

# Progress Report On Road Work

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## WHS Hosts One-Act Festival

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## Mental Health First Aid

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The existing, Walney Road bridge (inset photo) over Flatlick Branch is disintegrating structurally and surpassed its life expectancy some 18 years ago. So VDOT is replacing it with a wider, sturdier and safer bridge (artist's rendering main image).



Route 657 (Walney Road) Bridge Replacement  
VDOT Project 0657-029-396 (UPC 82214)



## ROUNDUPS

### Eastbound I-66 Closures Scheduled

All lanes of eastbound Interstate 66 will close intermittently between midnight and 5 a.m. Wednesday, Feb. 4 and Thursday, Feb. 5 for the installation of gantries. Each closure will last up to 30 minutes.

The Wednesday into Thursday closures will occur between Route 29 in Centreville (Exit 52) and Route 28 (Exit 53). The Thursday into Friday closures will occur between Route 123 (Exit 60) and Nutley Street (Exit 62).

Message signs will be posted in advance of the work so that motorists can use alternate routes.

The closures are part of the Virginia Department of Transportation's ongoing effort to install 36 new gantries as part of the I-66 Active Traffic Management System. The traffic system is scheduled to begin operating between Route 29 in Centreville and the Capital Beltway in mid-summer 2015.

### 'State of the Station' Meeting

The Sully District Police Station and its Citizens Advisory Committee will present a special, "State of the Station" meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 11, from 7:30-9 p.m. The station is at 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly, and refreshments and dessert will be offered.

The new station commander, Capt. Bob Blakley, will be the main speaker and will discuss crime and policing efforts in the Sully District. A crime

analyst will also be on hand to provide historic, plus real-time, data about crime in the local area.

The meeting is open to the public. Information will be given on last year's crime trends, as well as the ways the officers of the Sully District Station will continue serving the community throughout 2015. It's also an opportunity for residents to raise any issues or concerns they may have about what's happening in the community.

### Free Carseat Inspections

Certified technicians from the Sully District Police Station will perform free, child safety carseat inspections Thursday, Feb. 12, from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the station, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd. in Chantilly. No appointment is necessary. But residents should install the child safety seats themselves so technicians may properly inspect and adjust them, as needed.

Because of time constraints, only the first 35 vehicles arriving on each date will be inspected. That way, inspectors may have enough time to properly instruct the caregiver on the correct use of the child seat. (The inspection may be cancelled in the event of inclement weather). Call 703-814-7000, ext. 5140, to confirm dates and times.

### Learn about Police Department

Interested in learning more about the Police Department's creation and evolution from a five-person organization to a nationally renowned department of more than 1,700? Throughout the year, the Police Department will host a series of lectures as part of the department's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

♦ Feb. 20 – The FCPD Crime Scene Section, 1 p.m. at the DPSC Meeting Room followed by Crime Scene Facility tour. <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/crime-scene-section-lecture-and-tour-tickets-15304580412>

♦ March 18 – FCPD Narcotics – Investigations, Trends, and Public Awareness, 1 p.m. at the Sully District community Room <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fcpd-narcotics-investigations-trends-and-public-awareness-tickets-15373711184>

### Food Donations for WFCM

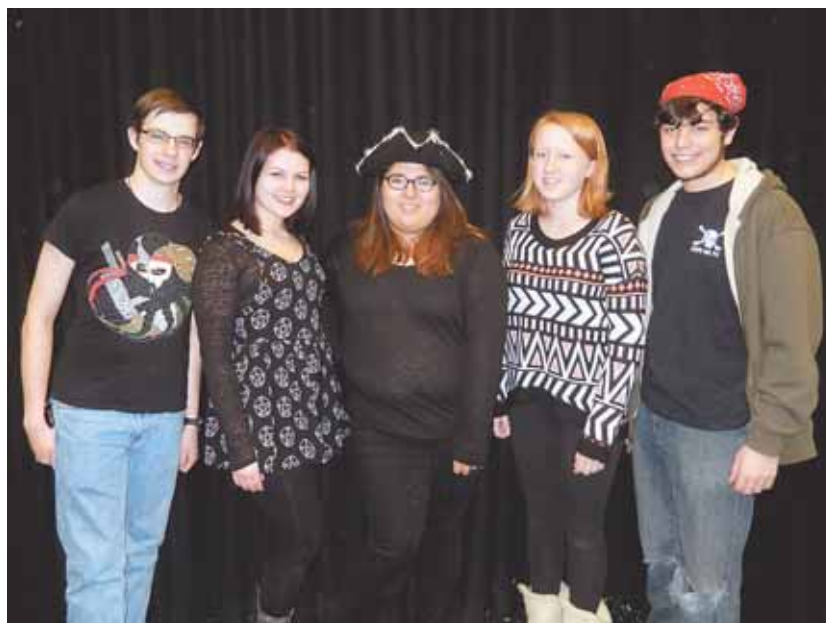
Western Fairfax Christian Ministries' food pantry needs donations of canned vegetables (except for green beans), canned pasta

SEE ROUNDUPS, PAGE 4

## NEWS

**Westfield's one-act-play directors are (from left) Andrew Brockmeyer, Jessi Swanson, Jenessy Garcia, Tatyana German and David Koenigsberg.**

PHOTO BY  
BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION



## WHS Hosts One-Act Festival

**A production offering laughter, romance, drama and pirates.**

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

**C**omedy, drama – even an award-winning, original piece – will all be presented during Westfield High's One-Act Play Festival. The five plays are all directed by seniors in the school's Theater Department.

Show times are Friday, Feb. 13, at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 14, at 2 and 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Feb. 15, at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10 at the door. The plays are as follows:

#### 'TURBULENCE'

Written and directed by Jessi Swanson, "Turbulence" was the play Westfield took to this fall's Virginia Theatre Conference (VTA) – where it won four awards, including Best Original Play.

A drama, it's a surreal piece about a woman in the last minutes of her life, and she's looking back on some of her most important memories. "You see them unfold in front of her," said Swanson. "And she comes to the realization that we build our lives on the choices we make — and then we have to live with those choices."

The character, named Mary, is shown four glimpses into her past by an angelic version of herself. Portraying her is senior Sam Dempsey. Classmate David Koenigsberg plays her husband, George, and junior Keegan Garant portrays Rick, a chauvinist man who's the antagonist during most of Mary's life.

"The actors confront some difficult life issues in the show, so they've had to study realism and connecting with their inner selves to connect with this show," said Swanson. "The audience will like the play's shock value, plus the real-life situations it presents and the sincerity of the actors in each scene."

She loved directing and says she's always had a passion for it. In fact, said Swanson, "I opened my own theater company this year. I love being able to see the story unfold in my mind and then put it on the stage and see my art come to life. I love creating something out of nothing."

#### 'ALMOST, MAINE'

The play, "Almost, Maine," is a series of vignettes that director Tatyana German culled three scenes from to create her one-act. "It's a drama with a little

comedy, here and there," she said. "And each scene has a man and a woman in it."

In one scene, a woman goes to see the Northern Lights because her husband recently died and these lights are supposed to carry his soul to heaven. The actors are Morgan Perigard and Keegan Garant.

In the second scene, featuring Porsche Amaya and Jackson Armstrong, two people are in a laundry room and the woman accidentally hits the man with an ironing board. But he can't feel pain, and she eventually falls for him.

Meagan Morrison and Zach Schwartz are in the third scene. In it, a woman comes to a man's house to get back all the love she gave to him. And she gives him bags and bags filled with the love he gave to her. Then comes a surprise ...

"This show's a combination of drama and comedy, and each scene involves a love story," said German. "So there's something for everyone." It's her first time directing, and she's enjoying it. "It's hard to be assertive with your friends, but I get to teach others," she said. "Directing takes lots of extra planning — choosing the scenes and making certain stage directions to tell the cast. I'm also involved in the costumes and rehearsal dates."

German's also discovered that she prefers directing to acting because she doesn't like memorizing lines. And she says the audience will like her play: "Although we only had a short time to pull this all together, I'm confident in my actors' abilities to put on a great show."

#### 'SCOTT PILGRIM VS THE WORLD'

Directed by Jenessy Garcia, "Scott Pilgrim vs. The World" is a comedy based — not on the movie — but on the series of books by Bryan Lee O'Malley. It's about a self-righteous, young man smitten by a mysterious girl who suddenly moves into town. He gets a chance to win her heart; but to maintain their relationship, he has to defeat her ex-boyfriends — who all have particular superpowers.

"This play has a new taste of humor with a lot of wit," said Garcia. "It's fast-paced and has a good love story girls will enjoy and lots of action for the boys."

There's a cast of 13, with four leading roles. Portraying them are Daniel Williams as Scott; Elizabeth Coo as the love interest, Ramona Flowers; and Zach Szmerekovsky, David Johnson and Embrey Grimes as the three exes.

Garcia also likes directing. "It's different because it gives you control over the image you want," she said. "And you get that freedom of expression you can't get from acting when someone else is leading

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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**Southbound Route 28 traffic in Centreville backs up during the Friday, Jan. 30, evening rush.**



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**Westbound Route 29 traffic heads home to Centreville in the late afternoon. Three lanes, instead of two, will help ease the evening rush-hour gridlock.**

# Work Progressing on Road Projects

## Frey gives update to community.

BY BONNIE HOBBS  
THE CONNECTION

Several local road projects are either underway, in the pipeline or nearing completion. And during the West Fairfax County Citizens Association's (WFCCA) Jan. 19 quarterly meeting, Supervisor Michael R. Frey (R-Sully) presented an update on them:

### ❖ Route 28 Widening

This project will widen Route 28 from Old Centreville Road to the Prince William County line at Bull Run from four to six lanes. The work includes intersection improvements, plus pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Cost estimate: \$47.35 million; FCDOT approved: \$47.35 million.

It complements the I-66/Route 28 interchange and, in conjunction with other road projects, would complete the Route 28 corridor through the entire county. This project

includes intersection improvements, as well as pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Preliminary engineering should start between now and January 2017.

A large development just south of the county line is expected to exacerbate existing congestion. So this widening is intended to reduce congestion between Prince William and Centreville. And as a transportation corridor of regional significance, it would improve access to Dulles International Airport, Reston and Herndon.

### ❖ Route 29 from Union Mill Road to Buckley's Gate Drive:

This project provides pedestrian facilities on the north side of Route 29 and widens Route 29 in this area from four to six lanes. It complements the VDOT bridge-replacement project at Little Rocky Run and completes the widening of Route 29 from Shirley Gate Road to Centreville.

It's currently the last segment of Route 29 between the City of Fairfax and Centreville that's not six lanes, so this work would eliminate the last remaining bottleneck. Cost estimate: \$32.7 million; FCDOT approved: \$25 million. Preliminary engi-

neering could start as early as July 2018.

### ❖ I-66/Route 28 Interchange:

Reconstruct portions of the existing interchange. Remove four traffic signals on Route 28 to enhance safety and improve capacity. A VDOT study is underway. VDOT already has \$50 million programmed for this project. Cost estimate: \$122 million. Six-year funding approved by Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT): \$54 million.

Widen and reconstruct westbound I-66 off ramp to northbound Route 28. Realign Braddock/Walney roads and construct overpass with ramp connection from northbound Route 28 to the new bridge. Provide new connections from Braddock to eastbound and westbound I-66, from Braddock to and from southbound Route 28, and from southbound Route 28 to eastbound I-66 (flyover).

This project extends Poplar Tree Road across Route 28 from Stonecroft Boulevard to Walney Road. It also involves construction of a new access road to E.C. Lawrence Park and reduces congestion on both I-66 and Route 28.

"The Route 28/I-66 interchange is moving forward, but it'll result in the loss of the senior center," said Frey. "So we're looking for a new site for it. But the start date for the interchange is yet to be determined. That's because the General Assembly adopted a new process last year saying it first has to be proved that a project will reduce congestion."

### ❖ Lee Road Widening/Culvert:

A .2-mile section of Lee Road in Chantilly has been widened from two to four lanes and its box culvert extended over Schneider Branch. The widening should relieve congestion by eliminating a previous choke point there.

Construction began in June 2014 and, last Thursday, Jan. 29, all four lanes of Lee Road between Albemarle Point Place and Penrose Place opened to traffic. Overall completion of this \$3.3 million project should be early next month — meaning that it came in under budget and three months ahead of schedule.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF VDOT

**The new, southbound lanes of Lee Road in Chantilly.**

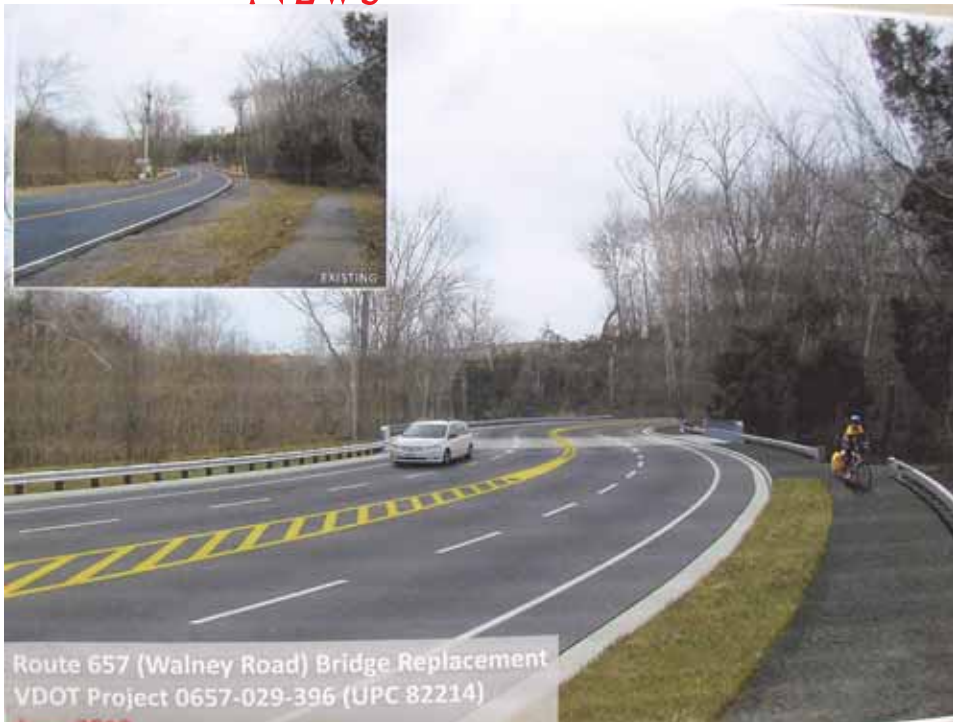
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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**Eastbound Route 29 traffic has now been shifted to the area closest to the bridge over the Little Rocky Run stream in Centreville, while work is done in the median.**





Route 657 (Walney Road) Bridge Replacement  
VDOT Project 0657-029-396 (UPC 82214)

PHOTO COURTESY OF VDOT

**Artist's rendition of a widened Walney Road Bridge, with inset photo of current bridge.**



PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

**The busy, Braddock/Pleasant Valley roads intersection during Friday's evening rush.**

## Work Progressing on Local Road Projects

FROM PAGE 3

### ❖ Stone Road Overpass over I-66 from Route 29 to Route 28:

This project provides an alternative to Route 28 that goes from Centreville to the Westfields Corporate Center. It received partial funding for an alignment study, environmental analysis and preliminary engineering. Cost estimate: \$81.55 million; amount approved by FCDOT: \$5 million.

Construct a four-lane divided road between Stone Road at Route 29 and New Braddock Road. The work includes curb and gutter, a 5-foot-wide concrete sidewalk on the east side and a 10-foot-wide shared-use path on the west side of Stone Road.

Construct a bridge over I-66 and another bridge over Big Rocky Run. Re-stripe westbound New Braddock Road to provide two, through travel lanes. This overpass could reduce congestion at the I-66/Route 28 and I-66/Route 29 interchanges. In addition, a future Metrorail station near this site is listed on the county's Comprehensive Plan.

### ❖ Route 29 Bridge Replacement:

VDOT is currently replacing the Route 29 bridge over the Little Rocky Run stream in

Centreville. Besides improving the bridge, itself, the project will also result in a new sidewalk and shared-use path. The new bridge will go from .2 miles east of Pickwick Road to Union Mill Road and will be just under a half-mile long.

It will be built six lanes wide to accommodate future traffic, but will initially be striped for four lanes. A 16-foot-wide, raised, grass, median strip will separate north- and southbound lanes. Each outer lane will be 15-feet wide, with the outermost three feet earmarked for bicycle riders.

On the bridge's south side, a path will connect to existing trails. The north side will have a 5-foot-wide sidewalk connecting to the Faircrest community and existing sidewalks. Estimated cost is \$17.7 million and anticipated completion is this October.

### ❖ Walney Road Bridge and Widening:

The existing, Walney Road bridge over Flatlick Branch is disintegrating structurally and surpassed its life expectancy some 18 years ago. So VDOT is replacing it with a wider, sturdier and safer bridge.

The new bridge will have a four-lane capacity with bike lanes. Walney Road will

also be widened from two to four lanes from 250 feet south of Mariah Court to Willard Road.

In addition, the downhill curve on north-south Walney will be smoothed out significantly to make it descend gradually. The road will also be raised 10 feet higher in the area where it currently dips down as drivers leave the bridge, for better sight distance.

"Utility relocation is ongoing, and full-blown construction will start any day," said Frey. "They'll close the bridge and implement a detour in April through summer. The goal is to complete the bridge by the end of the year." Estimated cost is \$15.5 million.

### ❖ Route 50 Widening West of Chantilly:

Construction began in fall 2011 to widen 3.7 miles of Route 50 from four to six lanes between Poland Road in Loudoun County and Route 28 in Chantilly. It was needed because increased development and congestion in Loudoun County created backups during much of the day on the four-lane segment, especially during morning and evening rush hours. But because of this project, things have improved significantly.

"It's now open to six lanes — three in each

direction — all the way out to South Riding," said Frey. "It'll still need most of the rest of this year to finish putting in the traffic signals and pedestrian crosswalks."

Besides the new travel lanes, this \$100 million project includes improved turn lanes and traffic signals, curb and gutter on the outside lanes, crosswalks and pedestrian signals, widened and upgraded bridges, plus pathways on both sides of the road. Route 50 will also be more level and provide wider buffers between the lanes and roadside hazards.

### ❖ Roundabout at Braddock and Pleasant Valley Roads:

VDOT plans to build a roundabout to improve traffic flow at the Braddock/Pleasant Valley roads intersection by Cox Farms in Centreville.

Fort Myer Construction Corp. won the contract to do the work. Estimated project cost is \$5.8 million, with completion expected by spring 2016.

"It'll probably be under construction in two or three months," said Frey. "VDOT will have a 'pardon-our-dust' meeting for the community to let people know what they can expect."

## Roundups

FROM PAGE 2

and pasta sauces, canned tomatoes, canned fruit, peanut butter, canned and dry beans, and granola bars.

Also needed are toiletries, which WFCM clients cannot purchase with food stamps. Especially needed are shampoo, diapers sizes 4 and 5, deodorant, toothpaste and toilet paper.

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. A volunteer stocker/bagger is needed Wednesdays, 4-6 p.m.

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

## Help Re-stock Food Pantries

For many of the local, non-profit pantries this is the time of year when their shelves are minimally stocked. The only collection location within the Sully District will take place on Saturday, Feb. 7 at the Clifton Giant, 5740 Union Mill Road between 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Donations collected at this site will benefit the Western Fairfax Christian Ministries

Visit [fairfaxcounty.gov/living/food/stuffthebus](http://fairfaxcounty.gov/living/food/stuffthebus) for more information.

## How to Hire CLRC Workers

The Centreville Labor Resource Center (CLRC) serves businesses and homeowners needing help with just about any home remodeling or maintenance project. Call 703-543-6272 or go to [www.centrevilleLRC.org](http://www.centrevilleLRC.org) and click on the "How to Hire" link. Tell what kind of work is required, how many workers are needed and when.

The CLRC will match the needs to its reg-

istered workers' skills and set up the job. The price for work will be negotiated. After the job is completed, employers are encouraged to provide the CLRC with feedback.

## Meals on Wheels Volunteers

Fairfax County needs Meals on Wheels drivers in Chantilly and group coordinators in Chantilly and Fairfax. Call 703-324-5406, TTY 711, email [VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:VolunteerSolutions@fairfaxcounty.gov) or visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs/olderadultservices/volunteer-solutions.htm).



# WHS Hosts One-Act Festival

FROM PAGE 2

you.”

As for her actors, she said, “The cast is really working well with the original script, and I’m very happy with them. It’s also an ensemble show and everyone’s doing a great job.”

## ‘NO EXIT’

Andrew Brockmeyer is directing a cutting of Jean-Paul Sartre’s “No Exit.” In this drama, three characters are locked in a room in hell. “They’re to be punished for their sins,” said Brockmeyer. “But rather than physical torment, they’re psychologically tortured by the other two people in the room. None of them intend it, but it happens because of their personalities.”

The actors playing them are Eni Oyeleye, Cait Egan and Meredith Mehegan, with Gabby Moses as the valet who introduces them to each other. And Brockmeyer couldn’t be prouder of them.

“I have the most fantastic actors,” he said. “These are very difficult roles and they’re rising to the challenge. And I think the audience will appreciate the existentialist themes and the characters’ interactions. This play explores some serious themes and the ideas people have about hell and punishment, in particular.”

Brockmeyer has also found that he likes the process of directing. “As an actor, I’ve seen a director do something I think is arbitrary,” he said. “I’m now learning the reason behind it.”

Like his fellow student directors, he, too, enjoys

“seeing the transition from on paper to on stage, because you realize the final impact you can have on a show due to the choices you make.”

## ‘PIRATE SONG’

‘Pirate Song,’ directed by David Koenigsberg, is a comedy about pirates who go on an epic quest. They’re looking for treasure based on a map they got from a man named Hook Captain.

This show features a cast of about 24, with Andrew Sharpe and Keegan Garant playing the leads. Sharpe is the newest pirate and Garant is the old sea captain who’s recruited him.

“But it’s more of an ensemble show,” said Koenigsberg. “It’s a coming-of-age story for Andrew’s character — but with pirates. And I think the audience will enjoy the story’s uniqueness. I came up with the idea, and several of the cast members and I wrote the script together. It’s also a musical, inspired by a Scottish, pirate, metal band we found called Alestorm.”

Koenigsberg calls directing fun and is glad he got the opportunity to do it. “I’ve done acting and tech work,” he said. “But this year, we get to take the reins on our own projects, and it lets us grow as writers, directors and even actors.”

Initially, he said, he tried to run things democratically, but it was tough. “But at the end of the day, because I created this story, my colleagues respected me and were willing to work with me to get the best, final product,” said Koenigsberg. “The best part was working with friends, and it’s been a nice change-of-pace being allowed to pursue our own experiment.”

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# OPINION

## No Justification for Secrecy, Delay on Geer Shooting

Everything about this case erodes public trust and demonstrates police departments should not be allowed to apply “blanket” exemptions to release of information.

After waiting 17 months for any information about the investigation into the shooting death of John Geer, the information released last week is deeply troubling.

Fairfax County Police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield inside the doorway of his own home in Springfield on Aug. 29, 2013. Police were called to Geer's home following Geer's argument with his longtime partner. Police spoke with him for more than half an hour while he stood in his doorway, unarmed, with his hands raised and resting on the frame. As he began to lower his hands, by all accounts still at shoulder level, he was shot in the chest and died in his house without receiving medical attention.

It took more than 16 months, a \$12 million civil suit by Geer's family and a court order to get the first tiny bit of information on the shooting, which came earlier this month when police named the officer who fired the shot that killed Geer.

On Friday, Jan. 30, 2015, in response to a court order, Fairfax County released more than 10,000 pages of documents about the shooting and the investigation.

We now know that investigators learned on

the same day Geer died, Aug. 29, 2013, that at least five witnesses including the police officer actually talking to Geer at the instant he was shot, disputed Torres's version of events. Torres said Geer suddenly dropped his hands to his waist; none of the other witnesses saw Geer's hands move below his head.

### EDITORIAL

On the day of the shooting, investigators and prosecutors had compelling information to take to a grand jury. Instead, after a long period of silence, obstruction and obfuscation, the investigation was turned over to the Justice Department, where there is no timetable for resolution (and no adequate explanation for punting the investigation to the feds).

Without the Geer family lawsuit and the court order to turn over documents as part of discovery, the public might never know what really happened that day.

The question of accountability for what happened remains.

As we have said many times, the problem goes beyond Fairfax County, and beyond police shootings.



# 520 days

**It took a court order and 520 days after Fairfax County police officer Adam D. Torres shot and killed John Geer of Springfield for basic information about what happened that day to be released. The public now knows what investigators learned on the same day Geer died, Aug. 29, 2013, that at least five witnesses including the police officer actually talking to Geer at the instant he was shot, disputed Torres's version of events. Torres said Geer suddenly dropped his hands to his waist; none of the other witnesses saw Geer's hands move below his head.**

Police officials in Fairfax, Arlington and Alexandria have adopted what they call a “blanket” approach to using their exemption. That means they have decided to withhold any document they can without any analysis of whether they should.

It's past time for change.

— MARY KIMM

MKIMM@CONNECTIONNEWSPAPERS.COM

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Fairfax Should Pay for ‘Quality’ Performance

To the Editor:

The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors is preparing to pass a 27 percent pay raise for themselves. The raise, from \$75,000 to \$95,000, will be implemented with the incoming 2016 Board. This measure was approved despite several troubling factors apparently ignored by all but two board members.

Fairfax County is currently facing a budget shortfall surpassing \$140 million. Taxes of county residents have increased approximately 14 percent over the past three years. The board is urging bond rating agencies to maintain our threatened AAA bond rating. Commercial property vacancy is hovering around 19 percent which is the highest in a quarter century. This year, our schools have cut 720 positions, cut programs and increased class sizes. And it's not getting better anytime soon. Schools are projecting an additional \$100 million deficit next

year. It's also worth mentioning that School Board members are seeking to double their pay from \$20,000 to \$40,000 per year. Not bad for a part time job.

The last pay raise for supervisors occurred in 2007. The proposed increase will equate to over 3.5 percent per year, far more than teachers and many other “full time” county employees have received in the same period. Despite some assertions to the contrary, the supervisors position is a part time job. Several supervisors, in addition to their service to the county, have full time careers.

Some, in trying to justify the pay raise, have referenced higher salaries of supervisors in neighboring Montgomery County, Md. Common sense would dictate that we should also compare job performance when we compare compensation. Montgomery County has property taxes that are approximately 30 percent less than Fairfax County. Montgomery County has a bal-

anced budget. Montgomery County pays their teachers higher salaries while we continue to delay raises for our teachers and many county employees. One might argue that Montgomery County is paying for a job well done.

In addition to managing the county budget, the Board of Supervisors is also responsible for hiring the police chief and county attorneys. The supervisors are also responsible for oversight of the Police Department. On Aug. 29, 2013, an unarmed man, John Geer, was shot to death by a police officer as he stood in the doorway of his home with his hands in the air. The Police Department, along with county attorneys, withheld information from both state and federal investigations. It took 16 months, federal intervention and two court battles at taxpayer expense to get the county to reluctantly release information that should have been made public long ago. The supervisors, by their

silence and lack of supervision, supported the stonewalling. In the fallout, they now intend to hire an “expert,” at taxpayer expense, to tell them when and what information should be released when an officer takes a life. Why can't this board make such a simple commonsense decision without wasting more tax dollars?

In my opinion, at least eight of our supervisors don't deserve reelection, let alone a raise. Supervisors Herrity and Smyth, voting against the pay raise, are the only two that seem to understand the problems that this county is facing.

In November, we need to elect eight new supervisors that represent the people, not the police. We need to elect supervisors that can balance a budget without continually passing the burden to the people in the form of new taxes. We need to elect supervisors that can produce “quality” results. The citizens of this great county deserve no less.

**Jeff Stewart**  
Chantilly

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**NEWS DEPARTMENT:**  
[chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Steven Mauren**  
Editor, 703-778-9415  
[smauren@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:smauren@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Bonnie Hobbs**  
Community Reporter, 703-778-9438  
[bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:bhobbs@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Jon Roetman**  
Sports Editor, 703-752-4013  
[jroetman@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jroetman@connectionnewspapers.com)  
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**Debbie Funk**  
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703-778-9444  
[debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:debfunk@connectionnewspapers.com)

**David Griffin**  
Marketing Assistant  
703-778-9431  
[dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:dgriffin@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor & Publisher**  
Mary Kimm  
[mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:mkimm@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@MaryKimm](https://twitter.com/MaryKimm)

**Executive Vice President**  
Jerry Vernon  
[jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jvernon@connectionnewspapers.com)

**Editor in Chief**  
Steven Mauren  
**Managing Editor**  
Kemal Kurspahic  
**Photography:**  
Deb Cobb, Craig Sterbutzel  
**Art/Design:**  
Laurence Foong, John Heinly  
**Production Manager:**  
Geovani Flores

**Special Assistant to the Publisher**  
Jeanne Theismann  
[jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:jtheismann@connectionnewspapers.com)  
[@TheismannMedia](https://twitter.com/TheismannMedia)

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# SCHOOLS



PHOTO BY WILL PALENSCAR

## CHS Hall of Fame

Chantilly High School honored members of its inaugural athletic hall of fame class on Jan. 30. Inductees are (not in order): Brian Snyder (baseball-1976); Scott Secules (football- 1983); Amy Colvin (cross country/track-1987); Sarah Colvin (cross country/track-1987); Terry Warren (football/basketball/baseball- 1987); Michele Shaw (softball-1992); Darryl Franklin (basketball- 1992); Kevin Johnson (wrestling-1994); Eric Post (cross country/track - 1997); Bhawoh Jue (football/basketball- 1997); Alyssa Aiken (track & field-2000); Joe Koshansky (baseball- 2000); Alena Koshansky (basketball-2003); Jenny Suh (golf-2003); Chris Ake, state champion softball coach (1989, 1990); Danny Meier, state champion football coach (1996).

## SCHOOL NOTES

Email announcements to [chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com](mailto:chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com). Deadline is Thursday at noon. Photos are welcome.

**Stephanie Feeback** of Oak Hill has been named to president's honor roll for the fall 2014 semester at Oklahoma City University.

**Westfield High School** is one of nine establishments serving food in Fairfax County to receive the 14 Carrot Gold Food Safety Award for 2014 from the Fairfax County Health Department. Westfield High was joined by eight restaurants across Fairfax County as a recipient of the 2014 award, and was the only school in the county to be recognized. The 14 Carrot Gold Food Safety Award recognizes establishments that demonstrate outstanding food safety practices and promote food safety education among their employees.

The award was established to recognize establishments that go above and beyond food code requirements and excel in sanitation and food safety.

**Patrick Kenna** of Chantilly, a senior majoring in management, was named to the dean's list of Saint Vincent College (Latrobe, Pa.) for the fall 2014 semester.

**Jeremy Carlin** was named to Susquehanna University's (Selinsgrove, Pa.) dean's list for the fall 2014 semester. Carlin, a graphic design major, is a 2014 graduate of Chantilly High School, and is the son of Craig and Alice Carlin.

**Katherine Ellinger** of Chantilly, has been named to the dean's list at Youngstown State University (Youngstown, Ohio) for the fall 2014 semester. Ellinger is majoring in integrated social studies education.

**Emily Rosenthal** of Oak Hill, has been named to Millersville University of Pennsylvania's dean's list for the fall 2014 semester.



PHOTO BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

## Now 13-4

**Mary Clougherty and the Chantilly girls' basketball team defeated Herndon 31-30 on Jan. 30 at Chantilly High School, improving the Chargers' record to 13-4. Chantilly will travel to face Oakton at 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 6.**

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# Local Prep Football Coaches React to End of Super Bowl XLIX

Majority say they would have called a run play.

BY JON ROETMAN  
THE CONNECTION

**T**ony Verducci still regrets not calling a timeout.

Kyle Simmons is still bothered by failed personnel decisions.

Trey Taylor remembers when he could have been a goat, but ended up a hero.

Football coaches spend countless hours during the season preparing their teams for game day. They must develop a strategy for attacking and defending against a particular opponent. They must choose which of their athletes will get the most playing time. And they must find a way to motivate their players to perform to the best of their ability.

After all the time, effort and emotion coaches spend preparing their teams for a game, sometimes a contest can be decided by a single decision.

On Sunday night in Glendale, Ariz., Seattle Seahawks head coach Pete Carroll and offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell combined to make a decision that will be remembered for years to come.

Seattle trailed the New England Patriots 28-24 with less than 1 minute remaining in Super Bowl XLIX. The Seahawks faced second-and-goal at the 1-yard line with the clock ticking and one timeout available. Through 59-plus minutes, Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch, nicknamed "Beast Mode" for his violent running style and ability to break tackles, had amassed 102 yards and a touchdown on 24 carries, including a 4-yard run on the previous play that placed the ball just shy of the goal line.

**ON THE VERGE** of becoming the first team in a decade to win back-to-back Super Bowls, Carroll and Bevell called for a pass play rather than handing the ball to their star running back. The play called for wide receiver Ricardo Lockette to run a slant pattern. In theory, Lockette, with the help of a "pick" from fellow receiver Jermaine Kearse, was supposed to flash open for a touchdown. But when quarterback Russell Wilson fired the football toward Lockette, New England rookie defensive back Malcolm Butler jumped the route and intercepted the pass, securing the Patriots' fourth Super Bowl championship of the millennium and leaving the Seahawks wondering what could have been.

Instead of putting the ball in the hands of the Seahawks' best player (multiple times if needed), Carroll and Bevell called for a pass play into a crowded area of the field and came up empty. After the game, the play call received harsh criticism from fans, media members, and players from other teams.

From ESPN.com: "Carroll botches Super



South Lakes football coach Trey Taylor was "shocked" the Seattle Seahawks passed the ball at the 1-yard line in Super Bowl XLIX.

Bowl."

From The Seattle Times: "Seahawks lost because of the worst call in Super Bowl history."

From the San Jose Mercury News: "Any way you look at it, Seattle's insane pass at the end of the Super Bowl was the worst play-call in modern sports history."

The following day, several high school football coaches from Northern Virginia and Montgomery County, Md., shared their thoughts about the final minute of Super Bowl XLIX. The majority of those who re-

**"Everybody is a football expert on Monday. The nature of being a football coach (or a weatherman) is that you will get second-guessed."**

— Lake Braddock football coach  
Jim Poythress

sponded said they would have called a run play on second-and-goal from the 1. Some coaches acknowledged that it's easy to second guess a decision, and some shared tough decisions they had to make in the past.

Verducci, head football coach at Bishop Ireton (Alexandria), was "shocked" by Seattle's decision to throw the football.

"In a similar situation against Green Bay [in the NFC Championship game on Jan. 18] the Seahawks ran 'read option' and Russell Wilson was virtually untouched scoring a touchdown," Verducci wrote in an email. "During the timeout [prior to first down], I would have called a power running play for Lynch on second down and the read option for Wilson on third down if they did not score. I would have used my final timeout if the second and third down runs were unsuccessful."

Verducci is haunted by his own tough decision gone wrong. Facing St. Christopher's in the 2011 state semifinals, Bishop Ireton led 34-31 with less than a

minute remaining in the fourth quarter. St. Christopher's faced fourth-and-15 at its own 2-yard line with less than 1 minute remaining and no timeouts.

"My gut instinct was to call a timeout," Verducci wrote, "but I did not call one."

St. Christopher's executed a hook-and-lateral play that broke loose for a 98-yard touchdown and the Saints held on for a 38-34 victory.

"I still regret the fact," Verducci wrote, "I did not call the timeout to discuss the possibility of a trick play, among other things."

Simmons, who has led the Westfield football team to four consecutive region championship games, was "surprised" Seattle opted to pass.

"They had one timeout left and an almost unstoppable running back," Simmons wrote. "I said out loud, Seattle just needs to run the ball now. ... I would have run the same play they ran on first down. They almost scored on that one."

Simmons said he remembers some of his failed choices as a coach.

"My biggest regrets come with personnel decisions," Simmons wrote. "And yes, when I look back on some of those decisions it bothers me very much."

Taylor was the head coach at W.T. Woodson in 2008 when he called for a fake punt at the Cavaliers' own 10-yard line in a game against Westfield. The intended receiver on the play dropped the pass and Woodson went on to suffer a lopsided loss.

"The play was there, we just failed to execute," wrote Taylor, who is now the head coach at South Lakes. "... For the Westfield game, we knew we had to do some things out of the box to have a chance to win. We were prepared to do things like we did, so the decision didn't bother me because it was part of the game plan."

In 2009, Woodson defeated eventual region champion Lake Braddock 43-42 during the regular season. Taylor took a risk at the end of the game and it paid off.

"We score on a 90-yard screen play to pull within one with about a minute to go," Taylor wrote. "We opt for a 2-point conversion for the win. We convert and win the game 43-42. After the game, several people commented on how that isn't what they would

have done. Since we won it was a good call. If we wouldn't have, then everyone would have had a better idea. But at the moment, that is what felt right."

Seattle had the ball at the New England 11-yard line with 6 seconds remaining in the first half. The Patriots led 14-7 and the "safe" play would have been for Carroll to kick the field goal and go into the locker room down by four. Instead, he opted to run one more offensive play and it paid off with a touchdown pass from Wilson to Chris Matthews.

**CARROLL'S DARING DECISION** at the end of the game didn't pay off.

Lake Braddock head coach Jim Poythress defended Carroll, who led Seattle to a Super Bowl title the previous season and won a pair of national championships with the University of Southern California.

"Hindsight is always 20/20. Last I checked, Coach Carroll had won a lot of big games," Poythress wrote. "Everybody is a football expert on Monday. The nature of being a football coach (or a weatherman) is that you will get second-guessed. I wish I could show up at the work place of those who have criticized our program and say whatever ridiculous comment I wanted."

"Where were the experts after the NFC Championship [when Seattle overcame a 16-0 deficit to win 28-22 in overtime]? Didn't Coach Bevell lead the comeback? I take my hat off to Bevell for getting them to the 1-yard line [in the final minute of Super Bowl XLIX]. He did that with little time left and probably 100 million people watching. More importantly, I credit the Seahawk players for sticking together after the game. Nobody pointed fingers or laid blame. Even Marshawn Lynch, who everybody loves to hate, had only positive things to say about the call and his teammates."

Lake Braddock finished the 2014 season with a 10-3 record and reached the 6A North region semifinals despite the graduation of star quarterback Caleb Henderson, who is a freshman on the University of North Carolina football team.

"After winning 10 games this year, we were still second-guessed as a staff after the Westfield loss [in the region semis]," Poythress wrote. "We had some seniors that wanted to lay blame on the underclass. We had parents cry about their kid's touches or stats. After the last-second win versus West Springfield [in the region quarterfinals], we were the greatest staff in the area. The next week we were dog dirt. It comes with the turf and you won't last long if you pay attention to it. At the end of the season, only one team is happy."

Carroll, Bevell and Seahawks players will have all offseason to think about coming up 1 yard short of winning Super Bowl XLIX and the play call that led to the game-ending interception. Will they get over the disappointment? According to ESPN.com, the Westgate SuperBook and the William Hill sports book have Seattle as 5-to-1 favorites to win Super Bowl 50 following the 2015 season.

CONNECTION FILE PHOTO



## WELLBEING

**Jamie MacDonald and Leslie Roberts of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Wellness and Health Promotion teach a Mental Health First Aid class.**



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

# Mental Health First Aid

**County offers program to offer insight into mental illness and teach strategies for intervention.**

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL  
THE CONNECTION

**L**eslie Roberts recalls hearing a mother talk about getting her stepson admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

"Her stepson was angry and acting out," said Roberts. "She didn't understand what her stepson was doing."

The woman had completed a mental health first aid class that Roberts teaches. Mental Health First Aid is offered by the staff of the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board Wellness and Health Promotion. The goal of the class is to offer insight into mental illness and teach strategies for intervention.

"She was grateful that the class had taught her what those signs and symptoms were," said Leslie. "Before the class she thought he was being a problem teenager. After the class she understood that he was suffering from depression, and his behavior had a lot more meaning."

That is the goal of the eight-hour certification class, which is taught in both English and Spanish. Students learn the warning signs of such mental illnesses as depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, substance use disorders and self-injury. They also get a five-step action plan to help the individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional care.

"Students learn specific behaviors or comments that individuals will make," said Roberts, who is a Wellness and Health Promotions Supervisor. "Such as, 'Things are never going to get better. I feel like I'll always be sad. What's the point?'"

"They get background and statistics on these illnesses, as well as a basic understanding of risk factors, signs and symptoms," added Jamie MacDonald, wellness health promotion and prevention manager.

There is a standard curriculum and class instructors must be certified to teach it. The class is typically taught on two separate days. "We offer an open

enrollment class for adults once each month," said MacDonald. "It's a 'come one, come all.' Anyone from Fairfax County can sign up."

Students learn to assess for suicide or harm, listen non-judgmentally, give information and assurance, encourage appropriate professional help and self-help, and other strategies.

"We use the acronym ALGEE, which is the first letter of each skill the students learn," said MacDonald. "Then they get skills around how to approach someone who might be showing early signs of a mental illness or how to recognize when someone is in a mental health crisis."

After the class, students take a test. If they pass, they are certified for three years.

"There is a lot of repetition and practice. There are live simulations and scenarios where small groups will practice what they learn," said MacDonald. "We try to gear their minds toward, 'What will I do when I'm experiencing a mental health crisis? How will I support someone like a colleague, friend and even a stranger?'"

The re-enactment scenarios also help set limits. "We make their role clear," said MacDonald. "You're a mental health first aider when you get your certification, you're not a mental health crusader. You're not trained to provide treatment, counseling, or make a diagnosis. That is pounded into their heads."

Safety is another aspect of the training. "Students are taught to decide if a situation is safe for them to enter and whether or not they have time. If they start providing assistance, do they have time to finish it," asked MacDonald. "Being clear, careful and thinking through what steps they want to take is important. In a crisis, they have to decide: 'Do I want to step in or will I be in over my head? Do I need to grab my phone and call someone else? Your first and best action might be a call to 911.'"

"Some feel relieved when they realize that they don't have to intervene in every emergency," said MacDonald. "People feel inept and paralyzed. The class helps help people to understand that they may not be the best person to step in, but you might be able to find someone else. There's nothing wrong with that."

For information on the schedule of classes and to register, see [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/events/mental-health-first-aid.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/events/mental-health-first-aid.htm).

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- Zone 5:** The Potomac Almanac
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The Vienna/Oakton Connection  
The McLean Connection  
The Great Falls Connection

## The Past Future is Now Present

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



Presumably, maybe even obviously, nearly six years into a "terminal" diagnosis, arrangements for a smooth transition of power should have been made already. But they haven't. Not being a parent, and with no real extenuating-type circumstances to consider, despite the rather precarious existence in which I find myself I've never felt strongly about taking the steps necessary to arrange for a future which didn't involve yours truly.

Selfish, stupid, stubborn or any number of other characterizations which don't begin with the letter "s," I've never put down anywhere on paper – literally or figuratively – what would, in the event of my death, need to happen, how any of it should happen, and/or why it would even happen. So far, as concerns my wife, Dina, should I in fact predecease her, I've pretty much left it to happenstance. Moreover, given her interests, it seems unfair of me to not assist her somehow in a post-Kenny world.

Still, I've always felt that doing so, however prudent and practical – and considerate – was bad luck, sort of; a version of negative reinforcement. By not thinking of death/planning for it, somehow I was preventing its occurrence, dare I say (given my original "13-month-to-two-year prognosis"), its inevitability. And though I don't specifically know why this uneasy feeling has manifested itself of late (I've not received any discouraging medical news of late), it has; and ignoring the consequences of my continuing neglect seems ill-advised.

In addition, throughout this cancer experience, it has been suggested that managing stress (among other anecdotal-type advisories: keeping a positive attitude, maintaining a sense of humor, being a compliant patient) would be beneficial in the short, medium and long term battle royal that all cancer patients endure. But diagnosis-to-date, I've not addressed this most stressful, what-to-do/what-needs-to-be-done problem. And though a properly executed will would certainly be a start, it would not be a finish. There are more mundane instructions and organizational details, tedious as they may be, which would likely drastically reduce a level of stress which unbeknownst to me and my conscious, has probably invaded my subconscious, with predictable effect. I don't imagine solving this problem would put a bounce in my step; however, it would definitely eliminate a potential drag on my coefficient. And if my life is going to be lived, the less drag on it, the better.

Whatever I can do to lighten the load should be priority number one. I don't want to be spinning my emotional wheels over here. Cancer imposes enough pressure externally; I don't need to add to it internally.

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

## NEWS



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**Fairfax County Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy participants learn how to put out a fire during a recent class. Registration for the March Academy closes Feb. 16.**

## Citizens to the Rescue

### Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Academy accepting applications.

**T**he Fairfax County Citizens Fire and Rescue Academy, a free nine-week program to learn about the work of firefighters and paramedics, will begin its next session March 12, with the deadline for online applications closing on Feb. 16.

"Basically, this is an overview of the fire department," said Firefighter Capt. Willie Bailey. "It's a nine-week course and on the last day participants will get to put on gear and fight a fire, or as I like to say, put the wet stuff on the red stuff."

Applications for the academy will be ac-

cepted through Feb. 16 or until the class of 25 is filled. The academy will begin March 12 and will meet for nine consecutive weeks, from 6 to 9 p.m., at various locations in and outside of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Each session will cover different aspects of the organization, providing an in-depth overview of the department and of its uniformed and civilian workforce. Program topics include: fire suppression, emergency medical services, training, recruitment and special operations.

"Citizens of all ages are welcome to apply," Bailey said. "We had an 80-year-old woman participate in our last academy and she had a blast."

To sign up for the free program, residents must be 18 years of age and apply online at [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/cfa](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fr/cfa)

— JEANNE THEISMANN



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

### 'Stand By Me'

**Poplar Tree Elementary School students and teachers take a stand against bullying by wearing purple to show support for the theme, "Stand By Me." Students learned three ways to help someone who is being bullied: Stand up for the person, help the person walk away, and tell an adult.**



# ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements chantilly@connectionnewspapers.com. Include date, time, location, description and contact for event: phone, email and/or website. Photos and artwork welcome. Deadline is Thursday at noon, at least two weeks before event.

## ONGOING

The **Airbus IMAX Theater at National Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Center**, 14390 Air & Space Museum Parkway, is showing movies including "Interstellar", "D-Day: Normandy 1944", "Hubble", "Fighter Pilot" and "Hidden Universe". Visit [airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy](http://airandspace.si.edu/udvarhazy) or call 703-572-4118 for the movie schedule or to schedule an IMAX On Demand show for groups of 50 or more.

**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.

**Singing.** 7:30 p.m. at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires rehearse every Wednesday which includes training by an award-winning director. Visit [www.fairfaxjubilaires.org](http://www.fairfaxjubilaires.org) for more.

## PET ADOPTIONS

**Adopt a Dog.** Fridays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. and Saturdays, 1-4 p.m. at PetSmart, 12971 Fair Lakes Center, Fairfax. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit [www.lostdogrescue.org](http://www.lostdogrescue.org) for more.

**Adopt a Dog.** Saturdays, 12-3 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Highway. Visit [hart90.org](http://hart90.org) for more.

**Adopt a Dog.** Sundays, 1-4 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Memorial Hwy. Adopt a puppy or dog. Visit [aforeverhome.org](http://aforeverhome.org) for more.

## WEDNESDAY-THURSDAY/FEB. 4-5

**Menopause The Musical.** 8 p.m. at Hylton Performing Arts Center, 10960 George Mason Circle, Manassas. GFour Productions bring this international hit show to Manassas for two shows only. Tickets are available at the Hylton Performing Arts Center box office, [hyltoncenter.org](http://hyltoncenter.org), or by calling 703-993-7759. Now celebrating 13 years of female empowerment through musical comedy, Menopause The Musical has evolved as a "grassroots" movement of women who deal with life adjustments after 40 by embracing each other and the road ahead. Visit [www.MenopauseTheMusical.com](http://www.MenopauseTheMusical.com).

## THURSDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 5-8

**"Beauty and the Beast."** Thursday-Saturday, Feb. 5-7, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 7, 2:30 p.m.; and Sunday, Feb. 8, 3 p.m. in the Skip A. Maiden Theatre, Centreville High School, 6001 Union Mill Road, Clifton. Theatre Centreville presents "Beauty and the Beast." \$15.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 7

**Evergreens For Every Garden.** 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Evergreens are a must-have in every garden. They provide year-round interest, structure, define spaces and serve as backdrop to other plants. Attend this seminar to discover the many varieties. Visit [www.merrifieldgardencenter.com](http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com) or call 703-968-9600

**Children's Gardening Workshops.** 2 p.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. These seminars are ideal for parents and grandparents who want to introduce children, ages 6-12, to gardening. Each child will learn and have fun while creating a dish garden to bring home. An adult must be present. Space is limited. Visit [www.merrifieldgardencenter.com](http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com) or call 703-968-9600.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 8

**Model Train Show.** 1-4 p.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge T-TRAK model train show. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Information on the museum and shows is at [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

**Design with Roses.** 2-4 p.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Arlington Rose Foundation hosts "Fun Designs with Roses," with floral arranger Carol Inskeep. Rose bouquets as door prizes. Light refreshments. Free. Call 703-371-9351.

## THURSDAY/FEB. 12

**Author Event.** Noon at the United States Navy Memorial, Naval Heritage Center, Presidents Room, 701 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C. Centreville author Alan Rems will speak at the "Authors on Deck" book lecture series bringing often overlooked fighting in World War II's South Pacific Theater to life. "South Pacific Cauldron: World War II's Great Forgotten Battlefields," is the first historical account that

embraces all land, sea, and air operations in the South Pacific during World War II. Rems summarizes the theater's activities from January 1942 to September 1945 by examining the perspectives of the Americans, Australians, and Japanese. Free and open to the public. Call 202-737-2300 or visit [www.navymemorial.org](http://www.navymemorial.org) for more.

## FRIDAY-SUNDAY/FEB. 13-15

**Singing Valentines.** 9 a.m.-9 p.m. The Fairfax Jubil-Aires will send a singing quartet of elegantly dressed gents to serenade a loved one at work or at home delivered with two songs, a message from the sender, a long-stemmed rose, and a mini box of candy. \$50 on Friday, Feb. 13 or Sunday, Feb. 15; \$70 on Saturday, Feb. 14. For \$30 a telephone singing Valentine will be delivered anywhere. Visit [www.fairfaxjubilaires.org](http://www.fairfaxjubilaires.org) or call 571-418-3840.

**Winter One Acts.** Friday and Saturday, 7:30 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 2 p.m. at Westfield Theatre, Westfield High School, 4700 Stonecroft Blvd. Chantilly. \$10 at the door. Visit [www.westfieldtheatreboosters.com](http://www.westfieldtheatreboosters.com) for schedule.

## SATURDAY/FEB. 14

**It's All About the Birds and the Bees.** 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Flowers can be so much more than gifts for a Valentine. Find out how they use their shape, fragrance and color to attract the perfect partner for pollination and reproduction. Is it love, biology or both? Visit [www.merrifieldgardencenter.com](http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com) or call 703-968-9600.

## SUNDAY/FEB. 15

**Model Train Show.** 1-4 p.m. at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. The Northern Virginia NTRAK members will hold an N gauge model train show. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Information on the museum and shows is at [www.fairfax-station.org](http://www.fairfax-station.org) or call 703-425-9225.

## TUESDAY-WEDNESDAY/FEB. 17-18

**Auditions.** 6:30-9 p.m. at Mountain View High School, 5775 Spindle Court, Centreville. Auditions for The Alliance Theatre's production of "Curtains." It's the brassy, bright, and promising year of 1959. Boston's Colonial Theatre is host to the opening night performance of a new musical. When the leading lady mysteriously dies on stage the entire cast and crew are suspects. Actors must be at least 17 to audition and come prepared to dance in comfortable clothing and shoes. Actors should prepare a 32 bar cut with own accompaniment or a cappella. Sides will be provided. Cold readings will be done. Call backs Thursday Feb. 19, at 6:30 p.m. Rehearsals begin Feb. 23, 7 p.m. Performance dates are April 24-25, May 1-9. Register at [www.thealliancetheatre.org/auditions.html](http://www.thealliancetheatre.org/auditions.html).

## SATURDAY/FEB. 21

**Boxwood and Flowering Shrubs.** 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Discover the many new and different varieties of boxwood and discuss flowering shrubs to complement your boxwood. Visit [www.merrifieldgardencenter.com](http://www.merrifieldgardencenter.com) or call 703-968-9600.

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