

Geer Documents
Made Public

NEWS, PAGE 3

Burke
CONNECTION

Lake Braddock Band Goes National

NEWS, PAGE 6

EXIT

WELLBEING

PAGE 10

**Guest Band Director Roy Holder
directing the Lake Braddock Sec-
ondary School Symphonic Band.**

Olivia Laverne
Carson, 93, of
Burke, Dies

OBITUARY, PAGE 4



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Geer Documents Made Public

FCPD report confirms John Geer was shot while unarmed, hands raised.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Of the seven eyewitness accounts of the shooting death of John Geer, only one describes Geer quickly bringing his hands down to his waist. That was the perspective of PFC Adam Torres, the officer who shot Geer in the chest, killing him in the doorway of his home on Aug. 29, 2013.

Torres' account appears in several of the approximately 11,000 pages of discovery from the Fairfax County Police Department investigation released to the public by Fairfax County on Jan. 30, about 17 months after the shooting. The release also contains more than 50 audio files and five videos related to the incident.

The six other eyewitnesses included four different police officers, John Geer's father Don Geer and friend Jeff Stewart. Their stories in the investigation documents all describe a similar scene: Geer had been standing in his doorway, hands resting on the frame, speaking calmly with officer Rodney Barnes for about 40 minutes before he was shot.

"I'm comforted the officers at the scene support what I saw," said Stewart.

The detective who interviewed Barnes noted him referencing Geer as saying "he did not want to get shot and did not want anyone else to get shot." Barnes also said that before he arrived, he was told Geer had threatened the officers, but he himself "did not hear any verbal threats while he was on the scene."

Barnes described Geer as periodically asking permission to lower his hands to scratch his nose, as well as Geer asking for Torres to lower his gun. Each of the other officers had guns down and in cover position, while Torres held his raised and pointed at Geer.

Torres recounts seeing Geer quickly lower his hands to waist level, a threat provoking him to fire. The other accounts describe Geer's hands at either shoulder or ear level.

"Finally shooting him for scratching his nose," said Stewart. "Four other officers support that testimony, support that John was not a threat."

Stewart and Michael Lieberman, the lawyer representing the Geer family and Geer's longtime partner Maura Harrington in a civil suit against the county, have keyed into additional commentary in the reports that describe Torres as having just finished an argument with his wife before arriving at Geer's house. Further pages reference an incident on March 5, 2013, in which officer Torres had a "meltdown" and outburst with



John Geer standing in his doorway in Springfield, minutes before he was shot by a Fairfax County Police officer.

PHOTO COURTESY
OF MICHAEL
LIEBERMAN



COURTESY OF JEFF STEWART

John Geer

Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney Charles Peters in a courtroom. That incident became the subject of an Internal Affairs investigation by the FCPD, the results of which were not included in the discovery materials.

In his interview for the investigation, Peters referenced that internal affairs file being sought by Commonwealth Attorney Raymond F Morrogh while his office was still working on the case. FCPD refused to cooperate, Peters said.

Some have called that type of action in this case "stonewalling" by Fairfax County, including the police department and the governing body they answer to, the Board of Supervisors.

Jerry Santos, another friend of Geer's, said, "At this point, while Torres' past and his management or mismanagement remain relevant and important, it's all overcome by the cover-up by the board's and chief's and county attorney's arrogance and frankly foolishness in the manner in which they've conducted themselves in the matter of the killing of John Geer."

ONE DAY AFTER the county posted the

files on its website, Board of Supervisors Chairman Sharon Bulova and Mount Vernon Supervisor Gerry Hyland fielded questions about the Geer case at the Mount Vernon Town Hall Meeting.

Bulova held the position that this case presented unprecedented circumstances.

"Our policies have not fit with this particular scenario," Bulova said. "Do we get it? Absolutely."

Hyland responded in calm and paced phrasing. "I questioned immediately whether the force that killed him was appropriate," he said. "Now everyone pretty

much knows what happened. Obviously people have questioned whether it was just. This never takes that long with a typical case and the frustration has been awful for us."

Supervisor Pat Herrity (R-Springfield) followed the release with a statement saying: "It is a shame we are where we are," and that the latest action by the county was "making up for lost ground on transparency."

"I encourage the public to view this release as what it is," Herrity continued, "peoples' honest perceptions of the facts mixed in with hard evidence."

LIEBERMAN SAID the release is beginning to ease Don Geer's "torture" of the last 17 months being left in the dark.

"I don't know how many days he's been able to sleep through the night," said Lieberman.

Though he said he was upset at times that

nothing was going to happen with his son's case, Don Geer said the county's handing over documents, videos and audio is "encouraging."

"We're going in the right direction finally; these have been sitting around on somebody's desk and finally we're getting some action," Don Geer said.

Having witnessed the shooting himself, Don Geer was initially concerned "possibly there would be some conflicting stories," he said. But the incident report "came out exactly as I saw it," Don Geer continued. "Fortunately we were all on the same page."

Except for Torres.

Torres' internal affairs file is the subject of one of three motions Lieberman is planning to bring to court Friday, Feb. 6. "What did the county do in light of the fact Torres had a meltdown in court?" said Lieberman. "Mediation of some sort? Counseling? Did they conclude he was a loose cannon and didn't do anything

about it?" Lieberman insists the court dates won't stop there, that even though Morrogh has handed the case to the Department of Justice civil rights division, "I don't see why the state can't take another look, say we should bring it to the grand jury or raise some special prosecutor."

The county's materials, first produced under court order to the Lieberman, the Geer family and Maura Harrington on Jan. 21, can be found online at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/news/2015/geer-case-materials.htm>.

"We're going in the right direction finally; these have been sitting around on somebody's desk and finally we're getting some action,"

— Don Geer

OBITUARY

Olivia Laverne Carson, 93, of Burke, Dies

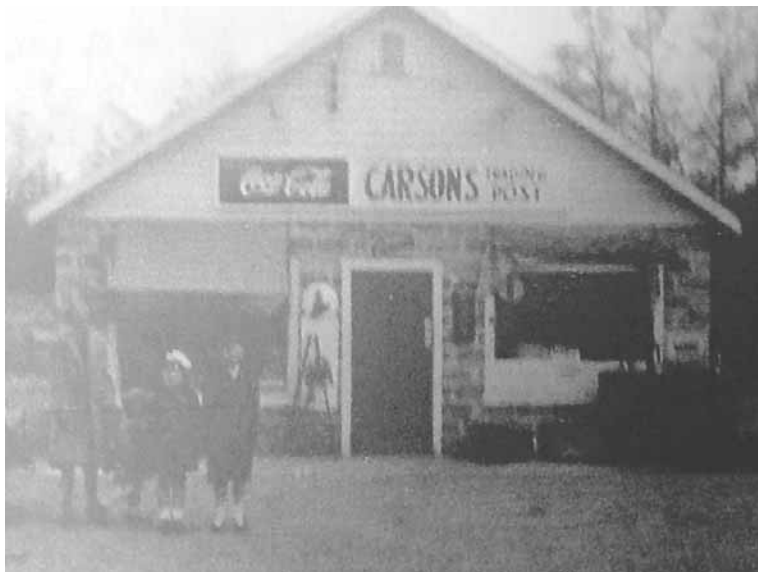
Olivia Laverne Carson died on Jan. 29, 2015 at her home of 75 years in Burke.

Daughter of the late Albert P and Clara Goss Weir, she was preceded in death by the love of her life, husband, Roy H. Carson, Sr. and son Roy H. Carson, Jr.

She was the beloved mother of LaVerne Carson, Wayne (Chip) Carson, and Janette (Jan) Carson, and the most wonderful grandmother to Matthew Carson, Katherine Webster, and Amanda Sutton as well as seven great-grandchildren.

She and her husband were pillars of Burke — and helped create the community through their generosity, leadership, and love. Everyone was welcome in their home—and many became “family” as close as blood.

They ran Carson’s Trading Post, Burke’s General Store, from 1946-1966. It was the “last store until Springfield” at a time when having stores within walking distance was key. It was the town center in many ways—a stopping and chatting place, a this-and-that place, a friendly get-to-know-you place.



Olivia Carson and her husband Roy owned Carson’s Trading Post, pictured in 1958.

For many years the Carsons owned one of the first TV’s in Burke—as well as the only telephone on Lee Chapel Road. Members of the community would often stop by to make a call or give the number to relatives near and wide. It was a common occurrence to receive calls in the middle of the night and then drive down the road to a neighbor’s home to deliver news

of a birth or a death. They were community people; helpful and kind people.

In the course of her life she worked at the store as a co-owner with her husband, Burke Post Office, drove the local school bus, and was a lifelong member of the Burke Volunteer Fire Department auxiliary. She made hundreds of cakes and pies—for every possible



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KATIE WEBSTER

Olivia Laverne Carson was a pillar of the Burke community and resident for 75 years.

fundraiser in the Burke community. In fact, she was a blue ribbon baker at the Burke Fair.

She loved and nourished every plant at her home—often referred to as “The Azalea House” on Lee Chapel Road. More than that—she loved and nourished her family, her friends and her community.

She was a gracious and generous woman who made every place she was better—just by the being there.

The family was receiving guests on Monday, Feb. 2, and services were held Tuesday, Feb. 3, at Fairfax Memorial Funeral Home, 9902 Braddock Road, Fairfax.



Family Matters

It’s a good feeling to know that help is there when you need it—the assurance that loved ones are cared for by skilled professionals who feel like family—the warm feeling of a neighborhood environment with good friends, brings with it an indescribable peace of mind.

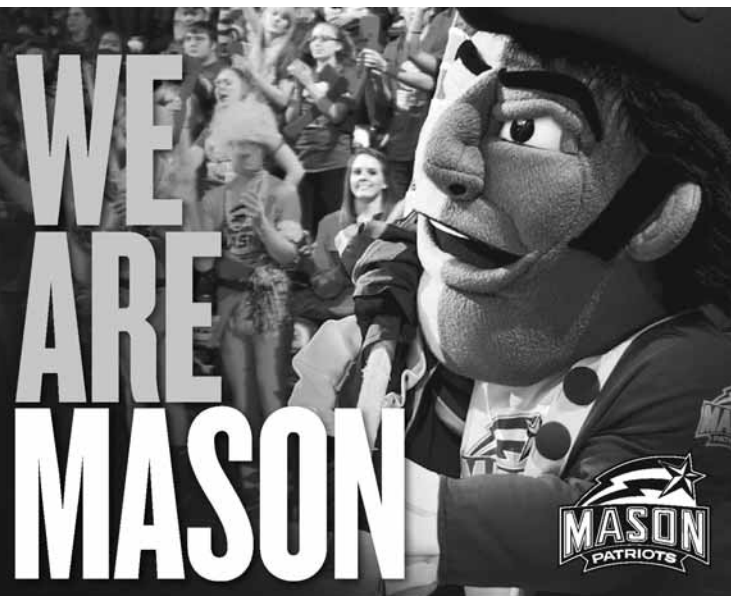
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COMMENTARY

Donate to Those Less Fortunate During National Canned Food Month

By JOHN C. COOK
SUPERVISOR (R-BRADDOCK DISTRICT)

It seems that as the memories of the holiday season fade away, so does our urgency to give. Many of us return to our daily routines, and we seem to forget that our neighbors continue to struggle to provide meals for their families. And although many continue to be in need after the holiday season, food donations drop and our food banks face shortages.

February is National Canned Food Month, and to help respond to those in need, my office will be working with local charities to help combat these shortages. Canned foods are popular in many households because of their ability to provide quick and convenient meals, and because they have a long shelf life, making them an even more important resource for food banks providing assistance throughout the year.

This is a critical issue for Fairfax County as there are an estimated 69,000 residents who are at risk of experiencing hunger. As you are browsing the overstocked shelves this weekend at your local grocery stores, please remember those less fortunate and consider giving to a community food bank.

Throughout the month of February, please bring canned food items (along with other staples like oil, flour, sugar, and spaghetti sauce) to my office and



Cook

we will disburse these much needed food items to four fantastic charities right here in our community. Giving back to the community, and helping those in need, is a gift you can give regardless of the time of year.

In case you are looking for a food bank in our area, here are some options:

ACCA - A church-related voluntary organization providing day care, food, rental assistance, furniture, and other services to low-income families in the

Annandale/Bailey's Crossroads area. Learn more at <http://accacares.org>

Food for Others - Northern Virginia's primary safety net for those needing food when an emergency strikes, and for the growing number of working poor who are unable to make ends meet. Learn more at <http://www.foodforothers.org>

ECHO - The purpose of Ecumenical Community Helping Others (ECHO), Inc. is to help people in need in our community by assisting those who suffer the effects of long-term poverty as well as people who are experiencing an emergency need. Learn more at www.echo-inc.org

Our Daily Bread - provides our Fairfax County area neighbors with short-term safety-net services and empowers them to work toward long-term self-sufficiency. Learn more at <https://www.odbfairfax.org>

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PHOTOS BY TERRANCE MORAN/THE CONNECTION

Lake Braddock Symphonic Band horn section.

Lake Braddock Band Goes National

Lake Braddock Secondary School Symphonic Band has been invited to perform at the 2015 Music for All National Festival, presented by Yamaha, the nation's most prestigious festival for school instrumental music ensemble. The 24th annual Festival will take place in Indianapolis, March 12-14.

The Symphonic Band is under the direction of Michael C. Luley and was selected to perform by a panel of music educators by recorded audition.

Lake Braddock Secondary School Symphonic Band is one of 40 high school and middle school concert band and percussion ensembles from across the nation selected to perform at the 2015 Festival. They will perform in concert, be evaluated by renowned music educators and participate in master classes and special events.

On Friday, Jan. 30, Roy Holder conducted the Symphonic Band to help prepare them for the competition. Holder was Lake Braddock's Band Director for 20 years and currently lives in Tennessee where he travels to assist other bands. "It's like being a grandfather, I can play with the kids, and then give them back to their parents," said Holder. For over an hour Holder broke down the planned piece and drilled them on tim-

ing, dynamics, and phrasing.

Friday was a non-scheduled school day, yet the entire Lake Braddock band was attending this special all-day practice session. Mike Luley, Lake Braddock Band Director, assembled a group of accomplished musicians to assist the band members in refining their skills. This group of volunteers has decades of experience playing in the Army's Pershing Own Band, Air Force Band, and other military bands in the Washington, D.C. area. Many were students of Roy Holder and have a special connection to Lake Braddock Secondary School Symphonic Band.

After the practice session with Holder the various band "groups" met with their "volunteer" expert where they drilled deeper into timing, phrasing, and dynamics.

Lake Braddock Secondary High School has a reputation as one of the better symphonic bands in the United States. Their music room is filled to the rafters with awards over the years and that is due to the continuity over the past twenty-five years between the work of Holder and his many students who now help and teach at Lake Braddock.

— TERRANCE MORAN



Lake Braddock's Band Director Mike Luley.



Ed Aston gives percussion tips to students Jack Reidy and Kelvin Chau of Burke.



From left: Aparna-Cheran-Barb of Burke; Noah Khan-Rafii of Springfield; and Tehan Dassanayaka of Springfield, at bassoon practice.

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AREA ROUNDUPS

Rodney V. Colbert Named Deputy Fire Chief

Fire Chief Richie Bowers has selected Battalion Chief Rodney V. Colbert for promotion to deputy fire chief, effective Jan. 24. Chief Colbert will be assigned as the Chief Training Officer. Since July of 2011 he has been assigned as a field battalion chief in the Operations Bureau.

Chief Colbert started his career as a recruit firefighter in April 1990, and was initially assigned to Fire and Rescue Station 19, Lorton. Career promotion and subsequent assignments include:

♦Technician, November 1993; Fire and Rescue Station 5, Franconia; Lieutenant, November 1995; Fire and Rescue Station 9, Mount Vernon; Captain I, May 2003; Fire and Rescue Station 37, Kingstowne; Captain II, Fire and Rescue Station 34, Oakton; Battalion Chief, September 2008; Resource Management, Support Services Division, Business Services Bureau.

As Chief Training Officer, he will be responsible for basic training, field training, emergency medical services training, and all volunteer training. More than 1,700 volunteer and career personnel train at the Training Academy continuously. He also supports and advises Explorer Post 1949.

Chief Colbert will complete his bachelor's

degree in Fire Service Administration, from the University of Maryland, University College, in the spring of 2015. He is also a graduate of the Paramedic Program, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. He is a member of the Fairfax County Professional Firefighters and Paramedics, Local 2068, Progressive Firefighters of Fairfax County, Inc., and the Fairfax County Professional Fire & Rescue Officers Association.

Creative Aging Festival Comes to Fairfax County.

The Arts Council of Fairfax County invites submissions by Feb. 20, 2015, from arts organizations and arts programmers to participate in the Creative Aging Festival which will be held in May 2015.

The Creative Aging Festival, sponsored by Fairfax County, AARP Virginia and 12 other community organizations, will feature a wide range of arts programs including poetry, visual arts, theater, dance and music. The Creative Aging Festival supports Fairfax County's 50+ Community Action Plan's initiative to promote arts programming for 50+ adults.

Detailed festival and application information can be found at <http://artsfairfax.org/news/creative-aging-festival>.

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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

An Open Letter to Virginia Delegates

Dear Delegate:

Many of you know our story well. We are the parents of Morgan Harrington. Morgan, a student at Virginia Tech, went to a rock concert in Charlottesville in 2009 and never came home. Her remains were found 100 days later.

We've made it our life's work in honor of Morgan to support victims of sexual assaults and to make sure that all students are safe on our college campuses – even if they're just visiting.

That's why we're asking for your support of HB 1343, a bipartisan bill by Delegate Eileen Filler-Corn and Chief Co-Patron Dave Albo.

Once a victim reports a sexual assault to campus and/or local law enforcement, HB 1343 calls for the local Commonwealth's Attorney to be notified within 48 hours of the reported incident.

We agree with Del. Filler-Corn who said: “By passing this bill, we can show victims that we will not

tolerate sexual assault on campus. We can show them they can have faith in our justice system.”

Chairman Albo has said that this “bill ensures that allegations of sexual assaults on college campuses will receive the same level of attention by police and prosecutors that off campus sexual assaults receive. This bill strengthens our justice system and encourages collaboration between victims, college staff, police and prosecutors.”

The reality is that too often sexual assaults aren't reported to the police.

A December report by the U.S. Justice Department found that 80% of students do not report rape and sexual assaults to the police.

That same report also found that fewer than one in five female student victims received assistance from a victim services agency.

This is where HB 1343 can make a difference.

HB 1343 works to restore victims' faith in the justice system and to show that they will be heard and supported. The bill expedites investigation of the case once reported to campus law enforcement, while ensuring the proper course of action, due process and any necessary legal filings are completed.

It also lets each Commonwealth's Attorney's Office Victim/Witness program get involved early on in the investigation, which helps provide counseling and can help educate a victim about her or his options going forward with a criminal prosecution.

Supporters of the bill include: Michael R. Doucette, Commonwealth's Attorney for the City of Lynchburg; Mary Gavin, City of Falls Church Chief of Police; Stacey Kincaid, Fairfax County Sheriff; Denise Lunsford, Commonwealth's Attorney for

Albemarle County; Trina Murphy, Aunt of Alexis Murphy, Help Save the Next Girl supporters

Ray Morrogh, Commonwealth's Attorney for Fairfax County; Virginia Sheriffs Association, representing 95 sheriffs; Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

We know this bill isn't a silver bullet when it comes to the complex problem of solving campus sexual assaults. But it is a good first step and that's what is needed.

Passing this bill can help us make sure that all students are safe on our college campuses.

We urge you to join us and support passage of HB 1343.

Gil and Dan Harrington
Parents of Morgan Harrington
Founders of Help Save the Next Girl

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NEWS

Silas Burke House Stays, Sunrise Gets Closer

New language in rezoning application passes to supervisors.

BY TIM PETERSON
THE CONNECTION

Though once home to Burke's enterprising namesake Silas, the stately white house he built circa 1824 and the property overlooking Burke Lake Road aren't actually owned by the county. "The neighborhood just seemed to adopt it as their own property," said Terry Neal, who has owned the estate with his wife Suzanne "Suzi" Fowler Neal. "Someone would complain because the windmill wasn't going around, wondering when the grass was going to get cut."

For years, Terry and Suzi maintained the nearly 200-year-old house and the grounds, the place where Suzi grew up. Her family purchased the home in 1925 from Henry Copperthite, a businessman originally from Connecticut who specialized in pie-making and built the Burke Racetrack.

But for the current Chantilly residents, the labor became too much to handle. "We looked long and hard for someone we could feel comfortable turning it over to," said Neal, "someone to care for the house."

FOR THE LAST YEAR, Neal and his wife have had the property under contract with Sunrise Senior Living, an organization looking to build an 82-unit, 54,000 gross-square-foot structure there.

"We're working together and committed to saving the house," said Sunrise Chief Financial Officer Edward Burnett. "The use interacts well. Using the slope [down behind the Burke house] to hide the new building would keep the Burke house as the prominent feature."



The rendering from Sunrise shows the existing Silas Burke house on the left, with a concept for the Sunrise community behind the house on the right.

Burnett said Sunrise has agreed to maintain the house in perpetuity and proffer it to the county, opening it for various groups to use. The deal with Sunrise came up for clarification at the Jan. 29 meeting of the Fairfax County Planning Commission. In order for Sunrise to proceed with their facility, the land needs to be rezoned as R-3, allowing two-to-three dwelling units per acre. The commission, acknowledging some confusion in the public understanding of the proposal to the Board of Supervisors, passed a slight change in the staff report.

The new language states: "The Silas Burke House should be retained and preserved in accordance with The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, with commitment to an active use for the house."

The change was from "active adaptive reuse," that had some citizens worried the house might be torn down.

"We've received lots of feedback from folks in Burke, Springfield and beyond, saying it must be preserved," said commission chair Peter Murphy. "There is nothing before the Planning Commission alluding to or concentrating on the destruction of this

SEE HOUSE, PAGE 19

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WELLBEING

Mental Health First Aid

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Leslie 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



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

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

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 typi-

cally 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.'"

For information on schedule of classes, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/events/mental-health-first-aid.htm.

Free and Low-Cost Dental Care for Children

Special programs available as part of National Children's Dental Health Month.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Dental hygiene should start even before a baby's first tooth emerges. That is one of the messages that dental professionals are hoping to convey this month.

February is designated National Children's Dental Health Month, organized by the American Dental Association, along with the ADA Foundation, to raise awareness about the benefits of good oral health for children. Dental professionals stress children should brush for two minutes twice per day, floss and rinse daily, eat healthy meals, limit snacks and visit the dentist regularly.

"To get babies comfortable with oral hygiene, begin cleaning the baby's mouth by wiping the gums and tongue with a moist washcloth or gauze shortly after birth until teeth erupt into the mouth," said Jeanne Yang, DDS, a public health dentist at the Joseph Willard Health Center's dental clinic in the City of Fairfax. "It is recommended that parents bring children to their first dentist appointment preferably within 6 months of when the first tooth appears, but no later than their first birthday. And, always, always, always use a soft toothbrush, whether you are 1 or 100. A soft toothbrush should be used by all ages."

Local health departments want the public to know that a child's dental care need not depend on a family's ability to afford such services. Many Northern Virginia dental clinics offer free or low-cost dental examinations, cleanings, fluoride applications, restorative services including fillings and even limited oral surgeries.

"We have three children's dental clinics in Fairfax County," said Tina Dale of the Fairfax County Health Department. The county's clinics are in Mount Vernon, Fairfax and Reston. "Our dental program is just for children. Their family's income has to be at a level where they meet Medicaid criteria."

The Northern Virginia Dental Society is also hosting a "Give a Kids a Smile Project" on Saturday, Feb. 6 at the Northern Virginia Community College (NOVA) Medical Education Campus in Springfield. The project will join dentists and dental hygiene students from NOVA with other community volunteers to offer dental services to underserved children, including pre-school students in Arlington County's Head



PHOTO COURTESY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dr. Howard Ngo works on a young patient at Northern Virginia Community College's Medical Education Campus in Springfield, as part of the Give Kids a Smile Program.

Dental Service Programs

Fairfax County Health Department
♦ Joseph Willard Health Center: 3750 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax; 703-246-7100.
♦ Herndon/Reston Office: 1850 Cameron Glen Drive, Suite 100, Reston; 703-481-4242.
♦ Mount Vernon Office: 8350 Richmond Highway, Suite 233, Alexandria; 703-704-6181.

Start program.

"A huge number of children have dental disease earlier and earlier," said Kathy A. Thompson of Northern Virginia Community College. "This is an opportunity to get them excited about dental care and give them information on how to take care of their teeth, and introduce them to what it's like to go the dentist."

The slogan for the 2015 campaign is "Defeat Monster Mouth." It's plastered on posters that depict dental superheroes fighting to defeat "Plaquer the Monster" for good oral health. Dental providers are hoping to teach children and parents about the timing of a first dental visit, how to brush and floss properly, the effect of thumb sucking

on teeth and the importance of regular dental examinations. Although the observance is a month long, health department officials keep up the effort year-round.

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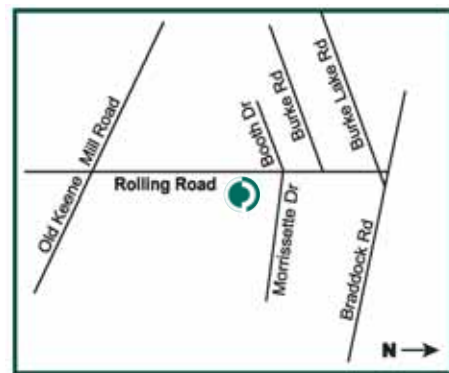
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Pancakes, Candy, Fudge, Ice Cream and More

Fairfax's Chocolate Lovers Festival is Feb. 7-8.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Get your sweet tooth ready – the 23rd annual City of Fairfax Chocolate Lovers Festival is this weekend, Feb. 7-8.

Featuring delicious, chocolate fun for both children and adults, the event includes a Taste of Chocolate, a Chocolate Challenge, musical performances, a chocolate movie – “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory” – fairy tales, a fire-safety puppet show, face-painting, a Chocolate Caper mock trial, cupcake-decorating, magic, juggling and open houses in historic buildings.

A Chocolate Express will provide free, shuttle service between event locations. It'll run Saturday, Feb. 7, from 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 8, from 11:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

The fun begins Saturday at Fire Station 3, at 4081 University Drive, with the annual, Kiwanis Club Pancake Breakfast and Bake Sale, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Feast on regular or chocolate-chip pancakes, plus sausage, coffee, juice and milk. Cost is \$7, adults; \$4, children ages 4-10. Children 3 and under eat free with a paying adult (limit two children per adult). Face-painting will be available.

The Taste of Chocolate will be held Saturday, Feb. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, Feb. 8, from noon-4 p.m., on both floors of the Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive (corner of Main Street and University Drive).

Attendees may feast on a vast array of chocolate cakes, chocolate candies and bars, chocolate-covered strawberries, fudge and ice cream. There'll even be chocolate fountains into which people may dip fruit, cream-filled doughnut holes or marshmallows. Admission is free; visitors buy pogs for \$1 each and then browse around the vendors' tables to check out the wide array of chocolate treats being offered. When something catches their fancy, they pay for it in pogs.

There's also the Chocolate Challenge com-

Allie Moss, 7, is about to eat a chocolate-covered marshmallow.



Where to Park

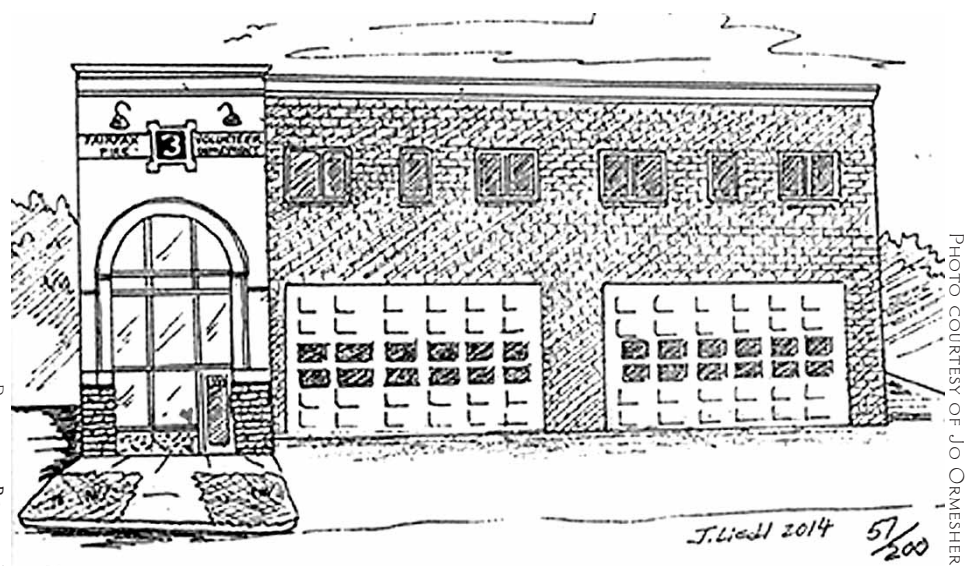
Free parking is available at the following locations, with handicapped parking offered at all sites, except for Sager Avenue:

- ❖ **Bank of America**, 10440 Main St. (accessible from Route 236 and North Street).
- ❖ **City Hall**, 10455 Armstrong St. (accessible from Route 123/Chain Bridge Road and George Mason Boulevard).
- ❖ **City of Fairfax Regional Library**, 10360 North St. (accessible from University Drive and Old Lee Highway).
- ❖ **East Street parking lot** (accessible from Route 236/Main Street and East Street).
- ❖ **Fairfax County Courthouse Garage B**, 4400 Chain Bridge Road (accessible from Page Avenue).
- ❖ **Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center**, 10209 Main St.
- ❖ **Fire Station 3**, 4081 University Drive.
- ❖ **Old Town Plaza**, 3955 Chain Bridge Road (accessible from Route 123/Chain Bridge Road and University Drive).
- ❖ **Old Town Village** (behind Pacer's, 10427 North St.) Open at noon Saturday and all day Sunday; (accessible from University Drive).
- ❖ **Sager Avenue parking lot** (accessible from Sager Avenue and University Drive).

petition to see who can make the most beautiful and creative chocolate sculptures, cakes and cupcakes. It's held at the Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive, and runs Feb. 7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Feb. 8, from noon-4 p.m.

Both professionals and amateurs participate, and judges and visitors judge them in various categories. Donated cakes and other items will be open for silent-auction bidding through Feb. 8 at 2:30 p.m. Admission is \$1/adult; children under 18 are free.

For a complete list of events, plus their times and addresses, go to www.chocolatefestival.net.



The 2015 Valentine features Fire Station 3 in Fairfax.

Chocolate Cookbook and Valentine

It's always fun to bring home souvenirs from the Chocolate Festival, and two of them are the official, Chocolate Lovers Festival Cookbook and the annual, commemorative Valentine.

❖ The cookbook features recipes with chocolate as an ingredient and includes snacks, appetizers, main courses, soups, salads and, of course, desserts. Recipes were submitted by chocolate fans from around the nation.

The newest edition of the cookbook may be purchased during the festival, Feb. 7, at the Pancake Breakfast, Taste of Chocolate, Ford House and Chocolate Challenge. On Feb. 8, it'll be available at both the Taste of Chocolate and the Chocolate Challenge.

Current-edition cookbooks are \$10 each and may be bought at the Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St. (703-

385-8414). Make checks payable to the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee.

Mail orders are accepted; there's a \$4 charge per book for postage and handling. Submit requests to the Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee, City Hall, Room 123, 10455 Armstrong St., Fairfax, VA 22030.

❖ The valentine for the 2015 Chocolate Lovers Festival features Fire Station 3, drawn by local artist Jackie Liedl. These limited-edition valentines cost \$5, and each one includes a coupon for five, \$1 pogs for use at the Taste of Chocolate. Valentines may be purchased at: City Hall, 10455 Armstrong St., Room 123 (Parks and Recreation Department), weekdays, from 8:30 a.m.- 5 p.m.; Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St., daily, from 9 a.m.- 5 p.m.; or from any member of the Independence Day Celebration Committee.

Meals for Young Minds

The Chocolate Lovers Festival Committee is again supporting the Fairfax Kiwanis Meals for Young Minds Program with multiple, food drop-off locations during the festival. This program provides meals to local, elementary-school students who don't have food to eat on the weekends.

Each child receives a gallon-size bag filled with child-friendly, nonperishable, nutritious food items to last over the weekend. Since its inception in 2010, the program has expanded to support students at three local elementary schools.

Each bag contains two breakfasts: oatmeal, small cereal box, granola bars and other breakfast foods; two lunches: cheese and crackers, cup of soup and similar items; two dinners: easy-cook macaroni and cheese, beef ravioli, tuna and similar foods;

plus two or three snacks: applesauce, pudding, fruit cup, fruit roll-ups and other snacks. These and similar child-friendly, nonperishable food items will be collected as follows:

Saturday, Feb. 7:

8 a.m.-1 p.m. - Fire Station 3, 4081 University Drive (during the Pancake Breakfast); 9 a.m.-5 p.m. - Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center, 10209 Main St.; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. - Historic Fairfax Courthouse, 4000 Chain Bridge Road; 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Nutrition Kitchen, 3950 University Drive; and 10 a.m.-5 p.m. - City of Fairfax Regional Library, 10360 North St.

Sunday, Feb. 8:

9 a.m.-5 p.m. - Fairfax Museum and Visitor Center; noon-4 p.m. - Nutrition Kitchen; and noon-4 p.m., City of Fairfax Regional Library.

A Chat with the Event Chairman

Leslie Herman is this year's Chocolate Festival committee chairman, and she and her committee of more than a dozen people have been hard at work on the event since the fall.

They represent several of the organizations involved in the festival events, including the Fairfax Bar Association, Fairfax City Regional Library, Friends of

Fairfax, GMU Department of Nutrition and Food Studies, Independence Day Celebration Committee, Kiwanis Club of Fairfax, Fairfax County Retired Educators, Patriot Harley Owners Group, Woman's Club of Fairfax and the City of Fairfax.

"There are many things I enjoy about being chairman," said Herman. "I enjoy working with a great group of people who draw

upon the volunteers from their organizations and resources to provide a fabulous chocolate event. It's wonderful to rely on so many others to make the Chocolate Lovers Festival happen.

"I also love the new and creative events the committee suggests to add to the festival to continue to keep it fresh and exciting," she continued. "Last year we added

Chocolate and a Movie, and this year we've added the Sweet History Walking Tour. And with the [completion] of Old Town Square, we're excited to start brainstorming on what we can add new next year." Herman says the variety of chocolate activities for all ages that touch all five senses makes the Chocolate Lovers Festival so special."

ENTERTAINMENT



Andy Ilachinski describes his colorful, powerful and magically manipulated images as “Synesthetic Landscapes,” referencing the psychological, creative – even mystical – experience of synesthesia, a joining of the senses (smelling sounds, hearing colors, feeling shape) to communicate a point of view to another through his photographs. View his photos through Feb. 9 at the Jewish Community Center of Northern Virginia, 8900 Little River Turnpike, Fairfax.

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline is the Friday prior to the next paper's publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THROUGH SUNDAY/FEB. 8

Dressing for the Occasion: An Exhibition of Costumes and Textiles Representing Fairfax Personalities and Events. Exhibition. Fairfax Museum & Visitor Center, 10209 Main Street, Fairfax. Open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. 703-385-8414.

THROUGH MONDAY/FEB. 9

The Bravura Ensemble - Chamber Music Classics. 8 p.m. Old Town Hall, 3999 University Drive, Fairfax. The Bravura Ensemble is a Washington D.C.-based chamber group devoted to performing chamber music repertoire ranging from 18th-century works to modern-day music. Clarinetist Albert Hunt earned a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree from The Juilliard School and has performed around the world as a soloist and chamber musician. He has also played in orchestras such as the Cleveland Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, and the Orchestra of St. Luke's. Violinist Rachelle Betancourt is a member of the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra in Germany and is an international competition winner. She frequently performs solo and chamber music recitals in the Americas and in Europe. Come join us for an evening of chamber music featuring clarinet, piano and strings.

SATURDAY/JAN. 31 - SUNDAY/APRIL 5

Reference. W-16 - Vulcan Gallery, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Reference is a multi-media exploration of the various modes of influence that inform visual artists in both content and process. In Reference, participating artists incorporate performance, sound, process, and imagery to address the strong influence of other artists, visual and otherwise, upon their creative output as well as their deepest philosophical and spiritual understandings. No ticket required. www.workhousearts.org. 703-584-2900.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 4 - SUNDAY/MARCH 8

Julia Galloway. Building W-8, Workhouse Arts Center, 9518 Workhouse Way, Lorton. Julia Galloway is a utilitarian potter and professor. She is currently the Director of the School of Art and Professor at the University of Montana, Missoula. Julia makes

useful pottery working at a mid-range firing at c6 in a soda kiln and re-firing her pottery at low temperatures to develop rich glaze surfaces. She combines wheel throwing and hand building techniques to make her pottery. No ticket required. 703-584-2900.

FRIDAY/FEB. 6

Friday Night Film Series: Ivory Tower. 7-9:30 p.m. Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church, 10215 Lakehaven Drive, Burke. As tuition rates spiral beyond reach and student loan debt passes \$1 trillion (more than credit card debt), IVORY TOWER asks: Is college worth the cost? From the halls of Harvard, to public colleges in financial crisis, to Silicon Valley, filmmaker Andrew Rossi assembles an urgent portrait of a great American institution at the breaking point. This is a non-religious event open to the public. www.accotinkuuc.org, administrator@accotinkuuc.org

SATURDAY/ FEB. 7

10th Annual Seed Exchange: Co-Host Washington Gardener Magazine. 12:30 - 4 p.m. Historic Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Bring your extra seeds to swap. Event includes swaps, lectures, planting advice and goody bag. \$15 for FROGS & Washington Gardener Magazine subscribers, \$20 for general public. Registration at 703-642-5173.

Cool Cow Comedy Presents:

Robert Mac. Workhouse Arts Center, 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. 7p.m. and 9 p.m. Ages 16 & up.*** CLEAN SHOW. The 9 p.m. performance is a fundraiser benefiting Girls Scouts Service Unit 5208. \$20. Come to Cool Cow Comedy's for entertainment! Each month headliners and featured performers take the stage in the W-3 Theatre. Host and Comedian Rahmein Mostafavi has performed outstanding stand-ups in the DC Improv, Richmond Funny Bone and Caroline's on Broadway.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY/FEB 7-8

Chocolate Lovers Festival. 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. City of Fairfax. The scrumptious and fun-filled weekend features everything from a competition to see who can make the most beautiful and creative chocolate sculptures, cakes and cupcakes to a chocolate-themed movie and a luscious sampling of chocolate treats from area vendors. It's also a chance to buy mouthwatering presents for Valentine's Day. <http://www.chocolatefestival.net/>

SUNDAY/FEB. 8

T-TRAK Model Train Show. 1-4 p.m.

Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. 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 phone 703-425-9225.

National Concert Band. 3 p.m.

Fairfax High School, 3501 Rebel Run Road, Fairfax. In celebration of its 40th anniversary season, the National Concert Band, founded by retired members of the D.C. Services Bands, will perform Gustav Holst's The Planets Op. 32. Here's an opportunity to hear the complete seven-movement suite, each named after a planet of the solar system and its corresponding astrological character, in live performance. Tickets are \$10 General Admission, \$5 Senior/Military. Students/Children are free with a paying adult. For more information, visit www.nationalconcertband.org.

Winter Lecture: Seasonal Floral

Windowsill Displays In Tune with Nature. 1:30 - 2:30 p.m. Historic Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria. Designer Nancy Ross Hugo inspires to create a simple seasonal windowsill arrangement, showcasing techniques with leaves, flowers and twigs in various flower pots. Foral supplies sales and book signing on site. \$10. (out-of-county and walk-ins \$12.)

Register online at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/greenspring using code 290 182 4401 or call 703-642-5173.-

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 11

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Local Prep Football Coaches React to End of Super Bowl XLIX

Majority say they would have called a run play from 1-yard line.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Tony 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 Bowl."



CONNECTION FILE PHOTO

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

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 responded 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 pos-

sibility 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.

"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."

— Lake Braddock football coach Jim Poythress

"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.

Whitman (Bethesda, Md.) head coach Jim Kuhn said he would have run the ball in the final minute of the Super Bowl, but added Carroll would have been praised if the pass play had worked.

"I would have run my zone read with Lynch," Kuhn wrote. "He hadn't been stopped for less than a yard all game. He's going to at least fall forward and if the [defensive end] came hard down the line, Wilson keeps and walks into the end zone. ... Again, it's easy to second guess. If that pass is complete and the Hawks win the SB, we're all talking about what a great, gutsy call it is."

"People criticize coaches all the time, it's part of the job. You have to have thick skin and get over it. If you dwell on it, it will ruin your coaching career."

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

SEE COACHES, PAGE 15

SPORTS

Hayfield's Overstreet Wins C6 Bars Title Despite Back Trouble

Fairfax's Barborek qualifies for regionals, wins beam title.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

Hayfield gymnast Molly Overstreet is a two-time state champion, but her junior year has been marred by lower-back pain.

Years of competing has taken a toll on Overstreet's body. On a scale of 1-10, Overstreet said her back pain is a 6 during meets, and a constant 3 or 4 during everyday life.

Overstreet captured a three-way share of the state vault championship as a freshman in 2013. The following year, she won the state bars title with a VHSL-record score of 9.925. Due to back pain, however, she spent most of the 2014-15 season unable to give her best effort.

"I've definitely watered down most of my routines for the preseason," she said.

On Feb. 2, Overstreet competed at the Conference 6 championship meet at McLean High School. The result was a conference bars title and a berth in the 6A North region meet as an all-around competitor.

Overstreet won the bars event with a score of 9.5. She tied for seventh on floor (8.8), finished 13th on vault (8.85) and came in 16th on beam (8.525).

She finished eighth in the all-around with a total of 35.675.

The top four all-around finishers qualify for regionals, along with any gymnast who totals a score of 35 or better. The top eight advance in each event, along with any gymnast who scores a 9.0 or better.

Overstreet said she'd like to add to her bar routine for the 6A North region meet, scheduled for Feb. 11 at Lake Braddock Secondary School.

After last year's state-record performance on bars, does Overstreet feel pressure to perform at a high level?

"Definitely, yes," Overstreet said. "I just try to do my best and have fun, but there always will be that pressure because I was



Hayfield's Molly Overstreet earned a berth in the 6A North region meet as an all-around competitor.

"I just try to do my best and have fun, but there always will be that pressure because I was the state champ."

— Hayfield gymnast Molly Overstreet

the state champ."

Joining Overstreet as an all-around gymnast at regionals will be Fairfax senior Rachel Barborek, who placed fourth at the



Fairfax senior Rachel Barborek won the Conference 6 beam championship on Feb. 2 at McLean High School.

Conference 6 meet with a total of 36.25. She won the conference beam championship (9.425), placed second on floor (9.5), finished 11th on vault (9.025) and tied for 12th on bars (8.3).

Washington-Lee senior Sophie Hatcher won the all-around title with a score of 37.625.

"It feels so good because at all my other meets, I didn't ever hit all four [events] — I always had some mistake — but today I hit all four and I'm really happy," she said. "This is the best meet I've ever had in all my four years of high school."

McLean's Jacqueline Green finished runner-up (36.625) and Lizzy Brown-Kaiser

was third (36.425).

McLean won its fourth consecutive Liberty District/Conference 6 championship with a score of 143. Washington-Lee finished runner-up (142.225), earning the conference's other regional team berth.

Yorktown was third (141), Fairfax (125.275), Hayfield (121.1), South Lakes (115.125), Madison (108.7) and Langley (81.3).

"It's a really great feeling because this is our senior year and there was a lot of pressure to keep our conference championship title [streak]," Highlanders senior Lizzy Brown-Kaiser said, "so it feels great to fulfill that."

Local Prep Football Coaches React to End of Super Bowl XLIX

FROM PAGE 14

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.

For now, there are plenty of reminders of the gut-wrenching loss coming from fans and the media.

"When I was a boy, my parents used to tell me to, 'consider the source' when being maligned," Poythress wrote. "I would like to meet the reader of these words who knows more football than Pete Carroll or Darrell Bevell."

Robinson Middle Takes on Rydell High in 'Grease'

Though none of the actors are in high school, Katie Jenkins believes her cast will have no problem bringing the students of the famed, fictional Rydell High to life.

"Robinson is a secondary school," said the middle school theater arts director, "so the kids are exposed to high school life earlier, with pep rallies, being mentored by high school athletes and working alongside high school theater students. It gives the students a more realistic grasp of what that's like."

The synergy between middle and high school drama programs has created a developmental pipeline, with younger students benefiting from the experience of upperclassmen and older students seeing the opportunity to expand their skills.

For the somewhat toned down "school version" of Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey's musical "Grease," the choreographer is Robinson junior Jessica Israel and junior Mady Hanton is stage manager.

"Mady joined the theater program in eighth grade," said



Eighth-graders Jenna Earhart (left) and Dante Estrada (right) rehearse as Sandy Dumbrowski and Danny Zuko, respectively, in the Robinson Middle School production of "Grease."

Jenkins. "Now she's commanding this whole thing."

Another challenge being met by the young thespians is finding per-

spective on the story's portrayal of gender roles and sexism from half a century ago. "How do you change who you are so the boy

likes you?" said Jenkins.

In the Robinson production, the lead roles of Sandy Dumbrowski and Danny Zuko (played by eighth

Where and When

Friday Feb. 13 at 7 p.m., Saturday 14 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., and Sunday 15 at 2 p.m at Robinson Secondary School, 5035 Sideburn Road, Fairfax. Tickets are \$12, available online at www.robinsondrama.org and at the door.

graders Jenna Earhart and Dante Estrada) are meant to be deeper, more nuanced and stronger than their Olivia Newton-John and John Travolta counterparts.

"My Danny is more two-sided," said Estrada. "He's the guy's guy personality and then a total wreck with this one girl."

Earhart, who played Glinda in Robinson's production of "The Wiz," intends for Sandy to be less shy than normal. "My Sandy goes more out of her comfort zone, because she cares about this guy," she said. "When I play her, she keeps more respect for herself; the movie doesn't convey that as much."

— TIM PETERSON

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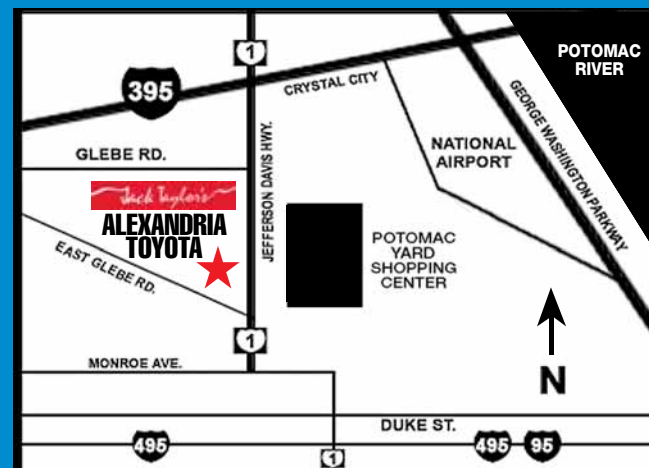
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News



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Del. Eileen Filler-Corn's (D-41)

Del. Filler-Corn's 'CARE Act' Passes the House

Del. Eileen Filler-Corn's (D-41) HB 1413 passed the full House of Delegates on Tuesday, Feb. 3, 2015. HB 1413 or the "CARE Act" addresses the important role of the informal and family caregivers and improved communication with them and medical providers. Specifically, the bill looks to improve healthcare and reduce preventable hospital revisits by having hospitals formally acknowledge a patient's family caregiver at the time of admission and provide critical home care instruction before discharge.

"In Virginia today we know that the majority of older Virginia residents want to live independently at home. Family caregivers in Virginia help their loved ones achieve this. They are there when a person in need wakes up, when they fall asleep and in between. Simply put, they are the bedrock and foundation of our long term care system," said Del. Filler-Corn.

The CARE Act will also strengthen the link between hospital care and home based care, an interface of critical importance that will need continued attention. "Many fam-

ily caregivers perform a variety of nursing/medical tasks once provided only in hospitals. However, most family caregivers receive little or no training to do these tasks," added Del. Filler-Corn.

Almost half of family caregivers reported they never received training to perform tasks of the kind and complexity once provided only in hospitals. "There is a need for HB 1413 and I believe that it is in the best interest of Virginia to implement this legislation," continued Delegate Filler-Corn.

Most Virginians who receive assistance at home rely exclusively on unpaid family caregivers for help. In fact, family caregivers provide unpaid care valued at about \$11.7 billion annually.

"Delegate Filler-Corn understands the critical role family caregivers play in hospital transitions and in keeping their loved ones from being rehospitalized. We are grateful for her leadership. Family caregivers have a big responsibility and this bill will make their lives a little easier," said David DeBiasi, Associate State Director of AARP Virginia.

House

FROM PAGE 9

house." Jon Vrana, president of the Burke Historical Society who often portrays Col. Burke, was at the meeting on Jan. 29. "Our focus is careful protection of the house," he said. "With the language, it's clear from what we've seen, we've gotten good support." "We believe it's a positive thing for the neighborhood," Neal said of the Sunrise development, "for the security of the home."

THE NEXT STEP is for the language change to go before the Board of Supervisors for approval. Then's it's back to the Planning Commission for the rezoning application. The tentative date for that meeting is March 19, though the public is advised to check agendas through the commission website at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/planning.

BULLETIN BOARD

Send notes to the Connection at south@connectionnewspapers.com or call 703-778-9416. The deadline for submissions is the Friday prior to publication. Dated announcements should be submitted at least two weeks prior to the event.

THURSDAY/FEB. 12

Overcoming Isolation and Setting up a Social Network/ 3 p.m. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. Come and discuss strategies to help you maintain or develop a social network and reduce the risk of isolation. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.

WEDNESDAY/FEB. 18

Diagnosis Dementia...Now What? 1:30 pm. Insight Memory Care Center, 3953 Pender Drive, Suite 100, Fairfax. This discussion will help you start planning for the future, while also adjusting to a new life with someone who has dementia. Call 703-204-4664 to RSVP and for more information.



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