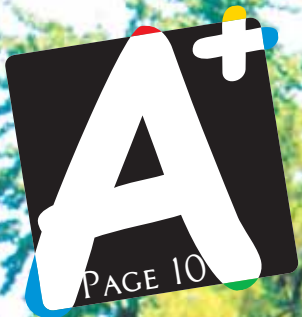


# Teens Learn the Law

Herndon traffic motor officer Eddie Stapleton shows teens how to use a lidar during the Herndon Police Youth Academy on Friday.

NEWS, PAGE 3



## Herndon Enjoys Summer in Spotlight

NEWS, PAGE 4

## New Town Council, New Fiscal Year

NEWS, PAGE 3





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# Teens Learn the Law Youth academy teaches teens law enforcement.

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**3** O. 25. 40. Carlos Zelaya, 14, held the Lidar, a binocular-style radar gun, up to his eyes, aimed for the front of passing cars, and captured their speed - and whether the cars were speeding.

Zelaya, Herndon resident, was one of the 13 students in this year's Herndon Police Youth Academy, which taught students the everyday life of local cops last week.

He loved seeing what the law was like from the officers' point of view.

"I wanted to learn more about being a police officer," he said. "I don't see why people resist cops."

The students got to sit in the front seat of a police car, learn about crime scene investigation, see a real court case and meet some of the police dogs who also report for duty at the station.

Some of the more hands-on activities included taking a polygraph test and test the DIU Convincer to understand how a few drinks can lead to serious vision impairment.

"I got to experience things they get to experience every day," said 14-year-old Allison Lane, Sterling. "I got hooked up



**2014 Herndon Police Academy participants.**

to the polygraph. It was really stressful. I don't know if I would pass it even if I was telling the truth."

Herndon Police Department Senior Officer Denise Randles was the head of this

year's program.

"I thought this year was successful," she said. "We got great feedback from the students."

Hopefully they got a good sense of what

it takes to be in law enforcement, what it takes to be a good citizen and be respectful to others."

She treated the teens to pizza and soda after they received their completion certificates.

Then she showed a slideshow to parents so they could see what their children learned throughout the week. Randles quizzed the parents on the police-themed music, some of which, like "Bad Boys" by Inner Circle, she exclaimed the teens never heard before.

Dejauna Black, 14, of Herndon, joined the summer program because she wanted to learn more about law enforcement. What she found out surprised her.

"They don't just catch bad guys," she said. "They're not mean people."

She said she liked learning about gangs and how the polygraph machine detects a lie.

"It detects your sweat glands," she said.

By the end of the program, some of the teens even had aspirations to become an officer.

"I actually really liked it," said 13-year-old Nikola Dragacevac, of McLean. "I think law enforcement would be fun when I'm older."

## New Town Council, New Fiscal Year

**Council approves reserves for future, current projects.**

BY REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

**P**rojects that were not finished by the end of June were held up until the first Herndon Town Council meeting this month.

The town council unanimously approved to re-appropriate funding from the previous fiscal year to the current one to keep projects, including for the Herndon capital project, moving forward and spur new projects during the July 8 meeting.

The fiscal year ends June 30, said town Director of Finance Mary Tuohy, and the town council is asked every year to review and approve reserving money not used in the previous budget for ongoing or upcoming projects.

"Without this authorization, the work or acquisition requirements may still be valid, it may still be on your list of things

you want to accomplish, but the funding would not be there, so the work could actually not be done," she said.

Among the projects the town plans on working towards is creating another office space for a new senior accounting position.

"I sometimes feel like the old woman in the shoe with too many people and not enough rooms," said Tuohy.

Other projects include the continuing capital project.

"This budget has already been approved?" asked councilmember Jasbinder Singh. "The last town council approved it?"

He also asked if the resolution just makes sure there is money - which the town already has - is available for the projects.

"We are increasing the budget by the amount in the reserves," said Tuohy. "What you're also doing in this action is you're approving what we call rolled purchase orders, open purchase orders."

By approving the resolution, they are "recognizing the commitments of the town."

Although the resolution was accompanied by a public hearing, no one from the audience spoke for or against it.

The resolution had to be voted on in two parts - to approve the reserve of Fiscal Year



**Herndon Town Council approved to re-appropriate project funding from the previous fiscal year to the current one.**

2014 for new and outgoing projects as well as to amend the FY 2015 budget to recognize the reserves for the projects.

"We're sold," said Mayor Lisa Merkel.

In other business, the town council also

approved to make town parks and playgrounds voluntary smoke-free zones and appointed councilmember Grace Han Wolf as the town principal for the Dulles Board of Directors committee.





The women of Voce Chamber singers had a summer concert at ArtSpace Herndon on July 12. They sang hit songs of the 1940s and '50s.



Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel with NBC4 reporter Angie Goff and Herndon town council member Grace Han Wolf.

# Herndon Enjoys Summer in Spotlight

**Downtown Herndon remains active despite summer heat.**

By RYAN DUNN  
THE CONNECTION

**A**lthough school is out and summer is in, downtown Herndon is still being active. On July 9 and July 10, reporters from channel NBC4 visited downtown Herndon to share some of the special qualities of the town. “We wanted to emphasize how great Herndon is incorporating the community,” said NBC4 reporter Angie Goff. Goff is an alumnus of Herndon High, and was able to visit several sites and attractions that make Herndon unique. Herndon is the third largest town in the commonwealth of Virginia, and will be seeing some new rails soon with the addition of the Metro Silver Line.

“It really has this small town charm, that’s the feel you get when you come to downtown Herndon,” said Goff. Goff and her team visited the historic Herndon Depot museum where they spoke with former Herndon council member Charles D. Waddell, president of the Herndon Historical Society. Goff spoke with Herndon council member Grace Han Wolf when they visited the ArtSpace Herndon on 750 Center Street. The video segments were later broadcast on WRC-TV, channel 4, an NBC owned and operated television station.

ArtSpace Herndon is displaying images taken within Herndon by local photographers. This exhibit will be on display until July 27. An artists’ reception open to the public will be held the evening of Saturday, July 26 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. On July 12, the community gallery hosted a concert by women of the Voce Chamber singers. The theme of the concert was music of the 1940s and 1950s.

“It is a nice facility,” said Chris Borton, a



**Over 18 local residents of Herndon attended a morning zumba session near the old Town Hall near Lynn Street on July 10. Teaching the event were fitness instructors employed by the Herndon Parks and Recreation Department.**

**“With the metro coming, we are going full circle as a rail town.”**

**— Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel**

member of the Voce Chamber singers. Borton accompanied the singers on the piano for the July concert. The concert audience and singers had the opportunity to view the photo exhibit. “It was fun to sing some music which we do not normally sing,” said Voce Chamber board member and founding member Gretchen Newman. In August, ArtSpace Herndon will display an exhibit on the customs and life in Konko, a village in Ghana.

The NBC4 reporters had a meal at Jimmy’s Old Town Tavern, and visited the Herndon farmers market. The Thursday morning farmers market has been held on Lynn Street in front of the caboose in downtown Herndon. A feature of the farmers market is entertainment by local artists. Performances are open to the public 10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. on Thursdays on the Town Hall lawn at 730 Elden Street and will continue until August. On July 17 there will be a show by the band Rocknoceros, July 24 features Paul Hadfield “The Funny Guy”, and July 31 will have a reading by children’s author Kwame Alexander.

“It is pretty amazing to think that Herndon is preparing for the biggest transition we have seen in decades, the Silver Line,” said Goff. “With the metro coming, we are going full circle as a rail town,” said Herndon Mayor Lisa Merkel. In November of 2013, the Town Council, upon recommendation by the Planning Commission, incorporated a new chapter into the Zoning Ordinance to permit the type of development envisioned in the Herndon Metro Station Area Plan. The Town Council rezoned the 38 acre Herndon Transit-Oriented Core to the new zoning designation Planned Development - Transit-Oriented Core (PD-TOC).



# Herndon Town Calendar Photos On Display

Photos of Herndon on display at ArtSpace Herndon.

BY RYAN DUNN  
THE CONNECTION

ArtSpace Herndon has opened the annual Town of Herndon Calendar Exhibit, featuring finalists from the 2014 Town of Herndon Calendar Competition. The photo exhibit shows the works of 25 local photographers, who all took photos within the corporate limits of the Town of Herndon.

This year competition's jurors and judges are Peter Toth and Lee Love who evaluated photographs submitted to the competition and selected the finalists photographs' to exhibit in ArtSpace Herndon's Post Gallery. From the finalist photographs, the Town of Herndon selects photographs for the 2015 Herndon Town Calendar. Each year in December, more than 10,000 calendars are printed and



PHOTO BY RYAN DUNN/ THE CONNECTION

**Anne Emerson and her husband display her photo "Herndon Rotary Club Pumpkin Stall II." The 2014 photo exhibit displays the works of 25 local photographers, who took photos within the corporate limits of the Town of Herndon.**

distributed to all citizens and businesses throughout the town. In addition to the exhibit and publication in the calendar, finalist photographs are eligible to receive the Herndon Town Calendar People's

Choice Award, given to the photograph best representing Herndon.

In November photographer Peter Toth will show between 20-30 pieces at the U.S. Geological Survey in Reston. Herndon photogra-



**Photographer Katy Betti has three photos in the Town of Herndon Calendar Exhibit at ArtSpace Herndon**

pher Lee Love specializes in corporate, advertising, editorial, industrial, portraits, and lifestyle photography. Love's two ongoing projects are Shadows, a series of photos of local skateboarders, and

Roller Derby Girls. An awards reception at ArtSpace Herndon is planned for Saturday, July 26, from 7 to 9 p.m. Winners of the competition will be used for the Town's calendar. Both the winners and People's Choice will be announced during the Awards Reception. The reception will be free and open to the public.

ArtSpace Herndon is a community art gallery created and supported by art lovers in the greater Herndon area providing opportunities for local artists and photographers to exhibit their art, teach classes, and offer workshops. As a gathering place celebrating the arts, ArtSpace Herndon is also a showcase for performers. There will be a concert at ArtSpace Herndon on Saturday, July 12 at 7:30 p.m. by women of the Voce Chamber Singers. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased in advance by visiting [www.voce.org](http://www.voce.org). Tickets will also be sold at the door. ArtSpace Herndon attracts artists and performers at local, national, and international levels. For more information about ArtSpace Herndon, visit [www.artspaceherndon.com](http://www.artspaceherndon.com).



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# OPINION

## Save a Little, Help Others Prepare for School

**Virginia's tax holiday on school supplies is a good reminder to donate supplies and dollars for children who need help arriving at school prepared.**

Virginia's tax holiday on school supplies and clothing is Aug. 1-3, and it makes sense to take advantage of the savings, and to spread the wealth around.

During this three-day period, school supplies selling for \$20 or less per item, and clothing and footwear selling for \$100 or less per item will be exempt from Virginia sales tax.

There are some items that do not qualify, for example digital school supplies. See <http://www.tax.virginia.gov/> for more details.

When you are buying school supplies for your family, buy extra to donate to local families who are not able to afford to do the same.

In Fairfax County, just under 50,000 students are poor enough to qualify for free or reduced price meals at school.

In Fairfax County, local nonprofits, Fairfax County Public Schools and corporate partners are collecting school supplies and backpacks. Monetary donations and backpacks are being accepted by eight local nonprofits and through local Apple and Northwest Federal Credit

Union Branches, as well as online at <http://collectforkids.org/donate/> through Sept. 2. Last year the drive provided supplies for nearly 20,000 students. A \$10 cash donation goes a long way.

Collect for Kids Program runs through Sept. 2. Monetary donations can be accepted any time.

**EDITORIAL** Donate money at [www.collectforkids.org](http://www.collectforkids.org). Donations of

backpacks are also being accepted at every Apple Federal Credit Union and Northwest Federal Credit Union branch in Fairfax County and at any of the affiliate charitable organizations, including Cornerstones, Western Fairfax Christian Ministries, Our Daily Bread, Koinonia, United Community Ministries and others.

For more, see the Collect for Kids website at <http://collectforkids.org>.

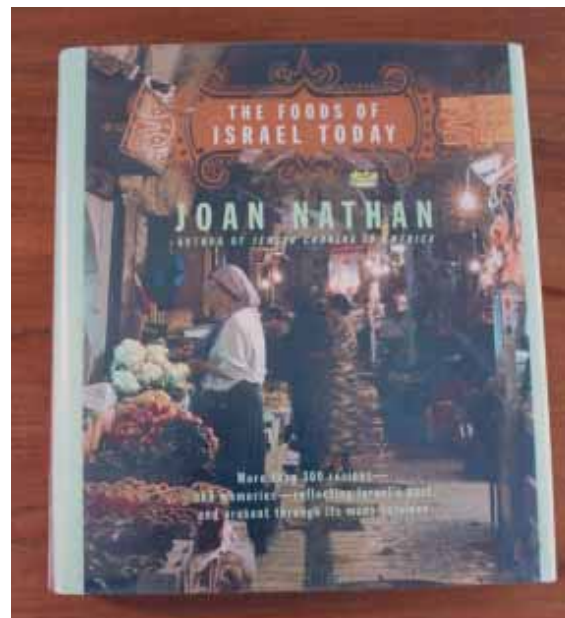
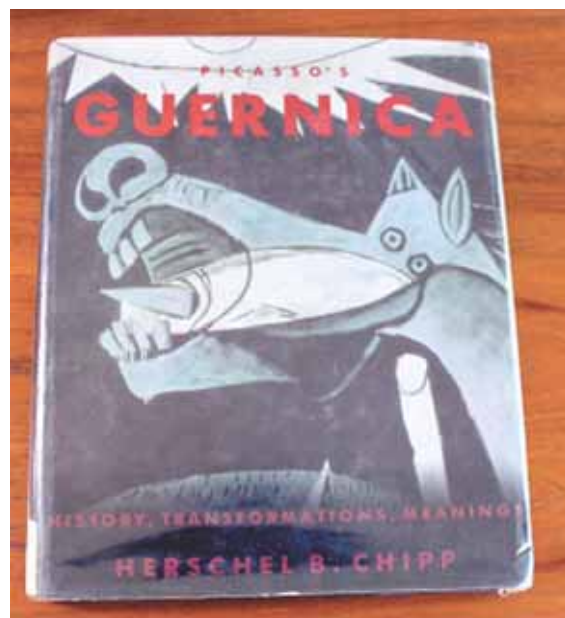
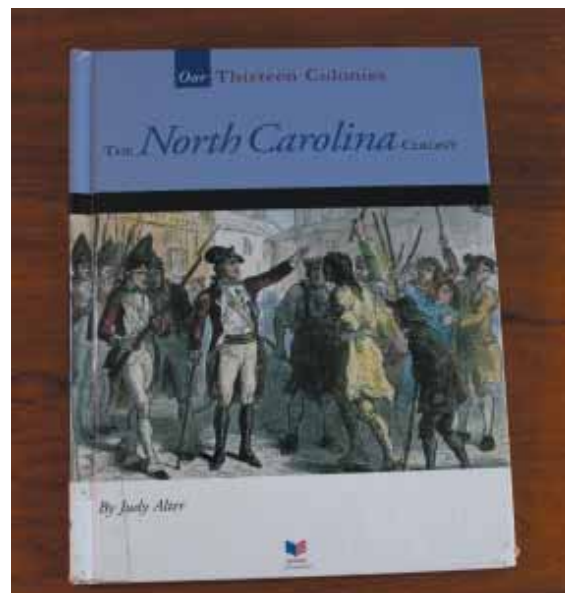
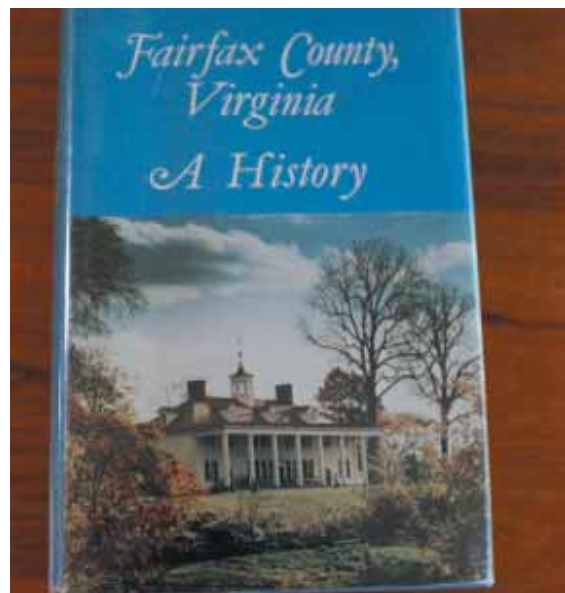
## Help Save Our Books

To the Editor:

Last November the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors voted to cancel the Beta Plan for the county library system; however, Library Operations has continued to pursue the Beta Plan. At the Library Board of Trustees meeting July 9, 2014, Michael Cutrone, the Hunter Mill Representative to the Library Board, requested that current procedures for discarding low demand items be changed. Low demand items are books that have not been checked out for 24 months. Low demand books are now transferred to Technical Operations, and large numbers in very good condition are being discarded. Michael Cutrone asked that until a new policy can be instituted that the discard of low demand books be stopped. The Director of Library Operations stated that it was his decision to make and he was opposed to changing current procedures.

Many neighboring library systems keep their books on the shelves for five years before they are considered for weeding. Even then, I am told by librarians in other library systems, they are very reluctant to let go of nonfiction works. Nonfiction is the heart of any library's collection. Our children need nonfiction for their school papers. Information from the Internet is often incorrect and incomplete.

We have lost thousands of non-fiction books in good condition since February 2014. Especially vulnerable are large art books which are often only used in the library and not checked out because of their size and weight. Since the Library Board is reluc-



**Some of the low demand books that were discarded by the Fairfax County Public Library since February 2014.**

tant to direct operational procedures is there anything library patrons can do to protect the collection and culturally significant books?

Yes, there is. Patrons can check out books. Once books are checked out, they are protected for

two years. Two years from now we will have a new Library Director and hopefully the new one will value the library as a place of learning and literacy. You can check out 50 books. Check out art, poetry, philosophy, science, history, biography, ethnic cookbooks. And

don't forget the children's nonfiction. It's the only way we have now to protect our collection. Think of it as a civic and patriotic duty.

Help save our books.

**Kathy Kaplan**  
Reston

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## LETTERS

### A Job-creation Candidate

To the Editor:

I have known Delegate Barbara Comstock, candidate for Congress from Virginia's 10th District, for over a year now. She has always impressed me as a bright, serious and pragmatic candidate who was focused on addressing the important issues affecting our community rather than just

giving speeches, repeating talking points or pandering to specific groups. She has common sense proposals to address problems ranging from job creation and economic development that will give hope to working families, to combating human trafficking.

She told me that our economy is not growing enough to sustain the current level of spending that has added \$5 trillion in debt and left 23 million unemployed. As a college student at Miami University in Ohio that concerns me. There are far too many of my friends who are either unemployed or are underemployed and forced to find work outside of their college studies. The biggest concern facing my generation is not being able to find work out of college. I know that as a Congresswoman, Barbara Comstock will hit the ground running working for good-paying jobs in the Commonwealth.

I like most college students am concerned with the rising gas prices, and I know Delegate Comstock supports plans for achieving energy independence. President Obama won over my peers by running on a promise of hope and change, which has fallen flat over the past five years. We need leaders in Congress like Barbara Comstock who will work towards helping students. Delegate Comstock is a mom so I know she gets it. She has our best interests in mind and will work hard so that my generation has a bright future.

**Macy Anderson**  
McLean

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SEE VOLUNTEER, PAGE 11

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PHOTOS BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Kathy and Merv from Rockville during their set at the Lake Anne Ukulele Festival Saturday.

## Hawaii Spirit at Lake Anne Plaza

### Fifth annual Ukulele Festival held Saturday.

By REENA SINGH  
THE CONNECTION

Reston experienced a slice of Hawaiian spirit on Saturday. Lake Anne's fifth annual Ukulele Festival brought out music lovers from all over the D.C.-metro area to the plaza to listen to live music, learn to play a Beatles tune or two and pick up a ukulele for those feeling inspired.

"The purpose of the festival is to showcase the ukulele, the versatility of the ukulele," said festival stage manager Ann Granger. "We started this morning with three workshops on how to play Beatles music on the ukulele."

The festival was created from a tongue and cheek joke from resident Eve Thompson, who runs the craft market during the plaza's Saturday farmers market. Thompson said after she realized there was a growing ukulele community in Reston, it would be a great opportunity to create a festival.

"The farmers market is a regular Saturday thing, so we always try to coexist," she said. "The proceeds from the market help to run these music festivals."

In addition to the craft and farmers market, several shaved ice stands and ukulele hawkers



Blake Miyashiro, Aloha Munchies, soaks shaved ice in syrup at the Lake Anne Ukulele Festival Saturday.

surrounded the scene, giving visitors the illusion they were in Hawaii for the day.

She said the festival is a great way to bring non-Restonians into the community. Many of the people watching the performers drove up to an hour to the unique festival.

Randy Dalnekoff from Maryland said the festival inspired him to buy a ukulele and learn to play about three years ago. He now performs short sets around Columbia.

"I wanted to come back, because one of the draws for me this year was learning to play Beatles songs," he said.

Becky Schneider, Warrington, said she has been playing the ukulele for three years but mostly from the comfort of her own home.

"It's a casual instrument, so you can just pick it up and play it," she said. I literally bought one on the Internet and started playing it. Taught myself."

When she found out there was a ukulele festival within driving distance, she could not pass up the opportunity to go.

"I drove out, because how often do you get to go to a ukulele festival," she said.

## CALENDAR

Send announcements to [reston@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:reston@connectionnewspapers.com). The deadline is the Friday prior to the following week's paper. Photos/artwork encouraged.

### TUESDAY/JULY 15–SUNDAY/JULY 27

**Town Calendar Photography Exhibit** (Recurring daily) ArtSpace Herndon, 750 Center Street, Herndon. Photos from professional and amateur high school photographers revolved around the town Herndon gets showcased at the 4th Annual Herndon Town Calendar Exhibit. 703-956-6590

### THURSDAY/JULY 17

**Herndon Farmers Market.** 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Thursdays, May 1-Nov. 13. Twelve Vendors sell a variety of products including kettle corn and fresh made Italian pasta. Old Town Herndon, 700 Block of Lynn Street, Herndon. [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/herndonmkt.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/farmersmarkets/herndonmkt.htm)

### FRIDAY/JULY 18

**Erin Driscoll.** 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Originally from Herndon, Ms. Driscoll is a Helen Hayes Award-winning singer/actress who has starred in shows at Signature Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Arena Stage, and Olney Theatre. \$20/25. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### SATURDAY/JULY 19-THURSDAY/AUG. 14

**To the Beach.** 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Hunters Woods Exhibit, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston. Come see acrylic paintings by Karen Pida. 703-476-4500.



PHOTOS BY REENA SINGH/ THE CONNECTION

Lake Fairfax's inaugural family-friendly Pirate Fest will be on Saturday, July 26.

## Pirate Fest on July 26

Argh you in? The inaugural Lake Fairfax Park Pirate Fest will take place July 26, giving children and adults the opportunity to dress in costume, talk to pirates and search for buried treasure.

"We wanted to create a family-fun festival that celebrates the cultural history of Fairfax County," said county Park Authority education and outreach manager Tammy Schwab. In addition to all the pirate related activities, like a boat tour, singalongs to sea shanties and

### SATURDAY/JULY 19

**Scent-sational Noses.** 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Learn about animal noses through fun activities, and take the Great Smelly Challenge; all ages. \$5-\$7. Reservations required by July 16 at 703-476-9689 and press 5.

**Last Ham Standing.** 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Herndon's new kings of comedy return for another hilarious night of improv. \$15. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### SUNDAY/JULY 20

**Bev Cosham & Terri Allen.** 6:30 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. Two of the DC region's premiere chanteuses bring their rich interpretations of the Music of Amanda McBroom to NextStop. \$20/25. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### TUESDAY/JULY 22

**Tips on Tuesday.** 6-8 p.m. The Dandelion Patch, 1810 Library Street, Reston. Join us for a free workshop on creative ways to enhance a memorable guest experience at your wedding with local wedding planners Sara Bauleke of Bella Notte and Teresa Lee of Rex & Regina Events. Please RSVP to 703-689-2240.

**American Giants of Science.** 7 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Meets America's most famous inventors and see them come to life onstage with Bright Star Theatre. Ages 6 to 12. 703-689-2700.

### WEDNESDAY/JULY 23

**Frying Pan Farm Stand.** 8 a.m.-

12:30 p.m. 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon. The Frying Pan Farm Stand will be able to offer customers a wider variety of produce such as lettuce, tomatoes, greens, squash, peaches, berries, and baked goods. <http://fryingpanpark.org/2014/05/15/farm-stand/>

### FRIDAY/JULY 25

**Tracy Lynn Olivera.** 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. A quirky, eclectic mix of Broadway, jazz, pop, and a little bit country, from a DC girl who is also a little bit of everything. \$20/25. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### SATURDAY/JULY 26

**Nature's Symphony.** 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Walker Nature Center, 11450 Glade Drive, Reston. Play a game of name-that-sound, go on a sound walk listening for bees buzzing and birds calling while collecting natural sound makers; ages 3 to 5. \$7-\$9. Reservations required by July 23 at 703-476-9689 and press 5.

**Sally Mayes.** 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. A Tony Award-nominated actress, award-winning recording artist and singer who has been called "a singer of incandescent ebullience" and "deliciously saucy" by the New York Times. \$25/30.

[nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### SUNDAY/JULY 27

**Kate Merryman.** 6:30 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. A graduate of Herndon High School and George Mason University, Kate has performed on stages throughout the metropolitan DC area and was nominated for Best Actress in a Musical by Broadway World DC in 2012. \$20/25. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

### MONDAY/JULY 28-AUG. 25

**Oil Paintings by Morgan Johnson**

**Norwood.** 9 a.m.-9 p.m. Jo Ann Rose Gallery, 1609 Washington Plaza N, Reston. A contemporary artist, Morgan Johnson creates paintings that evoke images of stones to trees to human cells and nerve endings. 703-476-4500.

### MONDAY/JULY 28

**Herndon Centennial Junior Open.** 8 a.m. Herndon Centennial Golf Course, 909 Ferndale Ave., Herndon. Open to kids of all skill levels to come and enjoy the thrill of competition. Visit <http://herndon-va.gov> for more.

### WEDNESDAY/JULY 30

**Children's Science Center.** 11 a.m.

Herndon Fortnightly Library, 768 Center Street, Herndon. Hands-on, science-based activities on animals, aeronautical engineering, creative engineering and forensic science. School age. 703-437-8855.

### FRIDAY/AUG. 1

**Andre Enceneat.** 8 p.m. NextStop Theatre Company, 269 Sunset Park Drive, Herndon. An WAMMIE-award winning pop, jazz and R&B artist, has sung back up for George Benson and is member of the renowned Uptown Vocal Jazz Quartet. Mr. Enceneat presents an evening of intimate jazz standards featuring Jazz pianist Pete Frassrand. \$20/25. [nextstoptheatre.org](http://nextstoptheatre.org) or 866-811-4111.

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# Financial Education for College Students

**Local experts offer budget tips to keep students out of debt.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**A**s the summer wanes, many recent high school graduates are preparing to head to college. For those who are living away from home for the first time, this means newfound independence. But that freedom brings responsibility — especially when it comes to money.

From student loans to credit cards, the financial maze can be filled with debt-traps and money pitfalls. A recent financial literacy assessment of 15-year-old students by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development shows that one in six lacks basic financial literacy skills.

That leaves approximately three years for them to learn about money management before leaving home. And that education is key: financial education is the best way to develop sound money management skills, say financial advisors.

Taking a financial education class is an option. The Northern Virginia Urban League offers a financial literacy workshop series with Fairfax County Human Services and Fairfax County Homeownership & Relocation Services.

“College students can learn everything from understanding a [credit] score and avoiding credit

traps to banking and money management,” said Vickey King of the Northern Virginia Urban League.

“College is not the time to live the lifestyle of your dreams,” said Rachel Powell of the Northern Virginia Council for Economic Education at George Mason University’s Center for Economic Education in Fairfax. “College courses, room, board, books are all costly. You can expect to be poor in college, and if you use the many resources your college makes available to you in exchange for all the fees you are required to pay, you can expect to be fed, safe and reasonably comfortable.”

**THE FIRST STEP** in financial literacy for college students is taking a personal money inventory. “Know before you go how much money you’ll have available from your income or allowance,” said Powell. “Will your folks be making regular contributions to your survival or are you on your own?”

Make a budget that includes all expenditures, including luxuries like frozen yogurt or coffee or movie tickets. Put some money aside for emergencies; even \$5 per week will add up over time.

Online tools can help college students organize their finances and track their spending and savings patterns. Alexandria-based financial planner Mark Frieze recommends mint.com, which categorizes spending, and bettermoneyhabits.com, which offers videos clips on how to budget better.

“Many people, especially teens and young adults, are surprised when they look at their entire

spending picture because they haven’t ... had to make the money they spend,” said Frieze. “They just don’t know the value of a dollar until they are lining their own wallets with their own money. So the big picture tools that highlight spending and savings habits are helpful.”

Know the difference between needs and wants: “Don’t buy what you don’t need,” said Powell. “Cold medicine — yes. The latest movie on DVD — no.”

Open a checking and savings account at a bank located close to campus, one that offers products and services for students, advises Powell. “Don’t accept accounts that require minimum balances or charge fees,” she said. “Shop around for the right bank.”

Find a way to establish or build savings, especially if you plan to work during college. “Pay yourself first,” said Frieze. “When you have a job, take a set portion of it and save it for your future self. If the job offers a retirement plan such as a 401(k), take advantage of it. A 401(k) provides the significant



PHOTO BY MARILYN CAMPBELL

**Financial planners advise college students to avoid the credit card debt trap and make an effort to save money.**

benefit of saving before taxes are taken out.”

**AVOID USING CREDIT CARDS** for immediate gratification and focus on building a high credit score for the future, said Frieze. “That score, that number, will be more important and reap greater rewards than any grade or SAT score ever was or could be,” he said. “If you build and maintain a good credit score, you will be rewarded time and time again

with preferred lending rates.”

When it comes to financial aid, take time to do research, and don’t underestimate the availability of college scholarships. Frieze points to a study from scholarship.com, which shows that billions of dollars in scholarship funds go unawarded every year.

“Take advantage of the opportunities out there,” he said. “Don’t assume that scholarships are only for top scholars or athletes because many scholarships start with GPA requirements of 2.5 or less. Start looking as early as sophomore or junior year and apply as soon as you qualify.”

“Saving as much as possible from summer jobs ... can help with at least some of the expenses,” said Powell. “Loans are available for all the expenses you cannot pay for through gifts, grants and scholarships. Be aware that money borrowed must be repaid and the interest [accrued] is the cost of the rental of those funds.”

In fact, the Department of Education reports that 10 percent of U.S. college graduates default on student loans so only borrow money as a last resort.

Investigate federal loans first. “Loans such as the Stafford loan can be far more cost effective than higher-priced private loans,” said Frieze.

College students should also estimate how much they will be able to afford to repay after graduation, said Powell. “Make sure that your target labor market is willing to compensate you with income commensurate with the cost of your education.”



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED

**The full cast and crew.**

## Peter Pan Jr. at Forest Edge Elementary

On June 13, Forest Edge Elementary School’s Drama Club put on a production of Disney’s Peter Pan Jr. This was the story narrated by Tinkerbell about Wendy Darling who loves to tell stories to her brothers, Michael and John. When her father announces she must move out of the nursery, Peter Pan comes

to visit the children and whisks them away to Never Land. Their adventure introduces them to the Fairies, Lost Boys, Pirates, Mermaids, Indians and even the infamous Captain Hook.

The cast and set/stage crew consisted of 64 students from grades 4 through 6. Lead roles were per-



**Musical number ‘What Makes the Brave Man Brave.’**

formed by Zoey Birman (Peter Pan), Danielle Yakubisin (Wendy), Camille Denny (Tinkerbell), Louisa Margaret Mattozzi (Captain Hook), Sebastian Byrum (John), Lucas Abousleiman (Michael), Frankie Delmolino (Tiger Lily), Madison Witt (Smee), Alexis Jeffries (the Chief), Gustavo Vega (Mr. Darling),

Jordana Sweeney (Mrs. Darling), Cid Vita (Nana), and Cameron Howard (the Crocodile).

The Musical was directed and produced by FCPS teachers Sara Birkhead, Mary Ella Mohyla, and Kate Fellin. Assistant Direction by Brianna Miles and Choreography by Chloerissa Kirwan.



## NEWS

# Numbers Indicate Stable Market

June home listings climb, with slight dip in sales; average, median prices continue to inch up,

The Northern Virginia market recorded increased inventories, providing buyers with more choices. Nonetheless, buyers are challenged by affordability and accessing credit.

The June market in Northern Virginia continues the trend of sales numbers coming in just under those from one year ago at this time, but the signs of a stable market have led to an increase in sellers planting signs on their lawns.

"It is all about managing expectations," said Lorraine Arora, Managing Broker at Long & Foster Real Estate in Springfield. "Some buyers are nervous. When houses are priced correctly, homes will sell."

Arora explained that since there was no activity in winter months, there was pent up demand for this region's early spring season. Now, she explained, prices are higher but not all sellers are getting their full price. Buyers are less willing to engage in bidding wars.

The housing affordability may continue to be a challenge in the region, said Mary Bayat, 2014 chair elect of the Northern Virginia Association of Realtors. "While the slightly rising home prices indicate an improving market, people are just not making quick decisions to buy." Bayat, a broker/owner of Bayat Realty in Alexandria, also noted that the current tight mortgage regulations have been a drag

on buyers' loan process. She noted that mortgage standards are under scrutiny by industry and housing groups at this time.

The Northern Virginia Association of Realtors reported on June 2014 home sales activity for Fairfax and Arlington counties, the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church and the towns of Vienna, Herndon and Clifton.

A total of 2,174 homes were sold in June 2014, a 12.90 percent decrease below June 2013 home sales of 2,496.

Active listings continued to show an increase this month compared with 2013. Listings were up 47 percent over last year, with 4,777 active listings in June, compared with 3,247 homes available in June 2013. The average days on market for homes in June 2014 was 30 days, an increase of 25 percent compared to the 24 days on market for homes in June 2013.

Average home sale prices increased slightly this June to \$580,013. This is up 3 percent compared to June 2013, when the average price was \$563,223.

The median sold price of homes this June, which is \$505,000, rose by 1 percent compared to the median price of \$499,900 in June 2013.

The 2,047 new pending home sales in Northern Virginia in June is a decrease of 9.62 percent compared with 2,265 contracts that were pending in June of last year.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FROM PAGE 7

email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov or call 703-324-5861, TTY 711.

❖ **Meals on Wheels** needs drivers in Franconia, Reston, McLean and Falls Church and substitute drivers throughout the county. 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 Sully Senior Center in Chantilly** needs a certified personal trainer, preferably

with experience working with older adults, for one hour two days per week. 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.



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3. no longer owned or known

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## SPORTS

# Jensen to Play Point Guard for Mary Washington

**Q and A: South Lakes basketball standout helped Seahawks win Conference 6 championship.**

**A**s a junior, Caitlin Jensen helped the South Lakes girls' basketball team reach the 2013 state tournament, providing a signature moment when she knocked down a game-winning, buzzer-beating jumper against a talented Mount Vernon team in the second round of the Northern Region tournament.

As a senior captain, Jensen was part of a Seahawks team that finished 23-4 and captured the 2014 Conference 6 championship. She participated in the 10th Suburban Classic all-star game on March 23, knocking down four 3-pointers en route to a game-high 22 points.

Now, the recent South Lakes graduate is taking classes at the University of Mary Washington and will play point guard for the women's basketball team in the winter. Jensen recently participated in a Q and A via email with The Connection.

**\*Connection:** What made Mary Washington the right fit for you?

Jensen: I chose Mary Washington because I loved the fact that it was academically challenging but still a very competitive athletics school. It also gives me a chance to come in right away and make a difference on the team. The girls on the team welcomed me as if I had been playing with them for years and the coaching staff did everything in their power to make me feel at home.

**\*Connection:** What is your major?

Jensen: My major is going to be in business with hopefully a double minor in social justice and biology.

**\*Connection:** What position will you play?

Jensen: I play point guard.

**\*Connection:** At what age did you start playing basketball? When did you realize playing college basketball was a possibility for you?

Jensen: I started playing basketball ever since I could remember. I would always go outside with my dad or grandpa and make them



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

**South Lakes graduate Caitlin Jensen, left, will play basketball at the University of Mary Washington.**

rebound for me. I started realizing it was a real option for me because of both my trainer, Mandy, and my coach, Christy Winters Scott. Both of them were willing to help me and gave me advice on how to contact colleges, gave me film to watch to improve and always pushed me to play with the older girls, which made me see that I could play at the same level they were playing.

**\*Connection:** What is your favorite memory of playing basketball at South Lakes?

Jensen: My favorite memory would just be anything with my teammates — celebrating after wins, going out to eat with them after, our dancing before the games. They were the best teammates I could have asked for and thankfully we have all stayed close!

**\*Connection:** If you could go back and change one thing about your high school athletic career, what would it be?

Jensen: I would have to say there are three things. The first one would be stopping [Madison's] Megan LeDuc from shooting that [game-winning] half-court shot in the district semifinals two years ago. The second would be our loss to Centreville [in the 2014 region tournament] and not stepping up as a leader or player as much as I could have. Lastly, I would say I wish I had played better than I had. Some games I disappeared and now looking back at that I wish I had

stepped up more, but it has only made me grow as a player.

**\*Connection:** What are you most looking forward to about the transition from high school to college?

Jensen: I am definitely looking forward to the freedom and the complete access to gyms and weight rooms instead of having to wait for gym space to open up or calling my coach so that she would come open the gym. I am also excited about being away from home so that I can grow and start to learn how to really balance my schedule.

**\*Connection:** Who is your favorite music artist? Why?

Jensen: My favorite music artist would have to be almost anything country, like Carrie Underwood or Florida Georgia Line. Country is just

something I can listen to on long road trips and it can be very relaxing.

**\*Connection:** What is your favorite movie? Why?

Jensen: My favorite movie is "Bridesmaids" or "Pitch Perfect." Both movies were basically team movies where we would always quote them or watch them together, not to mention they are both hilarious.

**\*Connection:** What is your favorite food?

Jensen: Chipotle. I eat it all the time and never hear the end of it from anyone!

**\*Connection:** What is your favorite hobby outside of basketball?

Jensen: I actually love working. It's nice to hang out with friends and go exploring, but working has given me a very satisfying feeling and working in a very friendly and open environment makes it even better.

**\*Connection:** What location is the farthest you have traveled from the Washington, D.C. metro area?

Jensen: The farthest I have ever been would probably be when my family took a trip to Sicily and Naples.

**\*Connection:** Did you follow the World Cup? If so, for which team(s) did you cheer?

Jensen: I follow the World Cup very closely and since the beginning I have wanted Germany to win!

— JON ROETMAN



**Glade's Maya Berry races to a third-place finish in the girls' 9-10 25-meter butterfly.**

## Sportsmanship Rules Duel in the Pool

Good sportsmanship was the order of the day as RSTA's two undefeated teams went head to head in last Saturday's meet. As evenly matched as they were, the lead went back and forth and the outcome wasn't determined until the very end when Lake Audubon emerged victorious over Lake Newport, 594-582.

"The great part about a meet like today is that everyone can make a direct impact to the outcome," said Keith Jacobson, Lake Newport parent. "This is not a league where only the A level swimmers count; even the new kids swimming in C have as much of a direct impact as year-round A swimmers!"

Swimmers from both teams prepared for what they knew would be a meet that could go either way.

"It was fun seeing the kids gear up to swim against swim-

mers who have previously just been a name on the top times list," said Lisa Fritz, Lake Audubon manager.

The competitive nature of the meet stayed positive as swimmers stayed in the pool to shake hands and parents applauded good effort on both sides.

"At the end of the relays, the whole crowd applauded both A teams for what was a really exciting race and then kept cheering as the last kid finished—really summed up the feeling of the whole meet," said Mike Collins, Lake Newport parent.

"What I love about RSTA and this meet in particular was the obvious support for all swimmers," said Blake Kohn, Lake Newport parent. "At the end of relays and an extremely competitive meet, the round of applause was the loudest I've ever heard. Everyone was proud of all the kids on both teams."



PHOTO BY RSTA

**Lake Audubon's Madeleine Daum and Lake Newport's Katie Storch demonstrate the good sportsmanship that was the hallmark of the competition between the top two teams in the league last Saturday.**



# Fairfax School Board Elects Chairman, Vice Chair

**Tamara Derenak Kaufax and Ted Velkoff elected to lead Board.**

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

Tamara Derenak Kaufax (Lee District) and Ted Velkoff (at-large) were elected chairman and vice chair of the Fairfax County School Board on Thursday night. Both will serve in their positions for one year.

"Ms. Derenak Kaufax has served the Lee district well and is also a team player for the greater good across the county," said Ilryong Moon (at-large), who served as chairman of the school board for two years. "One thing is for sure—she is not afraid to speak out."

Derenak Kaufax is the owner of Almatat Marketing Solutions and has been a school board member since January 2012. She is the parent of a sophomore and a 2013 graduate of Fairfax County.

Derenak Kaufax said the board



**Tamara Derenak Kaufax**  
(Lee District)

is one with "many challenges" but a lot of passion.

"I want us to be the best board ever. I will respect your opinions, as I think you know I have while working as the vice chair. I will work to keep everyone informed—sometimes you may not like what I say, but I will keep us moving forward in a strategic way," Derenak Kaufax said at the meeting.

Stork nominated Sandy Evans as vice chair of the school board, while Pat Hynes (Hunter Mill)



PHOTOS COURTESY FAIRFAX COUNTY  
SCHOOL BOARD

**Ted Velkoff (at-large)**

nominated Ted Velkoff for the position, who won the position with seven votes.

"He thinks outside the box a lot," Hynes said. "He's also shown tremendous leadership on the budget."

Velkoff has also served on the school board since January 2012 and was this year's chair of the budget committee. He is the parent of two Fairfax County graduates and previously served as Chantilly High School's PTSA president and treasurer.

## SCHOOL NOTES

Send school notes to north@connectionnewspapers.com by Friday.

**Emily Schaal**, a student at Herndon High School, is the winner of the 2014 National Peace Essay contest for Virginia and has earned a \$1,000 academic scholarship – US Institute of Peace announced. Emily's essay examined how security sector reform contributes to sustainable peace.

**Douglas Graney**, who teaches history and social studies at Herndon High, was named Virginia Teacher of the Year by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Department of Virginia. Graney was one of three teachers (elementary, middle, and high school) recognized by the state VFW for their commitment to teach citizenship education topics to students, and to promote America's history, traditions, and institutions. Graney received his award in Williamsburg last month. He teaches U.S. and Virginia history, U.S. government, and philosophy, and recently completed the renewal process for board certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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# Between Halves

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



At present, July 12th, I'm halfway, approximately, between my last CT Scan which showed a previously unseen silver-dollar sized growth in my lower left lung and my next CT Scan scheduled for August 6th, one month earlier than my usual three-month interval in order to make an evaluation sooner rather than later; to determine if this is new growth or nothing more than old growth that is now visible due to the combination of shrinking tumors and dissipating fluid opening up the viewing area, so to speak. Apparently, the chemotherapy drug, Alimta, with which I've been infused every three weeks since last September appears to be doing its hoped-for job: shrinkage.

My reaction to this new finding in late May was not negative. At worst, it was neutral, at best, it was positive; something seen for the first time because previously there was too much of other unhealthy stuff in the way for it to be seen at all. Less clutter, if you'll allow a lay person's description to suffice. And for all my oncologist knows, this growth may have been there all along and is not the least bit a cause for concern, quite the opposite in fact. But we don't know enough yet, so he decided not to wait three months. Heck, this growth could even be smaller than it was originally (affected by the Alimta also) and smaller even on this next scan. But we won't know definitively, we'll only know comparatively – between late May and early August.

To say I'm looking forward to the results would be a bit overstated. Curious, I'll allow. Moreover, I don't want to express any real confidence about my prospects, because so much of what cancer does it will do, regardless of what I think or hope or pray. But two things/symptoms my oncologist advised me to e-mail him about: pain in the area of the "new" growth and/or a persistent cough, neither of which I've experienced in the slightest. Now he didn't give me a timeline as to when I might feel something, but six weeks out, I haven't felt a thing. (I know better than to ask him hypotheticals; presumably patients feel symptoms differently, manifest symptoms differently and tolerate/notice symptoms differently, so feeling/not feeling might mean something or nothing; it varies. Uniformity is hardly at play here.) Still, I suppose I would have to go along with my brother Richard's encouragement: "It's better not to feel anything, KB, isn't it?" Heck yes! But it's hard not to worry. It's cancer, after all.

Following the calendar and chemotherapy schedule, I will have one more infusion before my next – and final – CT scan before I see my oncologist to discuss the results and dare I say, treatment options. On or about August 15th, I will once again know the tale of the tape. I will learn if my life goes on as it sort of is, with relative calm, or if I'll be thrust into the unknown vortex of clinical trials/N.I.H-type studies and the educated hands of researchers.

I've been extremely fortunate so far, diagnosis-to-date. And I'd like to think (wishfully, naively) that my luck will continue to be exceptional. Although, I realize I may be beginning to bump up against some shorter odds here, having survived five-plus years already (only 16 percent of stage IV NSCLC survivors live beyond five years). Nevertheless, I'm thrilled to be an aberration. In fact, I can't think of anything I'd rather be called.

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

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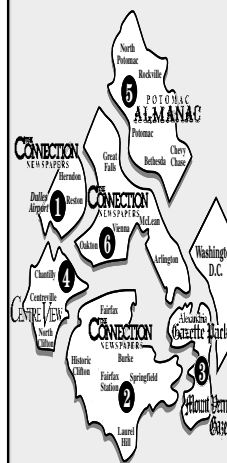
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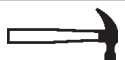
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## IMPROVEMENTS



Nancy Bass, Anniebelle and Patch, 2014, oil on panel, 18" x 50" x 2"

# GRACE Presents Artist Member Exhibition

Greater Reston Arts Center is presenting the first of what will become a biennial exhibition highlighting the talents of the area artist members. Selected by distinguished curator, educator, and artist, Helen Frederick, founder of Pyramid Atlantic Arts Center and Professor of Art at George Mason University, the exhibition features 28 artists treating a range of themes and working in a variety of media including painting, photography, sculpture and site-specific installation.

An opening reception is scheduled for Thursday, July 17, from 6 – 8 p.m.; all are welcome to attend. GRACE is located in Reston Town Center and is accessible by

public transportation. For directions and further information,

visit [www.restonarts.org](http://www.restonarts.org). A full-color exhibition catalog will be available at the gallery.

Featured artists include: John Adams, Lina Alattar, Ann Barbieri, Nancy Bass,

Brenda Belfield, Julia Bloom, Jessica Chong Kang, Catherine Day, Julia Dzikiewicz, Dorothy Fall, Jo Fleming, Susan Hostetler, Jackie Hoysted, Robert Hunter, Jessica Kallista, Melanie

Kehoss, Elizabeth Kendall, Brian Kirk, George Kochev, Mary Ellen Mogee, Michele Montalbano, Craig Moran, Connie Slack, Paul Steinkoenig, Nasir Thamir, Anna Watson, Ann Williams and Fred Zafran.

## What, Where, When

2014 Artist Member Exhibition, July 17 – Aug. 23.

Opening Reception: July 17, 6 – 8 p.m.  
Gallery Hours Tuesday – Saturday: 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. Free and Open to the public.

Greater Reston Arts Center, 12001 Market Street, Suite 103, Reston. [info@restonarts.org](mailto:info@restonarts.org)

## BULLETIN BOARD

To have community events listed in the Connection, send to [herndon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:herndon@connectionnewspapers.com) by the Friday prior to the following week's paper.

### THURSDAY/JULY 17

**ESL Pronunciation and Speaking for Intermediate Students.** 1 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Adults. 703-689-2700

### FRIDAY/JULY 18

**ESL for Beginners.** 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**Let's Talk - ESL for Intermediate Students.** 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.

### MONDAY/JULY 21

**ESL for Intermediate Students.** 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**ESL for Intermediate Students.** 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**ESL for Intermediate Students.** 4:30 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.

### TUESDAY/JULY 22

**ESL for Beginners.** 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**ESL for Advanced Students.** 10:30 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.

### WEDNESDAY/JULY 23

**ESL for Intermediate Students.** 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**INOVA Blood Drive.** 12-7 p.m. Reston Town Center, beside the Pavillion, 11900 Market Street, Reston. Come donate blood to those in need. Schedule appointments at 1-866-256-6372 or [inova.org/donateblood](http://inova.org/donateblood).

### THURSDAY/JULY 24

**ESL for Advanced Students.** 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**ESL Pronunciation and Speaking for Intermediate Students.** 1 p.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Adults. 703-689-2700.

### FRIDAY/JULY 25

**ESL for Beginners.** 10 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.  
**Let's Talk - ESL for Intermediate Students.** 11 a.m. Reston Regional Library, 11925 Bowman Towne Drive, Reston. Conversational group. Adults. 703-689-2700.



# School Board Decreases Suspension Time

## Student Rights and Responsibilities revised.

BY JANELLE GERMANOS  
THE CONNECTION

**S**tarting this fall, suspensions for certain student offenses in Fairfax County will decrease, thanks to a revision of the school system's Student Rights and Responsibilities.

The school board voted unanimously at the end of June to change the discipline handbook, which will now focus on in school suspensions to preserve time in school. Offenses that come with mandatory punishments are decreased under the updated handbook.

Sully District School Board member Kathy Smith said at the meeting that the focus remains to have safe schools, but to ensure that children are kept in school so they can continue to receive their education.

"The changes to the SR&R were made to better align with best practices, to reduce suspensions, and to include changes that have been made to the Code of Virginia," said School Board Chairman Ilryong Moon in a press release. "The adopted



PHOTO BY JANELLE GERMANOS/THE CONNECTION

**The Fairfax County School Board voted unanimously to change the Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook to decrease suspension times.**

changes emphasize the School Board's desire to keep students in class by promoting alternative forms of discipline and reducing the length of suspension for certain offenses. However, serious infractions will still be dealt with in a manner that protects students and staff."

The Student Rights and Responsibilities provides a guideline of rules for students of Fairfax County Schools and the consequences for breaking those rules. Students are required to sign it each year.

**CHANGES ALSO INCLUDE** adjustments to a marijuana-related punishment. First-

time use of marijuana that does not take place on school grounds or during a school-sponsored activity will be extended expedited review, meaning disciplinary actions other than expulsion may be used.

A motion was also approved that requires the collection of data on cases involving first-time possession and use of marijuana cases each semester. Principals are also given more independence in assigning disciplinary decisions.

Superintendent Karen Garza said at the meeting that disproportionality in school suspensions will continue to be examined.

"Are we there yet with the Student Rights and Responsibilities? No. I think we have to keep working on it and keep making it better," Garza said.

Under the updated handbook, the suspension time for many punishments is decreased from 10 to five days.

"We wanted to reduce the number of days students miss school due to disciplinary infractions. We need to hold students accountable, but can we do that in a way that still supports our educational mission, and I think we've made progress there," Garza said.

A requirement that required a 10-day suspension with a referral to the Division

Superintendent has also been eliminated.

"Everything we know at the national level of research is, when you pull children out of their school building, when you pull them even out of the classroom, they fall further and further behind," said Braddock District School Board member Megan McLaughlin. "When we look at the things that we as a system can try to control and improve upon for student achievement, it's important that we recognize that this is why getting our discipline practice right is so important, because this is how we will help improve student achievement and narrow the achievement gap."

**FAIRFAX COUNTY'S ADOPTION** of the new Student Rights and Responsibilities will be a model for the rest of Virginia, said Ted Velkoff, member at large.

"School boards are going to be looking at ways to respond positively to students without doing zero tolerance," he said.

Electronic cigarettes and hookah pens were also added to be classified as tobacco products under the updated handbook.

A motion was also approved that requires data to be collected regarding in-school and out-of-school suspension, as well as the number of those students not suspended, out of the total number of referrals to the superintendent for discipline infractions, to be reported each semester.

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