

New grad Trong Bui of Chantilly
with his mom, Hong Le.

Chantilly CONNECTION

Fair Oaks ♦ Fair Lakes

Overcoming Adversity, Achieving Success

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'Start with a Box of Metal'

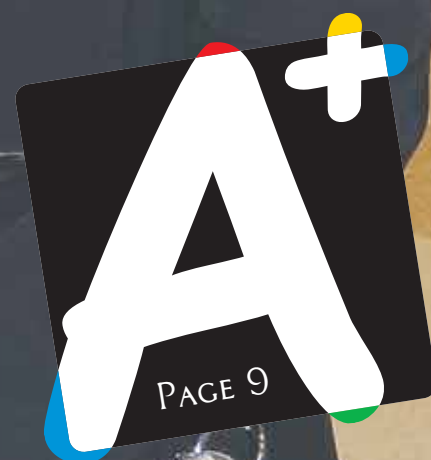
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PHOTO BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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Student speaker Zubeyda Tebra receives her diploma from Acting Principal Lee Holt.



Tom Orellana receives the Personal Achievement Award from Anne Hoffman.



Jeff Jones presents the Personal Achievement Award to Alejandra Gonzalez.



Veronica Perez (left) receives the Citizenship Award from Michelle Ohanian.

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

Overcoming Adversity, Achieving Success

Mountain View holds winter graduation.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

New Centreville High Principal Dave Jagels is no longer Mountain View High's leader, but he still kicked off the school's winter graduation last week with a heartfelt address to the new grads.

The ceremony was held Tuesday, Feb. 10, in Centreville's auditorium, and it seemed like old times as Jagels gave his welcome speech, congratulating the seniors on "this momentous occasion."

"Many students who come to Mountain View have been broken by circumstances or failure, and that led them to believe they

weren't good enough," he said. "But at Mountain View – with its motto of 'Family, Love and Respect' – the belief is that any student, armed with the right tools, can be successful."

Jagels said the school has helped "change the direction of people's lives" by putting a premium on relationship-building and on "a connectedness that unites us all." He also noted that it makes students more responsible when they realize that every person contributes to the success of the whole.

"The timber wolf is the school's mascot," he told the students. "And like them, you can change your own environment, as well, and even change the course of the lives of

SEE GRADUATION, PAGE 5



Student speaker Dibora Eshete



Counselor Ellen Fay (on right) gives the Faculty Award to Maggie Zhong.



New grad Veronica Perez (third from left) of Centreville with (from left) in-laws Jose Yucra and Cristina Pereyra, husband Brian Gamboa, mom Ivonne Pina and sisters Tania, Martha and Diana Perez. In front, from left, are Veronica's daughter, Stephanie Rivera, 4, and Tania's daughter, Brisa Perez, 2.



Centreville's Brianna Richardson (with flowers) celebrates her graduation with (from left) nieces Chinnell and Makayla Watson, friend Jody Green, dad Jerry Richardson and friend Taleah Thompson.

'You Start with a Box of Metal'

Local robotics team heads to two state championships.

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

It's a big deal when a team, academic or athletic, reaches the state championships. But it's even more impressive when that team does it in two, different states.

Meet team Robowiz — 10 local students who've reached that level in both Virginia and Maryland. The eight boys and two girls live in Centreville, Chantilly and Fairfax and are in grades eight through 10.

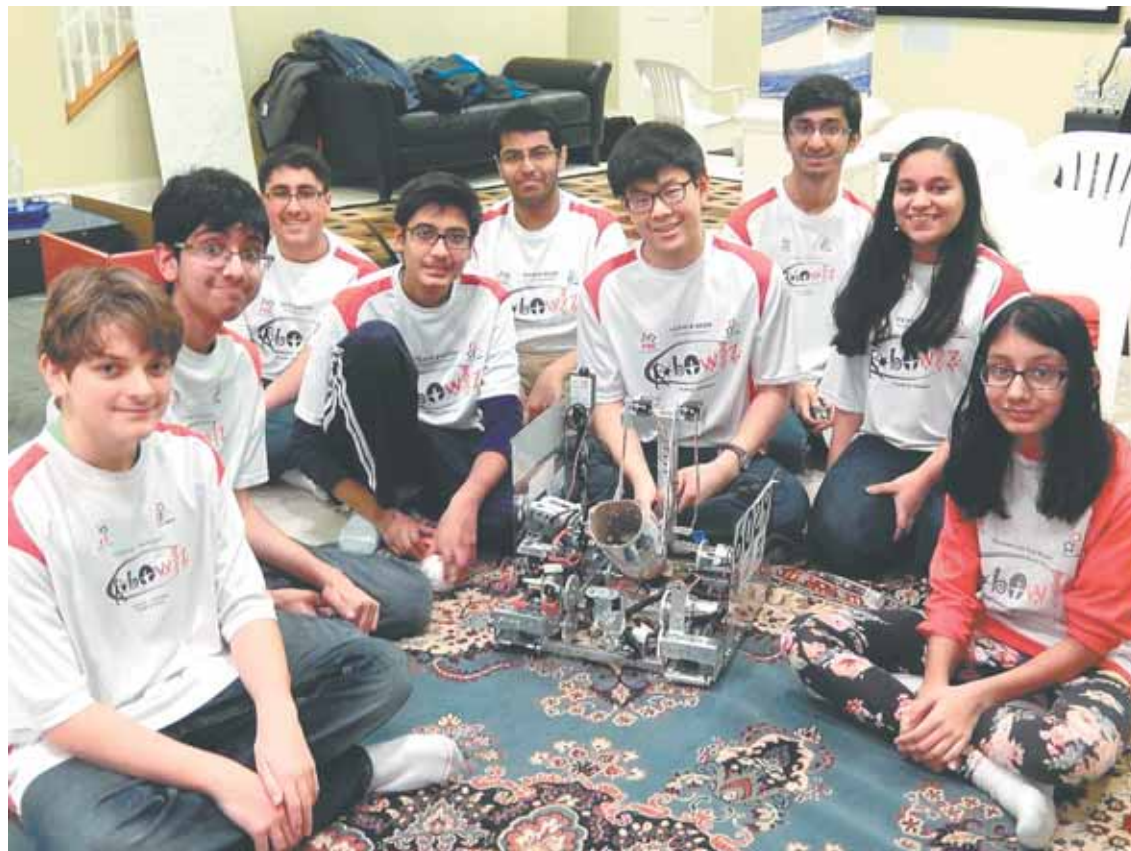
"Over the last eight years, my co-coaches Jugnu Agrawal and Ashish Kulkarni and I have seen unsure, tentative and sometimes shy elementary-schoolers turn into bright, young, patient and articulate high-schoolers," said head coach Suprotik Ghose. "They help other teams at tournaments, yet compete professionally in the robot matches."

The teammates meet a few times a week at Kulkarni's Fair Lakes home to work on their robot and prepare for competition. They vie under the auspices of FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), which encourages young people to be science and technology leaders, plus well-rounded and self-confident.

Robowiz won top honors in the FTC (FIRST Tech Challenge) Jan. 31 at the North Central Virginia FTC Tournament in Orange County. It took home the overall Champions Award (Inspire) and was captain of the robot, game-winning alliance. Both awards automatically qualified Robowiz for states.

"What makes it special was that the kids were aware of a rule supposedly preventing them from winning the Inspire award twice — they had also won Inspire in Maryland, a couple weeks earlier," said Ghose. "They immediately told the tournament director, but the Virginia FTC hadn't faced this situation before."

After the director spoke with USFIRST



Surrounding their robot are (from left) Cedric Bernard, Shomik Ghose, Saarthak Sethi, Josal Patel, Abhishek Mishra, Jami Park, Adarsh Kulkarni, Radhika Agrawal and Anushka Jain.

PHOTO BY
BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

national headquarters, they allowed Robowiz to keep both the Inspire and winning-captain alliance awards since it won them in separate states — with the understanding that it won't be able to win Inspire at both state tournaments.

"According to USFIRST, this was the first time a team had won the Inspire award in the same season in two, different states," said Ghose. "So I give a big shout-out to the team members for their honesty, dedication and hard work."

The Maryland state championship, with 24 teams, is Feb. 21 at Johns Hopkins University. Virginia's 52-team, state championship is Feb. 28 at St. Christopher High in Richmond.

Each year, FTC has a new challenge, and this year's was called the Cascade Effect. Games last 2 minutes, 30 seconds, with four teams in each round; two teams vie against two others. "You're allied with another team for one round of the five-round competi-

tion," said Chantilly's Jami Park, a sophomore at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ). "There are different alliances in each round."

In the challenge, each team's robot had to pick up Wiffle balls and golf balls from the ground and get them into its tube, or goal. Robowiz's robot has three goals, 30, 60 and 90 centimeters tall each. And, said TJ classmate Adarsh Kulkarni, of Fair Lakes, "The way to earn the most points was to move the rolling goal to a ramp. Scoring is based on the height of the balls you place inside the goal."

During the first 30 seconds of the 2.5-minute round, the robot is preprogrammed to move on its own. "The second two minutes are driver-controlled," said Park.

"The last 30 seconds of that two minutes, you put the balls into the goal," added TJ's Cedric Bernard of Centreville's Hampton Forest community. "It's a Plexiglas tower [in the center of the robot]."

On Jan. 18 in Potomac, Md., Robowiz came in first out of 27 teams, and did the same thing Jan. 31 in Orange County against 25 other teams. Both times, it won the Overall Champions, or Inspire, award for being the best team, plus its community service, engineering notebook and overall demeanor — called "gracious professionalism" — at each tournament.

Radhika Agrawal, a TJ sophomore from Fair Oaks, said Robowiz's engineering notebook contained the team's planning, events attended, photos, fun facts about the members and information about how they built their robot. "We started in August and finished the majority of it in November," she said. They then overhauled it over the Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks.

"We changed our entire game strategy to focus on getting rolling goals, instead of getting the balls," said Agrawal. That's because each rolling goal, moved to different

SEE PURSUING, PAGE 11

Team Members Teach Children with Autism

BY BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Besides participating in robotics competitions, team Robowiz also did community outreach via the START (Spreading Technology And Robotics Together) program. It partnered with the Autism Society of Northern Virginia (ASNV) to encourage children with autism to develop an interest in robotics.

The nonprofit, grassroots organization is based in Merrifield and serves Northern Virginia. According to ASNV Execu-

tive Director Sarah Peterson, it "builds community for individuals and families affected by autism through education, advocacy and support."

Jugnu Agrawal is a special-education professor at GMU and was formerly on ASNV's board of directors. Her daughter Radhika is on the team and asked Peterson about doing a service project with ASNV.

So the Robowiz members put on a robotics-education program for eight autistic children in grades four through eight. They held a series of sessions for four weeks in November and December 2014 to teach the children the basics of robotics design and

programming.

"We had a really positive response from all the participants," said Peterson. "Afterward, one boy — who hardly ever initiates conversations — was asking questions and proudly discussing what he'd learned. And one girl's mom told me that her daughter — whose classmates had told her that girls don't like math and science — was happy to attend the sessions. She said they validated her daughter's own interest in those subjects and gave her girl role models."

Peterson, too, was pleased. "I was amazed by the generosity displayed by these robotics students and their sensitivity to the needs

of the participants," she said. "They demonstrated a tremendous amount of maturity, and it made me feel hopeful for the future."

The effort was meaningful to the team, as well. "I enjoyed the community outreach we did because we made a real impact," said team member Shomik Ghose. Agreeing, teammate Josal Patel said, "The community outreach was a really great experience. I learned that it's a lot tougher to explain something you know to someone else. But it felt really good and I felt privileged to do something like this."

Combining Health and Mental Health

Community Services Board provides emergency services, prevention and treatment.

BY KENNETH MOORE
THE CONNECTION

One teenager who attempted suicide revealed that if anyone had asked him before hand whether he was thinking of hurting himself, he would have said yes.

That message rang loud and clear to Teresa Gallahan, school nurse at a Catholic school in Chantilly. The teen was part of a training video for a course on Youth Mental Health First Aid, offered by the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

Gallahan, from Herndon, was impressed that the instructor urged her to enter the phone number for the CSB Crisis Hotline into her cell phone on the spot.

"I'm trained to look for resources," said Gallahan, a Herndon resident, who has worked at St. Veronica School for approximately 7 years. Gallahan and her principal have now organized all teachers and staff to take the CSB training.

"Most parents appreciate that we keep an eye on their children," Gallahan said.

Since 2012, 1,750 have taken the CSB First Aid Mental Health Training. More than 10,000 people have taken the CSB online youth suicide prevention program.

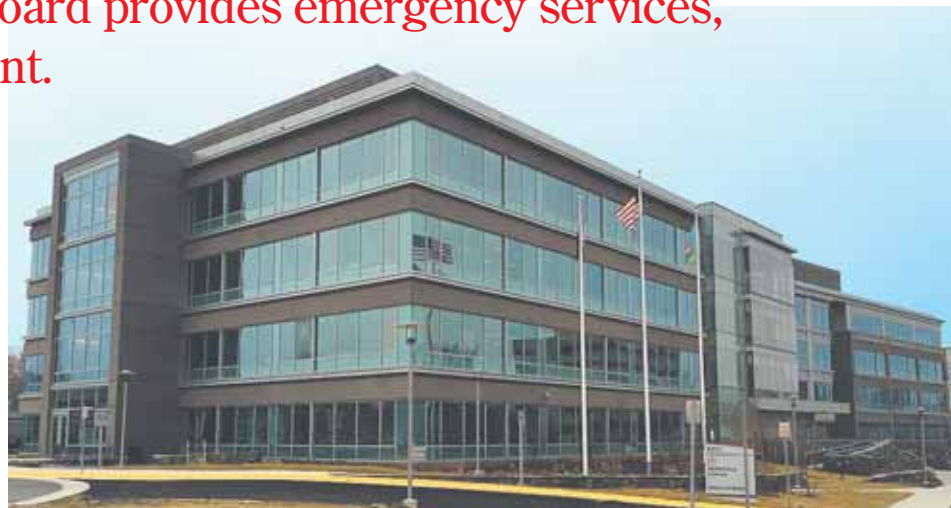
Mental Health First Aid is one of the ways the Community Services Board serves all residents in the community.

TRACEY PHILLIPS was 24 weeks pregnant when her labor began.

She had three premature triplets; her second baby didn't survive, and her son and daughter spent five and four months in the neonatal intensive care unit.

"I had to recover from a C-section, we had to plan for my son's funeral, and we had two very sick children in the NICU," she said. "The human spirit finds a way."

Phillips' family was immediately helped by the CSB's Infant and Toddler Connection, which provides evaluations and early intervention services for infants and toddlers who might have developmental or intellectual disabilities or developmental de-



Fairfax County Community Services' Board opened its new facility in Merrifield.

lay.

"We would be looking at a very different picture had my family not been given early intervention," Phillips said. "When my daughter started to walk I was sure she was on the right track."

Phillips' children, now six, both have special needs. Phillips now works for the Infant and Toddler program and is grateful she can give back to other families who are beginning their special needs journeys.

"There's a whole movement of people with lived experience who have something to offer," said CSB Executive Director Tisha Deeghan, of hiring people like Phillips. "That voice is absolutely magical in helping."

"Even with all that happened to us, I have found other families that have been through much worse," Phillips said. "We have been through the worst of it, we can see a future."

During FY 2014, the CSB served 3,164 children through the Infant and Toddler Connection.

THE COMMUNITY Services Board plans, organizes and provides services for people who have mental illness, substance use disorders, and/or intellectual disability. The CSB served 21,249 residents during last year's fiscal year.

Most CSB services are primarily for people whose conditions seriously impact their daily functioning. But anyone with a related concern may contact the CSB for help in finding appropriate treatment and resources.

"We are here for everybody," said Deeghan, who moved to Fairfax for her new job in September. "We are the agency that deals with the most difficult and complex situations."

Deeghan took the helm at the Community Services Board in September 2014, coming from Michigan with 33 years of experience in mental health and substance use disorder treatment and prevention. Most recently, Deeghan was the senior vice president and chief operating officer for Genesee Health System in Michigan for 13 years.

Deeghan replaces George Braunstein who retired in 2014 after serving as executive director since 2008.

"I'm learning the Fairfax way, the Virginia way. There is so much wealth here, but

there are two Fairfaxes," said Deeghan of her new home. "There is the wealth and the resources and the tremendous support from the Board of Supervisors. But there's another Fairfax, where people are very vulnerable, people who cannot find jobs, people who can't access services."

CSB'S NEW MERRIFIELD CENTER opened late last month at 8221 Willow Oaks Corporate Drive, and offers an integrated system of care, allowing people who are receiving services for mental health issues, substance abuse to receive other medical care at the same time.

"It's state of the art," Deeghan said. "It's the best example that I know of of an opportunity to bring integrated-care services to people."

Primary health care, pharmacy, dental clinic are available at the same location, as well as emergency services, entry and referral services, and more.

As one example, having a pharmacy onsite so patients are certain to receive their

Sign Up for Mental Health First Aid

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/events/mental-health-first-aid.htm



Tisha Deeghan, a Fairfax resident, became executive director of the Fairfax County Community Services Board in September 2014.

What Is the CSB?

The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board is the public agency that provides services for people who have mental illness, substance use disorders, and/or intellectual disability. The CSB also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services.

The Community Services Board serves three major populations: people with mental illness, people with substance abuse disorder, and people with intellectual disability and/or developmental disability. <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/csb/>

medications as soon as they are prescribed is a major advantage.

"It's exciting to me to see this system and all the creative community-based services in place," said Deeghan. "We're seeing much less need for high-end or restrictive services, such as hospitalization or residential placement, because we are getting so good at providing community-based services."

Providing integrated services is a national movement, Deeghan said. She cited a study a few years ago that showed that people with serious mental health issues often die 25 years or more earlier than others from treatable illnesses, because they didn't have access to health care.

Of the people served at the CSB last year, only 40 percent said they had a primary health care provider.

One in every five people live with a mental health problem, according to CSB documents. "Two-thirds go without treatment. 'Mental illness and substance abuse disorders impact every single layer of economics,'" said Belinda Buescher, of the CSB.

"The human spirit finds a way."

— Tracey Phillips

Who To Call for Help

In emergency situations (24/7)

❖ CSB Emergency Services, 703-573-5679, TTY 711

❖ Fairfax Detoxification Center, 703-502-7000, TTY 703-322-9080

❖ CrisisLink suicide hotline, 703-527-4077

❖ CrisisLink suicide text hotline, 703-940-0888

❖ Call 911 for a life-threatening emergency

During business hours:

❖ CSB Entry & Referral Services, 703-383-8500, TTY 711

❖ Infant & Toddler Connection, 703-246-7121, TTY 703-324-4495

For basic needs: food, housing, medical care, etc., 703-222-0880, TTY 711

Staff at all of the numbers listed above can take calls in English and Spanish and can access other languages when needed.

Graduation at Mountain View

FROM PAGE 2

your family and your children by graduating and getting a good job. You may have grown up in poverty, but you have the opportunity to change lives for generations to come.”

Jagels then thanked each teacher and staff member for “being a shoulder to cry on and a person the students knew they could come to” for help, encouragement and advice.” Telling the seniors how proud he was of them, he said, “It’s been one of my greatest gifts to be your principal. Go change your environment, go change the world, know you can always come home and know that you’ll always be a timber wolf.”

Taking the podium next were the two, student speakers. Dibora Eshete was born in Ethiopia and raised by her mother and grandmother. “Education was important to my family and, in 10th grade, I came to the U.S. to live with my dad and to get a good education and a good job,” she said. “But it was hard to leave my mom because I didn’t know when I’d see her again. She’s always been my motivation, inspiration and hope.”

Eshete spent a year with her father in Maryland, then moved to Virginia to help her aunt with her three children. She attended Herndon High, but wasn’t on target to graduate until 2016, so she switched to Mountain View where more flexible scheduling would let her graduate earlier.

“This school is where you see real family, love and respect,” she said. “I’ve had lovely teachers and made good friends. Every student has a second chance, and my teachers also taught me about life. I want to major in public health administration in college and return to Ethiopia to bring medical help to people in the rural areas. I’ve learned that, no matter who you are or where you come from, you can succeed.”

Also sharing her story was Zubeyda Tebra. “Some of us work all night, go to school and then go home to take care of a kid,” she said. “It hasn’t been easy, and we’ve all had our ups and downs.” Born in Baghdad, Iraq in 1995, Tebra moved with her parents to Stockholm, Sweden in early 2000.

“But it was hard there,” she said. “Students there have more freedom than here, which wasn’t good. Then, when I was 17, my mother decided to move to the U.S. with my sister. I thought it would be a new start to straighten up my life. But I changed schools three times.”

Frustrated that it was going to



Grad Raheem Woodson of Centreville and girlfriend Kristen Rivera.

take her a long time to graduate, in summer 2013, Tebra went to Mountain View to look around. “I talked to a man in the parking lot for an hour,” she said. “He told me it’s never too late and that one man had graduated from this school at age 34. I learned later that the man I was talking to was Mr. Jagels.”

After becoming a student at Mountain View, she said, “I loved the hope, care and encouragement



From left are friends Tom Orellana of Centreville and Marcos Perez Vasquez of Reston.

I got here. And I could see that the happiness in people’s eyes was real. People even congratulated me on passing my SOLs. It made me so happy knowing my success mattered to them, and I’m grateful for getting to meet and know everyone here.”

However, Tebra told her teachers and classmates, “I couldn’t have done it without the help, love, knowledge and patience you

SEE OVERCOMING, PAGE 7

PHOTOS BY BONNIE HOBBS/THE CONNECTION

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OPINION

Foundation Building Micro-Scholarships

BY LOGAN ALEXANDER
EDITORIAL TEAM, MOUNTAIN VIEW
STUDENT NEWSPAPER

COMMENTARY

While the Mountain View High School Foundation refocuses on micro-scholarships in STEM and vocational training, Mountain View students focus on raising money for The Foundation and their own future.

On Feb. 28 from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., the Centre Ridge Chipotle, located at 6317 Multiplex Dr. in Centreville, will donate half the proceeds from lunch to the Mountain View High School Foundation.

Students are busy on their mobile phones and social media rustling up hungry customers. To help The Foundation and improve students' chances of getting money for college, bring this flyer (visit <http://tinyurl.com/psnchkp>) to the event or simply say "Mountain View" when you purchase lunch.

The Mountain View High School Foundation is a nonprofit organization based in Centreville, with a mission to provide college scholarships to graduating Mountain View students. Over

the years The Foundation has provided more than a half century of college to deserving high school graduates by funding the first semester or two as students transition to college life.

Foundation Manager Sharon DeBragga said, "Our new focus is expanding to provide micro-scholarships with complete support for the student over the lifecycle of the scholarship."

These micro-scholarships, between \$500 and \$2,500, are enough to become a computer service technician (\$1,548), web developer (\$1,903), welder (\$2,685), network technician (\$1,956), certified nursing assistant (\$1,400), pharmacy technician (\$1,655), EMT (\$1,941) and many other careers; 100 percent of the donations to the Mountain View High School Foundation flow through to student scholarships.

"The scholarship awardees have been vetted by the school's faculty. The Foundation carefully approves every program in which we place scholarship money. We provide mentoring, personal finance and tutoring. We'll even work

through life issues. If a student needs transportation, we'll show them where and how to get a cheap car. We also assure quality job placement opportunities when they are done," DeBragga said.

Mountain View Alternative High, in Centreville, is part of Fairfax County Public Schools and serves students with nontraditional needs. The school's students are both minors and adults, students who are pregnant or parenting, students returning to school after major life events forced them to drop out and students accelerating their high school education. The school is not intended for students with severe disciplinary problems.

DeBragga said, "We are trying to serve as many needy and deserving Mountain View graduates as possible. Providing micro-scholarships turns High School graduates into tax-paying citizens with good jobs to support their families. We are thankful for these high school students working to raise scholarship money, and thankful for Centre Ridge Chipotle."

For more information contact email Sharon DeBragga@fcps.edu or call 703-227-2388.

Crossover: Final Hurdle for Bills

BY JIM LEMUNYON
STATE DELEGATE (R-67)

COMMENTARY

The General Assembly passed the midpoint of the 2015 session this week.

The House of Delegates is now considering Senate bills, and vice versa. Ten bills I introduced passed the House of Delegates, all unanimously, and two other bills I introduced were incorporated into other bills that passed. Information about these bills may be found at <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?151+mbr+H223C>. They are related to transportation, education, eliminating government waste, mental health, ethics, and other issues.

On Monday, Feb. 9, it was my privilege to introduce to the House of Delegates Miss Virginia Teen 2015, Ann Kutyna, and her parents who came to visit the Capitol. They reside in Oak Hill and Ann attends Oakton High School. She will be competing in the Miss Teen USA pageant this summer.

The House and Senate also acted this week on amendments to the 2014-2016 state budget. The two-year budget was approved last year through June 2016, but several "mid-course" amendments were recommended by the Governor, some of which were approved by the General Assembly, along with other amendments proposed by members of the House and Senate.

The differences between the House and Senate amendments are relatively minor, and I expect a compromise will be worked out during the next few days. The state budget will remain balanced. Details about the budget amendments may be found at <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?151&yp=H&d=H140>.

Included in the House-passed amendments is a pay increase for public school teachers if matched by local school boards. Also, an amendment I offered, which passed unanimously, would withhold the state subsidy to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Metro) starting in July 2015, unless the Authority completes its long overdue annual financial audit.

The Authority's fiscal year ended in June 2014, and the audit was expected in October 2014. Taxpayers and bus and train fare payers deserve to know that Metro's financial house is in order, or what problems exist if it isn't. The annual financial audit is key to the transparency and accountability of Metro's operations. The annual Virginia subsidy to Metro is approximately \$200 million. I'm told that the completed audit is expected in April. If so, funding will continue.

Remember, you can review my voting record



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Del. Jim LeMunyon welcomes Miss Virginia Teen 2015 Ann Kutyna and her parents who came to visit the Capitol.

on all bills in committee and on the House floor at <http://services.dlas.virginia.gov/webservices/frmLISVoting1.aspx>. Be sure to select my name from the delegate drop down box. Please feel free to contact me anytime at deljlemunyon@gmail.com or 703-264-1432. The phone will forward to our Richmond office.

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The Connection welcomes views on any public issue. The deadline for all material is noon Friday. Send to:
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Overcoming Adversity

FROM PAGE 5

shared with me. Today, I appreciate every, little thing God has blessed me with. So I want to tell you to have faith and don't give up your dignity and honor for any reason."

Before the grads received their diplomas, Mountain View staff honored four of them with special awards. Math Department Chair Anne Hoffman presented the Personal Achievement Award to Tom Orellana. Noting that it recognizes a student's success despite personal obstacles, she said Orellana has a nearly full-time job, yet maintained a 3.7 GPA, "while struggling to learn a new language and culture." He hopes to someday be an electrical engineer.

Also receiving the Personal Achievement Award was Alejandra Gonzalez. In his presentation, physics teacher Jeff Jones described her as determined and resilient in the face of "difficult, personal circumstances" this past semester.

"She embodies the values of 'Family, Love and Respect' and will be serving as an AmeriCorps volunteer," he said. "It's been a privilege to have taught and learned from her."

The Citizenship Award went to Veronica Perez. "She helped build a positive school community through

her own example," said ESOL Department Chair Michelle Ohanian. "She helped her fellow students and, as a single parent to a daughter, she served as a role model to our pregnant and parenting students."

The Faculty Award — given to the student who's achieved the greatest academic and personal success, despite significant obstacles — went to Maggie Zhong. "She came here in 2011 as a beginning ESOL student and is leaving at its highest level," said counselor Ellen Fay. "She held a job and still excelled in school because of her organizational and planning skills."

Furthermore, noted Fay, Zhong got the highest grade in every course she took. "She gave up lunch and stayed after school, when necessary, and reviewed materials at home," said Fay. "She kept striving for success and overcame the barriers of language and culture, but never lost hope."

"Maggie had high expectations, and her GPA in 14 courses is 4.0," continued Fay.

"Her overall GPA is 3.6. She received a \$5,000 scholarship and is thinking about a possible career as an elementary-school teacher. In an essay about herself, she wrote, 'People used to laugh at, stare at and fail to understand me. But I turned this into positive energy to overcome it, change my life and influence others.'"

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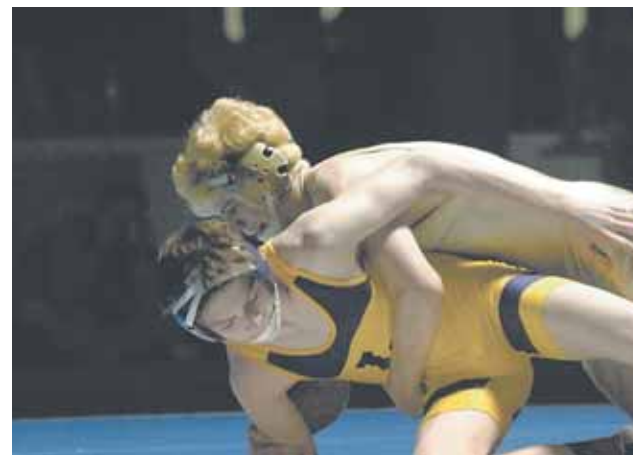
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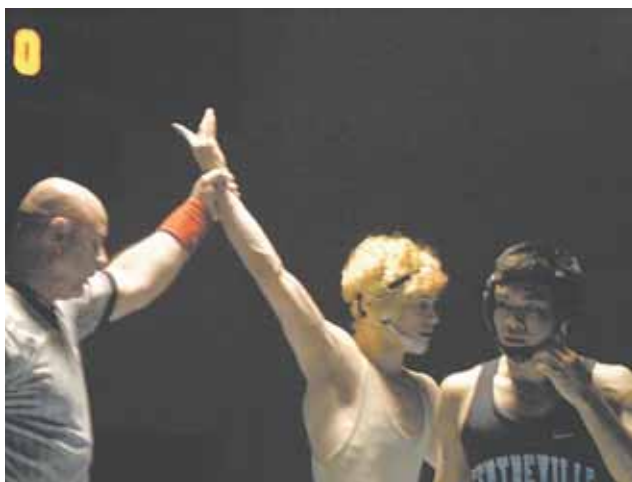
Centreville's Tyler Love pins Yorktown's Jason Kappel to win the 195-pound championship during the 6A North region wrestling tournament on Feb. 14 at Centreville High School.



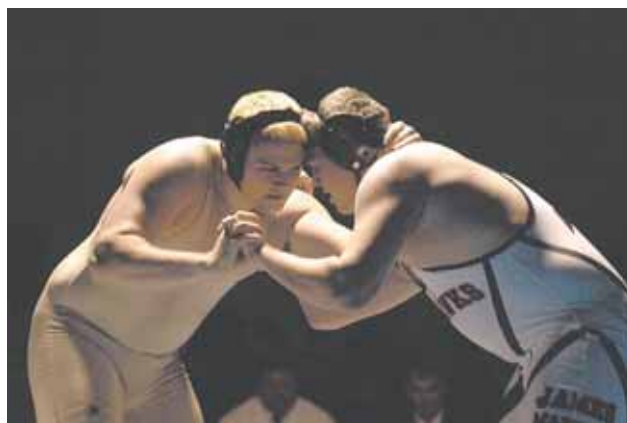
Centreville's Victor Echeverria, top, won the 113-pound title at the 6A North region wrestling tournament on Feb. 14 at Centreville High School.



Westfield's Ryan Yorkdale, top, beat Lake Braddock's Tyler Matheny to win the 138-pound regional championship on Feb. 14.



Westfield's Justin Yorkdale won the 132-pound region championship.



Westfield heavyweight Austin Knies, left, wrestles against Madison's Drew Smith in the 285-pound final at the 6A North region tournament on Feb. 14 at Centreville High School.



Chantilly's Brian Kim finished runner-up in the 220-pound bracket at the 6A North region wrestling tournament on Feb. 14.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG STERBUTZEL/THE CONNECTION

Centreville's Love Repeats as 195-Pound Region Champion

Westfield produces three individual wrestling champions.

BY JON ROETMAN
THE CONNECTION

A reporter interested in Tyler Love's performance during the 195-pound championship match at the 6A North region wrestling tournament decided to first interview a winner from a previous match before turning his attention to Love.

Too late.

Love, the defending 195-pound state champion, pinned Yorktown's Jason Kappel in 31 seconds to win a second straight region title in his home gym on Feb. 14 at Centreville High School.

"He stopped the first move I tried to do," Love said.

"We got back on our feet, he took a shot and it was almost just instinct. I just kind of tossed him right to his back and then squeezed real tight and hoped for the best."

The win was part of a dominant performance for Love, who earned Most Outstanding Wrestler for the tournament and was recognized for pinning three opponents in a combined 2 minutes, 6 seconds.

"It's an awesome win because it's at Centreville — the home turf," Love said, "but ... it's just a stepping stone to the state tournament."

Centreville's Victor Echeverria and Michael Vu also reached their respective championship matches.

Echeverria won the 113-pound title, beating Battlefield's Matthew Asper, 7-2. Vu lost to Westfield's Justin Yorkdale via pin in the 132-pound final. Yorkdale was one of three Westfield grapplers to win a region championship. His brother, Ryan Yorkdale, pinned Lake Braddock's Tyler Matheny in the 138-pound final, and senior heavyweight Austin Knies won a 10-4 decision against Madison's Drew Smith.

Knies placed fourth at regionals as a sophomore, but wasn't able to compete as a junior due to injury.

"That's why this means a lot to me," Knies said, "because I didn't get a chance to compete at region my junior year when I felt I had a chance at winning."

Chantilly's Brian Kim finished runner-up at 220, losing to Annandale's Tony Gibbs, 4-3, in overtime in the final.

Other individual winners included Patriot's Killian Cardinale (106), Battlefield's River Curtis (120), Lake

"He stopped the first move I tried to do. We got back on our feet, he took a shot and it was almost just instinct. I just kind of tossed him right to his back and then squeezed real tight and hoped for the best."

— Centreville senior Tyler Love

(182), McLean's Conor Grammes (152) and Mack McCune (170), and West Potomac's Joshua Carter (160).

Battlefield won the team title with a score of 188.5, followed by Osbourn Park (142.5), Robinson (141), Westfield (134.5), McLean (131.5), Chantilly (122), Annandale (120) and

Centreville (116.5). The state meet is scheduled for Feb. 20-21 at Robinson.

Braddock's Ryan Haskett (126), Robinson's Austin Riggs (145) and Cole DePasquale

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❖ **The Sully Senior Center in Centreville needs a certified personal trainer**, preferably with experience working with older adults.

❖ **Meals on Wheels needs drivers in Chantilly and McLean.** Substitute drivers needed throughout the county.

❖ **Korean Meals on Wheels needs Korean-speaking volunteers to deliver meals** in Centreville, Annandale and Falls Church. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer

Solutions.

The **Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program** needs volunteer advocates for residents in assisted living and nursing facilities. Training is provided in March. Call 703-324-5861, TTY 711 or email Lisa.Callahan@fairfaxcounty.gov. Visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ltc for me.

Meals on Wheels needs drivers in Chantilly, Clifton, McLean and Falls Church on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Substitute drivers needed throughout the county. For these and other volunteer opportunities, call 703-324-5406, TTY 711 or visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/olderadults and click on Volunteer Solutions.

Black History Month Celebrations

Local students learn about the history and accomplishments of African-Americans.

BY MARILYN CAMPBELL
THE CONNECTION

Fourth grade student Eli West crafted a poem this month that was modeled after Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous, "I Have a Dream" speech. As part of February's month-long celebration of the history and culture of African-Americans, fourth grade students at Norwood School in Bethesda, Md., wrote and delivered poems reminiscent of the speech that the famous civil right leader delivered in 1963. The students also delivered their verses before Norwood's lower school community.

"I learned more about Martin Luther King, Jr. I learned that he was a very spiritual man," said West.

"Black History Month is a time to honor the accomplishments of the African-American men and women who have made contributions to the world in spite of the injustice they faced," said Sandi Hannibal, Director of Multicultural and Ethical Education at Norwood School in Bethesda, Maryland. "One might ask why it is necessary to highlight these accomplishments in 2015. After all, we have lived through the Civil Rights Era and the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964. We have a black president. We have made so much progress. All of this is true, but in some schools the contributions and accomplishments of African-Americans are not woven into the overall curriculum, so it is important that Black History Month provides an opportunity to learn about prominent African-Americans in a very inten-

"Black History Month is a time to honor the accomplishments of the African-American men and women who have made contributions to the world in spite of the injustice they faced."

— Sandi Hannibal, Director of Multicultural and Ethical

tional manner."

Some educators are encouraging students to take time to ponder the history of African-Americans. "It's more than just the Jim Crow Laws. There're a whole host of things that African-Americans have done," said Lisa Styles, school counselor at Arlington Public School's Career Center in Arlington.

St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School, in Alexandria, will host a Middle School Student Diversity Conference on Friday, Feb. 20.

"Students at the middle school age are trying to learn who they are. We want to expose kids to the ideas of identity, inclusive behavior, and respect, and to let them know that what they feel matters," said KiKi Davis, St. Stephen's & St. Agnes School director of multicultural education, diversity, and equity initiatives. "We want to give them tools to become leaders in their own schools, and it starts with being able to talk about diversity and social justice issues at their developmental level. What it looks like to them, in their lives, at this age."

St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Potomac, Md., hosted a regional diversity conference earlier this month called "Diversity in the DMV" Conference. More than 200 representatives from independent schools in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia explored some of the tools needed for cross-cultural understanding.

Among the observances in Fairfax County Virginia, George Mason University Potomac Arts Academy and George Mason University School of Music will present a Black History Month celebration concert on Saturday, Feb. 21, called, "The Dream Lives On."

The Mason Wind Symphony and Vocal Studies Students, Mason Spiritual Ensemble will join local church choirs and elementary school choirs in a performance of gospel, spirituals, jazz and original compositions. The concert is designed to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. and other African-American leaders.

Black History Month Celebration Concert

Saturday, Feb. 21, 11a.m. at the GMU Center for the Arts, Fairfax. \$5 for children, students and seniors; \$10 for adults. For tickets, call 888-945-2468 or visit <http://cfa.gmu.edu/calendar/1830/>. For program questions, call 703-993-9889

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APRIL

4/1/2015..... Wellbeing – Senior Living Pullout

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Real-Time, Really Late

By KENNETH B. LOURIE



I'm not a night owl. More of an early bird, worms notwithstanding. But given the contents of last week's column, "Scantsy," I find it difficult to write about anything else while waiting for the results of my CT Scan. I mean, nothing matters more than these results in determining my next course of treatment/quality of life/life expectancy, so to pretend otherwise is a bit naive; and expecting a sound sleep is equally challenging, so here I am, 2:04 A.M., early Sunday morning, February 15th.

I can take it, really. I can function. You couldn't tell by looking at me or talking to me to know that I think my life may hang in the balance. After nearly six years of scanning and waiting, I've found my level. I'm not morose or depressed or pre-occupied, but I am something. Stuck in a kind of neutral, sort of. And though I am still positive about this negative, to say I can joke about it/be dismissive about it, or be unaffected by the potentially hugely complicated result as yet unknown, would be a bit presumptuous on my part and define "naive" in an entirely new way.

Certainly I understand that cancer is a disease and not necessarily impacted by my hopes and prayers; still, I've never wanted to be disrespectful of it. I've never spoken or written arrogantly about any success I've had combating this terrible disease any more than I would kick a man when he's down. If, for the time being, cancer is not having its way with me, and I am able to semi go about my regular business – until the next CT Scan three months hence that is, then I am one lucky son-of-a-gun and humbled by my amazing good fortune. And until I know the results – definitely by my next appointment on Friday, February 20th, I am sleeping at night only intermittently and living my days fatigued by the lack of sleep accumulating from the previous nights before. I'm not complaining. I'm just saying why it's 2:34 A.M. and I'm sitting on the edge of my bed hunched over and scribbling into this notebook.

The related problem is the speculation; being able to leave well enough alone, if it is well enough. And therein lies the dilemma. Somewhat surprisingly, my scheduled infusion went in as scheduled this past Friday. Typically, if there had been a change for the worse, treatment would have been delayed until my next appointment, where the oncologist and team Lourie would discuss the options. But that didn't happen. Does that mean that my scan results were still encouraging and thus there's no reason to change, or was it too close to the appointment to bother stopping and restarting again, if in fact that was our decision? Maybe? Perhaps? What if? What do I know? More importantly: What does my oncologist know?

So we wait. I'm not happy about it, but I am used to it. And even my wife, Dina, has gotten used to the delay; my brother, Richard, also. Still, it doesn't make it any easier, as odd as that may sound. Just familiar. I wish there were a different means to this madness, but apparently, there isn't. Cancer rules, and I'm here to play fair – out of respect.

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



Team Robowiz with its trophies: Back row, from left, are Abhishek Mishra, Shomik Ghose, Adarsh Kulkarni, Jami Park and Josal Patel; and, front row, from left, are Saarthak Sethi, Cedric Bernard, Radhika Agrawal and Anushka Jain. (Not pictured; Robinson sophomore Sid Bhatnagar of Fairfax).

PHOTO BY
BONNIE HOBBS
THE CONNECTION

Pursuing Two State Championships

FROM PAGE 3

places, is worth 30 points. One of just two girls on the team, she said, "We all pitch in equally and work well together. We play off each other's strengths and have grown closer since the team began."

The other girl, Frost Middle eighth-grader Anushka Jain of Fair Oaks, said she was initially shy when she joined the team, but "they let me fit in on the first day. It's fun to tackle the challenges together and design the parts of the robot, like the chassis."

"We do CAD, computer-aided design, to make sure it'll work before wasting time and energy to build it," added Agrawal. "I started robotics in fifth grade and it sparked a passion in me."

I like seeing how things come together and work. You start with a box of metal parts and build something that moves and can be programmed to do various things. And with FIRST, you get to network and talk with other people at the tournaments and get a real-world experience."

TJ sophomore Abhishek Mishra of Little Rocky Run said the team worked to make its robot more reliable and move easier. "I think we'll do well at States because we have a strong robot, nice community outreach and a well-made engineering notebook," he said. "We're well-rounded, which is what the judges look for."

Classmate Shomik Ghose of Fair Lakes

said robotics doesn't require hand-eye coordination. "It's more of a mental sport, and I enjoy learning cool things with people I like," he said. "We have fun as a team and mesh well together. And we used GoPro and cell-phone cameras to see what was going wrong with our robot and how to fix it."

Another classmate, Josal Patel of Fairfax, scouts the other teams to learn about their skills and determine whether they'd make good alliances for Robowiz during a competition — and also in case they become opponents. "I watch every match in the tournaments, analyze the teams and write down what they're good at and what they struggle with," he said. "So I'm able to pick the best teams that could help us win the most points."

TJ freshman Saarthak Sethi of Chantilly said all the Robowiz teammates love working on the robot, so it's tough breaking up the tasks. But it works out because "all of us are good friends who come together to work for the same purpose that we're passionate about."

"USFIRST has provided these future technologists a superb platform to learn the scientific and engineering process," added Coach Ghose. "When one sees all the young, determined and hardworking participants at the tournaments, it provides ample assurance that the future of our country is in extremely capable hands."

BULLETIN BOARD

Email announcements to 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.

CHANTILLY HIGH SCHOOL

New Information System. Chantilly High School is part of a pilot program for a new student information system. Beginning in February, Chantilly High School will pilot Student Information System Parent Accounts that will allow parents to access student information. After Feb. 23, each registered parent/guardian will receive in the mail a letter with registration and account activation information. This account is separate from the Blackboard Parent View accounts. Make sure your email address is accurate and current in the school's information system. Check this information by logging in to WeCare at:

www.fcps.edu/news/wecare.shtml.

MULCH SALES

Westfield High School. Mulch delivery is scheduled for April 10-11. Order early to guarantee driveway delivery. Delivery limited to the WHS boundary area only. Visit <http://ptsa.westfieldhs.org/parents/mulch-order-form.html> to order online.

THURSDAY/FEB. 19

Republican Club Meeting. 7 p.m. at Sully Government Center, 4900 Stonecroft Blvd., Chantilly. Liberty Republican Women's Club meeting with Supervisor Pat Herrity and Supervisor Michael R. Frey as guests. This will be a panel discussion with Q&A regarding happenings in Sully District and Fairfax County. Bring questions. Social hour at 6 p.m. Call 703-378-4190 for more.

ENTERTAINMENT

Email announcements to 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 or call 703-572-4118 for the movie schedule or to schedule an IMAX On Demand show for groups of 50 or more.

Jamie Netschert, Featured Artist of the Month Exhibit. Through Saturday, Feb. 28; Monday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sundays, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. at Clifton Wine Shop, 7145 Main St, Clifton. The Art Guild of Clifton presents a local wildlife photographer. Following a life-long passionate journey, he cares for the natural world through veterinary medicine and photography. See www.artguildofclifton.org or www.thecliftonwineshop.com.

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 for more.

CAMPS, CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

2015 Summer Programs.

Registration is now open for Fairfax County Public Schools summer camps. Students should register for programs based on the grade they are in during the current 2014-15 school year. Visit www.fcps.edu/is/summer/index.shtml 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 for more.

Adopt a Dog. Saturdays, 12-3 p.m. at Petco, 13053 Lee Jackson Highway. Visit 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 for more.

FRIDAY/FEB. 20

"Hoodie-Hoo Day." Noon, at the Main Street Pub, 7140 Main Street, Clifton. The ever-popular Northern Hemisphere "Hoodie-Hoo Day." At noon, everyone yells "Hoodie-Hoo" to chase away winter and usher in Spring.

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 or call 703-968-9600.

Live Raptor Show, 2-3 p.m. at Clifton Town Hall, 12641 Chapel Road, Clifton. Learn the difference between a raptor and a passerine and get up close and personal with some of the fastest birds on earth. Join Kent Knowles and his feathered friends. Kids of all ages will enjoy this special presentation and introduction to birds around Clifton. The Raptor Conservancy of Virginia is an accredited 501(c)(3) focusing on rehabilitation of injured birds. Visit www.cliftonva.org.

SUNDAY/FEB. 22

Hands On Modeling Day. 1-4 p.m. at at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Learn how to paint and display model trains and scenery for your displays. Museum members, free; adults 16 and over, \$4; children 5-15, \$2; under 4, free. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

Mariachi Estrellas: Musical Tour of Mexico. 2-4 p.m. at the Chantilly Regional Library, 4000 Stringfellow Road, Chantilly. Tour Mexico with Mariachi music and dancers. Children and adults clap, sing and dance along with this educational show highlighting Mexico's regional differences. Register at <https://va.evanced.info/fairfaxcounty/lib/events/signup.asp> or call 703-502-3883.

FRIDAY/FEB. 27-MARCH 1

2015 Capital Remodel and Garden Show. Friday-Saturday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Dulles Expo Center, 4320 Chantilly

Shopping Center, Chantilly. More than 375 companies will be on hand to showcase the latest products and services in remodeling, home improvement, gardening, landscaping and home décor. Special guests include Jeff Devlin, host of HGTV's I Hate My Bath and DIY's Good, Better ...Best; Chris Lambton, host of DIY's Yard Crashers and Going Yard; and Mike McGrath, WTOP's garden editor. Adults, \$6-\$10; children 6-12, \$3; children 5 and younger, free. Visit www.CapitalRemodelandGarden.com.

SATURDAY/FEB. 28

Pruning Made Easy. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Understanding just a few techniques and principles will take pruning from a confusing chore to an enjoyable pastime. Bundle up and get ready to go outside (weather permitting) for a hands-on demonstration. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

TUESDAY/MARCH 3

National Pancake Day. Participating local IHOPs celebrate by giving away one free short stack of pancakes with the hopes that patrons will make a donation to The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society's National Capital Area Chapter in lieu of payment for pancakes. Visit www.ihop.com for more.

SATURDAY/MARCH 7

Grass Roots Initiative. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. The U.S. National Arboretum has studied the love affair

that Americans have with their lawns. Learn their findings about the role of turfgrass in the environment and see how you can have a beautiful lawn and protect the environment at the same time. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

SATURDAY/MARCH 14

Gardening for Year Round

Interest. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. With planning and patience, you can have a beautiful garden in all four seasons. Peggy will show you how to combine trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals to make your landscape special. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

Casino Night. 7 p.m., at Temple Beth Torah, 4212-C Technology Court, Chantilly. Enjoy a night of craps, blackjack and roulette. Professional instructional dealers and raffle prizes provided. Cash bar and assorted desserts. Live art auction. Open to adults over 21. \$36 per individual; \$54 per couple. Call Jennifer Harding 703-217-8938 or visit www.BethTorah.net.

SUNDAY/MARCH 15

Model Trains Running. 1-4 p.m., at Fairfax Station Railroad Museum, 11200 Fairfax Station Road, Fairfax Station. Museum members and children 4 and under, free; children 5-15, \$2; adults 16 and over, \$4. Visit www.fairfax-station.org or call 703-425-9225.

SATURDAY/MARCH 21

Perennials in Every Garden. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. There is a perennial that is just right for every garden. Learn about new varieties and some time-honored favorites to consider adding this spring. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

SATURDAY/MARCH 28

Growing Herbs. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Bring out the best in recipes with home-grown herbs. Learn how to plan, plant and harvest an herb garden that will look as good as it tastes. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

Festival of Colors and Kites. noon-6 p.m. at Bull Run Park, 7700 Bull Run Drive, Centreville. Presented by IntenseDMV, thousands of people from all walks of life are invited to come together for a day of peaceful celebration with dancing, live performances, a variety of food, kite flying and color throwing. \$5 per person. Visit intensedmv.com.

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. Children will work on a garden project to invite nature into their homes. An adult must be present. Space is limited. Call 703-968-9600 or visit merrifieldgardencenter.com.

SATURDAY/APRIL 4

Amazing Container Gardens. 10 a.m. at Merrifield Garden Center, 12101 Lee Highway, Fairfax. Discover the rewards of gardening in containers. Learn how to combine plants for intense, striking displays of color and review soil mixtures, planting and care instructions to make sure plants stay beautiful throughout the season. Visit www.merrifieldgardencenter.com or call 703-968-9600.

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