sully Summer Workouts. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 a.m. and 9:45-10:45 a.m. Sully Community Center Parking lot, 5101 Sequoia Farms Dr. Centreville. A total body conditioning workout. \$10 Drop in fee, or \$90 for 10 classes. Visit www.benefitfitness.us/ for more.

SATURDAY/JULY 5

Plant Clinic. 10:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Master gardeners will provide horticultural tips, information, techniques and advice to home gardeners. Call 703-502-3883.

Lego Mania. 12:30 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Children in kindergarten through second grade can show off their Lego-building skills. Call 703-502-3883.

SUNDAY/JULY 6

Summer Concert Series. 6-7 p.m. at

Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy., Chantilly. The United States Air Force Singing Sergeants will play a concert. Free. Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/events/calendar/?month=7&year=2014> for more.

MONDAY/JULY 7

Bouncin' Babies. 10:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories and activities for babies up to 11 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

Small Wonders. 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories and activities for children 12-23 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

Writers of Chantilly. 6:45 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Share work and give and receive feedback in a supportive setting. Call 703-502-3883.

TUESDAY/JULY 8

Toddlin' Twos. 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Early literacy storytime with stories, songs and activities. Age 2 with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

"Flights of Fancy" — Stories for Children. 11 a.m. at Udvar-Hazy

Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy., Chantilly. Free. Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/visit/udvar-hazy-center/things-to-do/story-times.cfm> for more.

Reptiles Alive. 2:30 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. See how these animals cling, climb and chase in the wild. Presented by Reptiles Alive. For ages 6-12. Call 703-502-3883.

Magic and Mayhem. 4 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. A sci-fi and fantasy book discussion group for grades 6-8. Call 703-502-3883.

Art Storytime. 7 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Storytime to explore the artist in everyone, come dressed in old clothes. For ages 4-7. Call 703-502-3883.

Teen Writers Workshop. 7 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Writing workshop for teens to inspire creativity and improve writing skills. Participants can bring work to read out loud or just attend. Call 703-502-3883.

WEDNESDAY/JULY 9

Read, Build, Play Duplo Storytime. 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Duplo play storytime to help develop early literacy skills. Age 18-35 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

"Flights of Fancy" — Stories for Children. 11 a.m. at Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy., Chantilly. Free. Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/visit/udvar-hazy-center/things-to-do/story-times.cfm> for more.

Bouncin' Babies. 3 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories and activities for babies up to 11 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

Small Wonders. 4 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories and activities for children 12-23 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

Book Discussion Group. 7:30 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Book group for adults. Call 703-502-3883.

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY/JULY 9-11

Learn to Sew. 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Sully Historic Site, 3650 Historic Sully Way, Chantilly. Suited for children 8-12. \$90 for in county, \$105 for out of county. Call 703-437-1794 to sign up.

THURSDAY/JULY 10

Fairy Tale Writing Workshop. 10:30 a.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Learn to write a fairy tale, for children in grades 3 and 4. Call 703-502-3883.

"Flights of Fancy" — Stories for Children. 11 a.m. at Udvar-Hazy Center, 14390 Air and Space Museum Pkwy., Chantilly. Free. Visit <http://airandspace.si.edu/visit/udvar-hazy-center/things-to-do/story-times.cfm> for more.

Balloon Sculpting. 2 p.m. Centreville Regional Library, 14200 St. Germain Drive. Learn the art of balloon twisting, for ages 12-18. Call 703-830-2223.

The End, Or Is It? Book Club. 7:30 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Book discussion group. Call 703-502-3883.

FRIDAY/JULY 11

Bouncin' Babies. 3 p.m. at Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road. Rhymes, songs, stories and activities for babies up to 11 months with adult. Call 703-502-3883.

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